

Introduction and Beginnings: Pre- Upanishadic Philosophy

UNIT STRUCTURE

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit one can understand the meaning and nature of philosophy, the general nature of Indian philosophy. It is possible to learn about the Vedic literature and philosophy of Vedas.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Philosophy is the root of all knowledge. It is considered as the mother of all sciences. Philosophy is the study of general and fundamental problems concerning matters such as the nature of knowledge, truth, justice, mind, language etc. Man is a rational animal. He/she wants to bring co-ordination among the various experiences that he/she comes across throughout his/her life. Philosophy helps in understanding the significance of all experiences. A person does not want to live in chaos man wants to know oneself. Similarly he/she also wants to know the world in which one is living: what is the true world in which one is living? what is the true nature of the world? What is relation of a man and society? How is the world originated? What are the aims and objectives of one's life? What is knowledge? Or what is the world? These are some of the fundamental problems with which

philosophy deals? Philosophy tries to understand the universe in which one lives as well as to know one's relation to others or one's relation with the world. Philosophy tries to answer the deepest questions of life. Philosophy is a guide to life because it addresses the basic issues of living. According to Ayn Rand "philosophy studies the fundamental nature of existence of man and of man's relationship to existence in the realm of cognition. The special sciences are the trees, but philosophy is the soil which makes the forest possible." (philosophy who needs it page 2)

The word 'philosophy' comes from the ancient Greek word *philosophia*, which literally means 'love of wisdom' or love of knowledge.' There are many branches of philosophy such as metaphysics, epistemology, Ethics, logic, philosophy of religion philosophy of mind, social and political philosophy etc. philosophy deals with critical evaluation of general concepts such as knowledge, justice, truth, God, values, Liberation etc.

In this section we are dealing with the nature of Indian philosophy. Dr.S. R. Radhakrishnan writes in Indian philosophy vol. 1 (page 23) "In India philosophy stood on its own legs, and all other studies looked to it for inspiration and support. It is the master science guiding other sciences without which they tend to become empty and foolish."

1.2 NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY AND A GENERAL OUTLINE OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

The beginnings of Indian philosophy takes us back to Rgvedic period, probably about the middle of second millennium before Christ The speculative activity began very early in India In ancient India the natural conditions like huge forests, the security of life, the wealth of natural resources, the freedom from worry encourages to ponder over the fundamental problems of mankind. It stimulated the higher life of India. Philosophy in India became the guiding star for all the other branches of knowledge. "Philosophy", says Kautilya, "is the lamp of all the sciences, the means of performing all the works, and the support of all the duties. Philosophical knowledge does not aim at merely satisfying our theoretical and speculative interest but also at realizing the highest truth in life, it is the search for higher knowledge. In Indian tradition for higher knowledge the word 'pradnya/prajna, (प्रज्ञा) is used. Traditionally for philosophy in India the following three words are used viz Darshana (दर्शन) paravidya (पराविद्या) and Anvikshiki (आन्विक्षिकी)

Darshana :

The word Darshana is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Dris' which means to see. So Darshana means that through the instrumentality of which something is to be seen. The term Darshana is used in the temporal and the spiritual senses. The word Darshana means 'vision' and also the instrument of vision. It stands for direct immediate and intuitive vision of reality, the actual perception of truth and also includes the means which lead to this realization. The word Darshana is associated with schools of Indian philosophy like Charvaka Darshana, Sankhya Darshana, Nyaya Darshana etc.

According to Dr. Radhakrishnan "philosophically "darshana' is putting the intuition to proof and propagating it logically. Even in other systems it applies to the logical Exposition of the truth that could be had in conceptual terms with or without the aid of any vivifying intuition."

Paravidya - (पराविद्या):

Upanishads mention two types of knowledge, higher knowledge and Lower Knowledge i.e paravidya and aparavidya. Paravidya is higher knowledge and aparavidya is lower knowledge. Paravidya is about the highest reality. It is about the philosophical knowledge. Aparavidya or lower knowledge is about this physical or material world. This world is constantly changing and hence the knowledge about this world is also changing; whereas paravidya is knowledge about that principle which is not changing.

Anvikshiki – (आन्विक्षिकी):

For philosophy in Indian tradition the term 'Anvikshiki' is used. The definition of Anvikshiki is given in Nyayasutra. It means that principle which takes to the knowledge. Knowledge is derived through means of knowledge like perception, inference etc.

The work of philosophy is to analyse and critically evaluate the object of knowledge through the means of knowledge.

1.2.1 The schools of Indian philosophy:

The following are the major philosophical schools or systems (darshanas)

- 1 Nyaya system of Aksapada Gautama
- 2 The Vaisesika system of Maharshi Kanada
- 3 The Sankhya system of Kapila muni

- 4 The yoga system of Patanjali
- 5 The Mimamsa system of Jaimini
- 6 The Vedanta system of Badrayana Vyas
- 7 The Bauddha System of Gantama Buddha
- 8 The Jaina system of Mahavira
- 9 The charvaka system of Carvaka

1.2.2 Classification of the Indian Philosophical Schools; Orthodox and Heterodor:

The Vedas occupy very important place in the Indian philosophy. The Vedas are the earliest available records of Indian literature. The origin of most of the Indian philosophy can be traced to the Vedas. On the basis of the respect for the Vedas or otherwise, Indian philosophical systems have been classified into two classes viz Orthodox (astika, Vedic) and heterodox (nastika Non-vedic). Here the word Astika or Nastika does not mean the (astika) theist or one who believes in God or Nastika-means non-believes in God. But Astika are those systems of Indian philosophy which believe in the testimony of the Vedas i:e they accept the authority of Vedas This class includes six systems of Indian philosophy which are collectively known as shad darshana (षड् दर्शन). These are Nyaya, Vaiseshika, Samkhya, yoga, Minamsa and Vedanta. The Nastika class or Heterodox systems of Indian philosophy are those which do not believe in the authority of Vedas. These include the Carvakas, the Jains and the Bauddha systems. These systems do not believe in testimony of veda rather it is believed that they originated as a reaction against vedic tradition.

There is also another type of classifications of Indian philosophy based on their world perspectives. On this basis schools of philosophy are classified as materialist is made up of matter and spiritualist. Those who believe that this material world is real and are called as materialist. Charvaka darshan belongs to this class. The spiritualists are those who believe that the sprit to be real.

1.2.3 Problems and Methods of Indian Philosophy:

Philosophy:

Philosophy is the search of eternal truths. The basic problems of philosophy have been the same in the East as well as in the west however they may use different methods of enquiry. Indian philosophy discusses the various problems of Metaphysics, Ethics, Logic and Epistemology but generally it does not discuss them separately. Every problem is discussed by the Indian philosopher from all possible approaches, Metaphysical ethical, Logical and epistemological. Different schools of philosophy adopt

different methods of philosophy. Different systems of philosophy accept different means of knowledge. The nine major systems of Indian philosophy may be classified on the basis of sources of knowledge (i.e. epistemology) into three major groups Empiricism, Rationalism and Authoritarianism

i) Empiricism :

Empiricism is the view which accepts that perception is the only source of knowledge. A strong Empiricist accepts only sense experience as the only source of knowledge. Empiricists deny the existence of God, soul, rebirth, hell and heaven. Charvakas are the empiricists.

ii) Rationalism :

Those who hold that we are entitled to believe in what is not directly perceived but which can be inferred from what is perceived are rationalists. Rationalism is the view which accepts inferences as the primary source of knowledge e.g. from the perception of smoke we are entitled to infer the existence of fire though we do not see fire on the ground that wherever there is smoke there is fire. The Nyaya – Vaisheshika, The Samkhya-yoga and Buddhism are rationalist schools. They accept perception and inference as the valid source of knowledge.

iii) Authoritarianism :-

Authoritarianism is the view which accepts verbal testimony as the source of knowledge. According to some schools of Indian philosophy perception and inference may not be adequate to explain the transcendent realities, it can be known only through supra-sensuous experience of the mystics, prophets, saints, etc. Scriptures are the records of such experience or revelations. Authoritarianism also accepts other pramanas. Purva Mimamsa, Vedanta and Jainism belong to Authoritarianism.

Check your progress

1. Explain the meaning of philosophy
2. Explain the various branches of philosophy
3. Explain the classification of Indian philosophical systems.

1.3 INTRODUCTION TO VEDAS

The Vedas are the oldest authority on Indian philosophy. Most of the philosophical systems in India can be traced to Vedas. Vedic seers expressed their divine experiences in the Vedic hymns. It contains the knowledge which is realized and experienced by Vedic seers. Vedas are considered as a *pauruseya* as it is believed that the ultimate Being had manifested Himself in the form of the Vedic hymns. Vedic knowledge had been preserved through the unbroken tradition of the teacher and pupil from times immemorial. The knowledge was passed orally from one generation to another generation.

The word Veda is derived from the word 'vid' which means knowledge. Vedas are considered as one of the oldest records of human knowledge. Vedas give us a lot of information touching various topics spiritual as well as mundane.

There are four Vedas viz. Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda. From these four some consider Rigveda to be the chief Veda. Rigveda is the collection of songs. The Samaveda is a purely liturgical collection, in this hymns are arranged for being sung at sacrifices. The Yajurveda also serves a liturgical purpose, it was made to meet the demands of ceremonial religion. Yajurveda is in prose form as well as the hymns are in verses, Samaveda consists of hymns which are to be used at the time of sacrifice. They are to be used while singing during the sacrifice.

Atharva veda is considered to be of a later origin. It is considered as a historical collection of an independent content. In the words of Dr.S. Radhakrishnan. "A different spirit pervades this veda which is the production of later era of thought. It shows the result of the compromising spirit adopted by the Vedic Aryans in view of the new gods & goblins worshipped by the original peoples of the country whom they were slowly subduing" (Indian philosophy vol.1 page 65)

Each Veda comprises three parts Mantra, Brahmana and Upanishads. The collection of mantras or the hymns is also called Samhita. The Brahmanas are about the *karmakanda* i.e the religious duties to be performed by a person. It discusses about the rituals to be performed by the householder. The Upanishads and Aranyakas are the concluding portions of the Vedas. They mainly contain the philosophical thought. Aranyakas according to Radhakrishnan form the transition link between the ritual of the Brahmanas and the philosophy of the Upanishads. When a person went to forest in his old age he resorts to various meditations, the knowledge of this meditation is given in Aranyakas. At this stage performances of rituals are replaced by meditations, "while the

hymns are the creation of the poets, the Brahmanas are the work of the priests and the Upanishads the meditation of philosophers.” For studying the Indian thought the study of hymns of Rigveda is essential as they are considered as the source of later practices and philosophies. They are the first efforts of human mind to understand the nature and solve the mystery of the world.

The vedic thought developed slowly and gradually, Maxmuller divides Samhita mantra period into two called the chandas and manfra period. In the former period the hymns were composed. It contains offering made to the gods in the form of prayers. No traces of sacrifice was found during this period. In the second period the systematic grouping is found, the hymns were arranged systematically during this period. During this period sacrificial ideas slowly developed.

Vedic literature is a vast literature. The ideas developed in this was a long period. There is no one view regarding the period of vedic hymns. According to some Indian scholars vedic hymns, can be traced to 3000 B.c others assign it to 6000 B.c. The late Mr. Tilak assigns the Vedic hymns to 4500 B.c the Brahmanas 2500 B.c the early Upanishads 1600 B.C.

The Rig-Veda samhita or collection consists of 1,017 hymns or suktas, covering total of about 10,600 stanzas

1.4 TEACHING OF THE VEDAS

1.4.1 Vedic religion:

Most of the hymns of the Rig-Veda are prayers offered to god. The gods of the older veda are personification of the mighty forces and phenomena of Nature such as the sun, the Moon, the Dawn, the Fire, the Thunders etc. like the natural powers these gods are also co-related with one another.

1) Polytheism:

Polytheism is the belief in the existence of multiple deities each worthy of worship. Some thinkers claim that Vedas are polytheistic, because Vedas mentions the large number of gods, But according to some Vedas are purely monotheistic In polytheism the gods have separate individual existence but the vedic gods do not have separate individual existence. But like the natural powers they are correlated with one another. For the vedic seers when the particular power of nature impressed them, they refered to it as god.

2) Henotheism :-

Henotheism is a belief in several god, each in turn standing out as the highest. The Vedic seers while offering prayers to the particular god considers that god having most powers. "This god alone is present to the mind of the suppliant," with him for the time being is associated everything that can be said of a divine being. However there is no offence of depreciation of any other god. In Vedas we find there is a transition from polytheism to henotheism and from henotheism to monotheism.

3) Monotheism :

Monotheism is belief in a singular God in contrast to polytheism, the belief in several deities. Vedas mention about one god. Atharvaveda 13/4/20 mentions "Verily He is one single, indivisible, supreme reality" "He is the sole sovereign of the universe – Rig-veda 6/36/4

Polytheism, henotheism and monotheism are three different stages in the evolutionary history of the vedic gods"

4) Monism :

The vedic philosophy does not stop at monotheism but it culminates into monism In Vedas. There is a progress from the worship of the forces of nature which are outwardly to the one principle which is inwardly. There is a progress from external to internal. Following hymns exhibits the monism "The true essence of the gods is only one" rigveda 3.55., "All that was that is and that will be but the purusha" rigveda 10.90 Vedic seers who were offering prayers to the gods were fully aware of the supreme Being who is the inner soul of these deities. From the philosophical stand point the various names such as Indra, Agni, Vishwadeva etc. denote ultimately supreme being (paramatman).

1.5 SOME OF THE IMPORTANT GODS FROM VEDAS

Most of the hymns of Vedas eulogise the gods. These gods are the master of the moving spirits of the different powers of nature. Man had direct communion with Gods without any meditation. Gods were looked upon as friends of their worshippers. Some of the gods were considered as important.

Varuna :-

Varuna is god to whom man and nature, this world and other all belong. Moral and spiritual attributes such as justice beneficence, righteousness and even pity were ascribed to him.

Varuna is the god of the sky. The name is derived from the root var to "cover" or "compass" He cover the whole starry expanse of heaven "as with a robe with all the creatures there of and their dwellings. Mitra is his constant companion. Varuna and mitra when used together express night and day, darkness and light later on varuna was considered as the most moral god of the Vedas. He watches over the world, punishes the evildoers and forgives the sins of those who worships him and request him for his pardon. All the men as well as other gods prays varuna for guiding them on a moral path. He upholds the physical and the moral order. Other gods obey his orders. In almost all the hymns to the varuna the worshipper is praying for the forgiveness of sins. Varuna and mitra are called the Adityas, or the sons of Aditi along with Aryaman & Bhaga.

Surya :-

Ten hymns are addressed to surya. Surya removes the darkness and gives light, the activities are performed after the sun arises. In Vedas he is considered as a spy all observing R.V. vii 60 talks about surya as "surya is rising to pace both worlds, looking down on men, protector all that travel or stay beholding right and wrong among them, sometimes savitri is identified with sun sometimes distinguished from the sun, savitri represents not only the bright sun of the golden day but also the invisible sun of night. The gayatri hymn is addressed to surya in the form of savitri let us meditate on that adorable splendor of savitr; may be enlighten our minds. Surya is the form of visnu who supports all the worlds.

Agni :-

Agni is second in importance It is being addressed in atleast 200 hymns. The Agni is described as possessing a tawny beard, sharp jaws and burning teeth, wood or ghee is his food. He shines like the sun removing the darkness. In Rigveda 11.6 there is a prayer offered to Agni "O Agni accept this log which I offer to thee blaze up brightly and send up the sacred smoke touch the topmost heavens with thy mane and mix with the beams of the sun" Fire is dwelling not only on earth in the fire place or alfar but it is also dwelling in the sky and the atmosphere as the sun and the dawn and as lightening in the clouds. Agni became supreme god, stretching out heaven and earth. He becomes the mediator between gods and men, the helper of all. He was prayed for brining other gods to their offerings

Indra :-

Indra is the most popular god of the Vedas. Indra is the god of the atmospheric phenomena of the blue sky. Gradually Indra

becomes the divine spirit the ruler of all the world & all the creatures who sees & hears everything and inspires men with their best thoughts & impulses. Indra was considered as one of the strongest & brave god who won various battles, he helped men to conquer, he acquired the highest divine attributes.

Besides the above gods the goddesses mentioned in Rigveda are Usas Aditi, river sindhu and saraswati later became the goddess of learning vak is the goddess of speech.

We find in Rigveda that as there is advancement in the thought i.e. from the material to the spiritual, similarly there is also the transition from physical to personal and from personal to abstract deities. In Vedas from polytheism there is a transition to henotheism and from henotheism to monotheism and monotheism culminates in monism.

1.6 CONCEPTION OF THE UNIVERSE (VEDIC COSMOLOGY)

The Vedas contain different views about the origin of the universe. The origin of the universe is traced to Agni or fire. After that earth, heaven, day, night, water and medicines come into existence. Several gods like varuna, Indra Agni Vishwakarman were looked upon as the authors of the universe, just like how the carpenter builds the house out of wood like that gods created the world & here the Brahman is the tree & the wood out of which heaven and earth are made. Now does the god create the world out of pre-existent matter or without pre-existent matter and in Vedas we find both these explanations In x 121 (R.v) we have an account of the creation of the world by omnipotent God out of pre-existent matter. There is also a mention that God himself created the world matter out of his own will. Nasadiya hymn of veda represents the most advanced theory of creation. First of all there was no existent or non-existent. The absolute reality is at the back of the whole world and it is not possible for us to characterise it. This Reality alone existent in the beginning, other than that there was nothing Nasadya sukta states “who then knows who has declared it here from whence was born this creation? The gods come later than this creation who then knows whence it arose? He from whom this creation arose, whether he made it or did not make it the highest seer in the highest heaven he forsooth knows, or does even he not know?”

The purusha hymn of the yajur veda mentions about one omnipresent power as the originator of the universe. One who realizes this omnipresent for him all the chains of miseries are broken.

In the hymns of the Rgveda the world is considered as the evolution of God. The supreme reality becomes the active purusha “purusa is all this world what has been and shall be” from this purusa the virat was born He is the absolute as well as the self-conscious – I

1.7 THE THEORY OF RTA

Rta means the course of things, It is the principle of the order in the Universe It is the law which pervades the whole world which all gods and men must obey Rta is the principle underlying the cosmic order. The vedic seers have observed that there is systematic movement of the sun, the moon, the stars, the succession of day and night, cycle of seasons. There is systematic order observed in the growth of plants, animals etc. This might have aroused the idea of Rta in the minds of vedic seers Universe is changeable but Rta is unchangeable and eternal. Originally Rta denote the fixed course & order of the universe but afterwards its connotation was taken to signify the ethical course of gods and men. Rta furnishes us with a standard of morality. The world follows the course of Rta. It is the satya or the truth of things. Disorder or An-Rta is falsehood, the opposite of truth, One must follow the path of Rta “ The good are those who follow the path of Rta, the true and the ordered “ The good man of the Vedas does not alter his ways Varuna is considered as the perfect example of the follower of Rta The whole universe depends on Rta and moves with it. Varuna is also considered as the supreme moral authority. He keep an eye on the activities of human beings. To mitra varuna the sun reports the deeds of men the gods are observing the deeds of living creatures tike a herdsman These gods keep vigilance on the activities of human beings. Varuna is considered as guardian Of Rta. In Regveda we found Indra Requesting varuna for leading him to the right path. Rta acts at two levels, it acts cosmic lever as one organizing principle of the universe/cosmos and it also acts at worldly level. So there are two aspects of order which is present in the outside world due to which all the forces of nature are held in their respective position & the same order is also present in the society in the form of moral order/laws.

1.8 SUMMARY

Philosophy helps a person to understand oneself and the world in which one is living. Philosophy deals with the fundamental problems of life. It is an attempt to understand not only the world in which one is living but also the one’s relation to others and to the world. In India the beginning of philosophy can be traced to Rgvedic Period. In india traditionally for philosophy there are three words viz. Darshana, paravidya and Anvikshiki were used. The

various schools of philosophy were emerged in India. They are classified mainly into two groups viz. Astika or orthodox and Nastika or Heterodox. They are also classified as empiricism, rationalism and authoritarianism.

Vedas are considered as the oldest authority on Indian philosophy. Vedas are considered as Apaurusheya vedic knowledge has been preserved through the oral traditions There are four Vedas viz. Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda and Atharvaveda. Each veda comprises three parts-mantras Brahmanas and Upanishads Vedas are the first efforts of human mind to understand the nature and solve the mystery of the world. The vedic thought developed slowly and gradually.

Most of the hymns of Rigveda are the prayers offered to God. Various natural forces are considered as the gods. In Vedas we find there is gradual progress of thought from polytheism to henotheism and from henotheism to monotheism, vedic philosophy does not stop at monotheism but it culminates in monism.

1.9 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. State and explain the nature of Indian philosophy.
2. Discuss the classification of Indian philosophical schools.
3. State and explain the development of vedic thought.
4. Describe the vedic religion.
5. Write a short note on 'gods from vedas'
6. Discuss the vedic cosmology.
7. Critically evaluate the vedic religion.

Upanishadic Philosophy and Introduction to Six Darshanas

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Introduction to Upanishads
- 2.3 Basic Teachings of Upanishads/Philosophy of Upanishads
 - 2.3.1 Atman in Upanishads
 - 2.3.2 Brahman in Upanishads
 - 2.3.3 Nature of the World
- 2.4 Introduction to Six Darshanas
- 2.5 General Features of Indian Philosophy
- 2.6 Summary
- 2.7 Unit End Questions

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the Meaning and the subject matter of Upanishads
- To know the various Upanishads
- To understand the Teachings and philosophy of Upanishads
- To be aware about the various branches of Indian Philosophy
- To know the General features of Indian Philosophy

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Upanishads contain the supreme wisdom which influenced many thinkers since ages. Klaus G Witz writes about the Upanishads in 'Supreme Wisdom of Upanishads' that they "form the backbone of a large portion of Hindu Tradition, and give it a profound unity and great spiritual height." They are considered as the foundations of the later philosophies and religion, because of its richness and diverse thoughts, various thinkers have developed different and diversified theories on the basis of Upanishads. Dr. R. D. Ranade, writes in A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic

Philosophy, page 1 “ the Upanishads are capable of giving us a view of reality which would satisfy the scientific, the philosophic, as well as the religious aspirations of man; because they give us view which may be seen to be supported by a direct, first-hand, intuitive, mystical experience, which no science can impeach, which all philosophy may point to as the ultimate goal of its endeavour, and which may be seen at once to be imminent truth in the various forms of religion which only quarrel because they cannot converge.”

The unique feature of Upanishadic thought is that it is universal; it is applicable to all time at all places. It deals with fundamental truths of life. It has influenced many thinkers all over the world. According to Klaus G Witz, “The Upanishads have a fundamentalness and universality which was already recognized in the 19th century by A Schopenhauer, C.H.F. Krause, and P Deussen. These men accepted the Upanishads as highest Erkenntnis and Truth, and as an attainment of Western philosophy’s highest aims.”

In this chapter we are going to learn about the Upanishads, the branches of Indian Philosophy and also about the general features of Indian philosophy.

2.2 INTRODUCTION TO UPANISHADS

Upanishads are also called as Vedanta, as they are considered as the concluding portion of Vedas. Upanishads are in continuation of Vedic thought but it is not merely continuation but enlarging and transforming the hidden thought mentioned in vedic verses. Upanishads are regarded as secret doctrines; however it does not mean that it is meant for only few privileged sections of society. This knowledge is open for all those who are capable and fit to receive it and who are the true seekers of knowledge.

The word Upanishad is derived from upa + ni + sad, meaning ‘to sit near’, so etymologically, it means knowledge received “by sitting close to” Guru by a disciple. Those students who are qualified to receive the higher knowledge of Reality, who are dispassionate - free from desires, are keen and have one pointed determination, to only such students the knowledge of Higher Reality or Spiritual Truth is imparted. One of the important features of Upanishads is search for the truth.

With regard to number of Upanishads, there is difference of opinion. Generally, it is accepted that there are one hundred and eight Upanishads. From these some are considered as major or Principal Upanishads. Again, in connection with these, there are two different views. According to one view, there are thirteen Principal Upanishads. They are – Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna,

Mundaka, Mandukya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Chandogya, Brihadaranyaka, Svetasvatara, Kausitaki and Maitreyi. Whereas, according to another view, there are only 11 Principal Upanishads and last two are not included in this list. Shankaracharya wrote his famous commentary on the first eleven Upanishads only.

2.3 BASIC TEACHINGS OF UPANISHADS/PHILOSOPHY OF UPANISHADS

2.3.1 Atman in Upanishads:

Upanishads emphasize on knowing the Atman or Brahman. The Atman or 'the self' is the reality or being which is prevalent, it is all pervasive but without any form, individual self is the Atman only. According to Klaus G Witz, "All the Upanishadic teachings converge to the fact that the individual self is not different from Atman, and the latter is not different from Brahman." The Ultimate Reality, to whom Upanishadic seers calls as Sat, is also the self in man. Various illustrations are given to explain the identity of individual soul (Thou) with the Self/Ultimate Reality (That). Individual souls have emerged from the Existence/Universal spirit and they merge into it only but neither have they realized from where they have come nor where they will go. Just like bees are collecting the juices of various trees and make the honey, but this juice do not have the distinct idea that I am juice of this tree or that tree. When the individual souls are merged into the Ultimate Reality they do not have the distinct knowledge of their identity that I am so and so, As the rivers after merging into ocean do not realize that I am this sea or that sea, As in both the examples of juice and river, they lose their individuality and merged in the honey or sea. Similarly individual souls also lose their individuality and are also merged with Universal Self. Upanishads looks upon the individual soul which is psychical principle as identical to the cosmic principle i.e. Universal Self or Brahman, they recognized our Atman as Brahman. This identity is beautifully explained in Mundaka Upanishad. In the third chapter there is famous metaphor of the two birds sitting upon the self-same tree, one eating and other only witnessing. Two birds cling to the self same tree. One of them eats the sweet berry but with the troubles overwhelmed he grieves at his own helplessness but when he sees the other bird shining in its own glory, he delights in it, his troubles pass away. Here the two bird represents the individual self who is living in this world and has not realized his true nature, and the other is the Universal Self.

Upanishads consider four stages of jiva each stage is discriminated and represented different conception of Atman. These stages are explained beautifully in the Mandukya Upanishad, self is represented by AUM, A stands for Vaisvanara, U

indicates Taijasa, and M stands for Prajna. The Upanishad concludes with the emphasis laid on Aum- explaining the nature of self. “The mantram Aum stands for the supreme state of Turiya, without parts, beyond birth and death, symbol of everlasting joy. Those who know AUM as the Self becomes the Self; truly they become the self. The four stages are as follows—

1. Jagruta or Waking Stage—In the waking stage the jiva enjoys the external objects. He is called as Vaishwanara.
2. Swapna or dreaming stage—in this stage jiva comes in contact with the subtle internal objects and enjoys them through mind. Jiva is called as Taijasa
3. Susupti or sleeping stage—Jiva is called as prajna which is one, uniform, conscious and bliss and does not perceive internal or external objects.
4. Turiya or the fourth stage-- in this stage jiva is neither conscious nor unconscious, jiva is Atman one nondual consciousness. This fourth state is the self which should be known, In the Chandogya Upanishad vi.ii.3 and 4 fire, water and earth are said to constitute the jivatman or the individual soul together with the principle of infinite. The finite soul is the Atman coupled with the senses and the mind. The doctrine of pancakosa of Taittiriya Upanishad explains the different aspects of self. According to this doctrine there are five selves (atma or purush) which exists in one self. The person who is taking the spiritual path should be able to discriminate these selves that is why it is called as pancakosa vivek. In the words of Klaus G. Witz, “The spiritual path consists of discriminating these selves and fostering their unfolding in one’s spiritual life and ultimately going beyond them and merging in Brahman. The first self is oneself as a physical person, and then each succeeding self lies within, and animates, the preceding one.” This Pancakosa represents Human Personality. The five kosas viz Annamaya, Pranamaya, Manomaya, Vijnanamaya, Anandmaya or these five sheaths represent goals of human life. They are not completely separate from each other but belong to the same self. Annamaya kosa is sheath made up of food. The importance of food is explained in Taittiriya Upanishad by stating that “All living creatures of the world are born of food; live by food, and at the end they go back to become food. Pranamaya kosa is within the physical sheath it is full of vital energies. Manomayakosha is within the vital sheath, vijnanamayakosha is within the mental sheath, this is the consciousness sheath it is about the intellect and its activities. Ananandmaya sheath is within the consciousness sheath. It is full of bliss and without distinction of subject.

In the seventh chapter of Chandogya Upanishad there is a discourse between Narada and Sanatkumar. Narada wants knowledge of self which will take him beyond sorrow, Sanatkumar starts his teaching from the meditation on names and then higher than names, he says meditate on mind, and then taking to more higher and higher levels ultimately talks about the Self which is infinite and this infinite is joy. He proclaims "The self is all this" (VII. 25.2) It gives description about self, "This is the self which has no sin, no decrepitude, no death, no sorrow, no hunger, no thirst, has unailing desires, unailing will."(VIII.1.5)

In Chandogya Upanishad there is story of Prajapati, Indra and Virochana. Both Indra and Virochana went to Prajapati, stayed there for thirty two years. They wanted to know about the self. Virochana understood self as body, however Indra was not satisfied with this knowledge , so again he went to Prajapati- stayed for hundred and one year and ultimately got the self- knowledge.

2.3.2 Brahman :The Ultimate Reality:

Upanishads emphasize the identity between Atman and Brahman. One who knows Atman knows everything, because all this is Brahman and Atman is also Brahman. Upanishads states that Sarvakhaluidam Brahma, Ayamatmabrahma etc.

The concept of Brahman can be traced to Rigveda. Upanishads explain this concept in more detail, in the words of S.Radhakrishnan, "The Upanishads undertake a task of a more logical definition of the Eternal Spirit ever acting and ever resting." Brahman is considered as the cause and source of all the world, it is that principle from which the world is originated. Brahman is the essence of the universe and the Ultimate Reality. It is that from which everything flows and into which everything returns.(Taittiriya Upanishad chap. iii). Etymologically the word Brahman is derived from Bruha which means growth or increasing. Brahman is infinite, does not have any limits. In the Taittiriya Upanishad the son Bhrugu went to his father, Varuna and requested him to teach him the nature of Reality the father gave general features and asked him to discover it by himself. He says, "That from which these things are born, that in which when born they live, and that into which they enter at their death, that is Brahman." One has to do penance to understand the nature of Brahman. First the son considers matter as the ultimate Reality, then he realized that prana is the ultimate reality but after a while he is dissatisfied with it then he believed manas as Brahman but later he realized that this is not sufficient, so he considered Vijnana or intelligence as Brahman but then he realized that there must be something higher than mere intellect, where existence is no longer formulated in terms of knowledge. Reality is different from thought where there is no distinction. So

finally he realized that Ananda or delight is the highest reality where there is no distinction of knower, the known and the knowledge. There is nothing higher than Ananda. "This Ananda is active enjoyment or unimpeded exercise of capacity. It is not sinking into nothingness, but the perfection of being." Strictly speaking we can not give any account of the highest reality Ananda. Anandvalli of Taittiriya Upanishad contains Mimamsa of ananda, where gradation of higher and higher stages of bliss is given, here 'a young man – in prime of life, good, learned, most strongly built and most energetic and rich' is taken as one unit of human joy, comparing it to other grades it reaches ultimately to Brahman.

In Katha Upanishad ii.6.1 Brahman is described as, " There is that ancient tree whose roots grow upward and whose branches go downward. That is the bright, Brahman, the immortal, all worlds are contained in it and no one goes beyond it."

Brahman is existence. It is the subtle essence and substratum of all the things in the universe. The power of nature is only parts of Brahman. Taittiriya Upanishad describes Brahman as satyamjnanamananatam Brahman, i.e. Brahman is the Truth, Consciousness and Infinite. The Brahman is infinite. It is transcendent as well as immanent. "According to Brahadaranyaka Upanishad, the three types of knowledge of the Vedas came out of the second foot, the third foot includes the three vital breaths, while the fourth shines in the form of the sun beyond the earth. The living beings and the universe are born out of Brahman." Brahman, the cosmic self is the cause of the universe. In Shvetashvatar Upanishad Brahman is compared to the wheel, in which everything rests and lives. When individual self (Jiva) thinks that he and the Cosmic Self is different then he continues to travel round the cosmic wheel, i.e. he takes several births, whereas knower of Brahman is liberated from birth, maya's hold also ceases for him. The word maya appears in the 10th verse of first chapter of the Shvetashvatar Upanishad.

In Chandogya Upanishad, Aruni gives the most important teaching of identity between self- Atman and reality i.e. Brahman. The mahavakya "Tat -tvam- asi" appears again and again in this Upanishad. The Katha Upanishad states that the Reality is neither approachable by speech, nor by the mind. Brahman is beyond the senses, but the senses like eye, ear are able to perform their function due to Brahman. The second section of the Katha Upanishad deals with knowledge of Brahman and states the paradox. If one thinks one knows Brahman well, then one knows little. Upanishad says, "It is known by him who thinks he knows not, he who thinks he knows does not know. It is unknown to those who know and known to those who do not know." Kena Upanishad 3.3. This verse may appear contradictory, but it is not, what it intends to

say is that the person who has conviction that Brahman is known to him, certainly do not know Brahman. Brahman is only the seer, witness, ultimate source of everything. Brahman is the witness of every state of consciousness.

2.3.3 Nature of the world:

One of the important problems of philosophy is how the world came into existence? What is the root cause of the world? In what the world is going to be merged? Different philosophers try to explain it differently. Earlier Greek philosophers attempted to explain the main substance or root cause of the world as water, ether, air etc. Upanishadic thinkers like Aruni believes that from the ultimate reality that is Existence all the things have emerged. He believes that being cannot arise from non-being. He said, "By what logic can existence verily come out of non-existence? But surely, in the beginning all this was Existence, One only, without a second." Chandogya Upanishad VI.2.2 (With commentary of Shankaracharya,) Translated by Swami Gambhirananda.

It is the sole and the whole explanation of the world. It is material and efficient cause. Everything in the universe is the ultimate Reality itself. This Existence, Sat alone was there in the beginning, before creation of world, then this one Existence visualized to become many, to be born. So it created fire, from fire water is created, from water food is created. From the subtlest part of food, water and fire, the mind, vital force and organ of speech are emerged. (Ch. Up. VI.5.4) To explain how from Imperishable Being the universe comes out the following analogies are used in the Mundaka Upanishad. i) Spider -web, ii) earth herbs and plants iii) hair grown on a head and on body. Just as the spider creates the web and then takes it back inside it, similarly the Brahman creates the world and then takes it back inside Him. Before creation nothing was existing so He did not create the world from something external to him. The world was in Brahman in the unmanifested form. He manifested it. He created the names and forms and the objects. The world originates in Brahman, is sustained through Him and culminates in Him. Water, earth, air, fire and ether etc. the pranās, the organs and mind, all originate from Brahman. The rivers, oceans, plants, human beings, gods, animals, birds the four Vedas and Karmas, etc. all have their origin in Brahman. All the objects of the world are the modification of the Reality, i.e., Brahman.

Mundaka Upanishad talks that everything is Brahman, he is everywhere. This entire world is Brahman. Everything in the world is in essence the ultimate reality itself. Brahman is the sole and whole explanation of the world, its material and efficient cause. There is the tadatmya or oneness between the Brahman and the

world. The ultimate ground of being, Brahman and the empirical state of being, the world are not different. The world of plurality can be reduced without residuum into the everlasting one Brahman.

Check Your Progress

1. Explain the meaning of Upanishads.
2. State and explain the concept of Atman in Upanishads.
3. Why Upanishads are called as Vedanta?
4. Explain main teachings of Upanishads?

2.4 INTRODUCTION TO SIX DARSHANAS

The word Darshana is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Dris' means to see, so etymologically darshana means that the instrumentality through which something is to be seen. It is seeing or realizing the ultimate reality. This function of seeing can be performed both by external as well as internal eyes. The term Darshana also refers to the study of the ultimate reality. Almost all the systems of Indian philosophy have used it to signify the realization of Ultimate Being. Dr. Radhakrishnan says, "Philosophically 'Darshana' is putting the intuition to proof and propagating it logically. Even in other systems it applies to the logical exposition of the truth that could be had in conceptual terms with or without the aid of any vivifying intuition."

In Indian philosophy Vedas occupy the prominent place. Almost all the systems of Indian philosophy can be traced to Vedas. On the basis of the acceptance of authority of Vedas, Indian philosophical systems have been divided into two classes viz. Astika and Nastika. These two terms refer to believer and non believer in the testimony of Vedas. Thus Astika are those systems of Indian Philosophy which accepted the authority of Vedas. This class includes six systems of Indian Philosophy which are collectively known as Sad Darshan. These are Nyaya, Vaiseshika, Samkya, Yoga, Mimamsa and Vedanta. The Nastika schools are the Charvakas, the Jaina and Buddha system. In this chapter we are going to study the Sad Darshan.

1. Nyaya Darshan

The Nyaya system of thought is one of the Vedic systems of Indian philosophy. It was founded by Gautam (2nd Century BC) or Akspada, who wrote the Nyaya Sutras. Nyaya is also known as Aksapada system and Nyaya-Vidya. Gautam is also well known as the founder of the ancient Indian logic. So Nyaya is also called Tarka-Sastra (the science of reasoning) and Anviksiki (the science of critical study). The Sanskrit term 'Nyaya' is commonly understood as meaning 'argumentation' or 'reasoning'. It shows that the Nyaya system followed a predominantly intellectualistic and analytical method in its philosophical investigations. It is also known as Hetu-vidya or the science of causes or reasons. Vatsyayana (4th century AD) has written a commentary on the Nyaya-Sutras of Gautama. There are also various commentaries written by other Nyaya philosophers.

The Nyaya system is divided into two schools: 1) Prachin – Nyaya (ancient school) 2) Navya-Nyaya(modern schhol) Gangesh of 10th century AD is the founder of the modern school. He wrote Tattvacintamani.

Nyaya system gives emphasis on Praman Mimansa. Pramana are the sources of knowledge. They accept following four Pramanas- 1) Perception (pratyaksha pramana. 2) Inference (Anumana Pramana) 3) Verbal Testimony or Authority (Sabda Pramana) and 4) Comparison (Upamaan Pramana). The Nyaya system is realistic. According to it, objects of knowledge exist independently of the knower, knowledge or mind, while ideas and feelings dependent upon the mind. Like light, knowledge is the manifestation of object; it reveals objects by removing darkness.

Knowledge is broadly divided into presentative cognition (anubhav) and representative cognition (smriti). Valid presentative knowledge is prama. If it is invalid, it is called Aprama. Doubts and errors are forms. of invalid knowledge. Valid knowledge is definite and enerring (Yanthartha) and non reproductive experience of an object. Knowledge is true is its corresponds to facts ; otherwise it is false, but the test of truth is successful practical activity. True knowledge leads to successful and fruitful activity (pravritti Samarthyaa, while knowledge ends in practical failure (Pravritti Visamvada).

Perception (pratyaksha Pramanna):

It is immediate cognition. It is produced by sense-object contact. It is true and definite cognition of objects. So it is defined as a definite cognition produced by sense-object contact and is true or unerring. If one sees a table, this is a contact of one's senses with the table and one is sure that the object is a table. It is

characterized by directness or immediately. This is true of direct cognition of the feelings of pleasure and pain.

Perception is differently classified. It may be ordinary (laukika) or extraordinary (alaukika). In the former, there is sense-object contact. In the latter, there is no sense-object. Secondly, perception may be external (bahya) or internal (manasa). Thus there are six types of ordinary perception: visual, auditory, tactual, gustatory (taste), olfactory (smell) and the mental (manasa).

Inference (Anumana Pramana):

The Sanskrit term Anumana consists of two words, viz. 'Anu' means infer and 'Mana' means Pramana or knowledge. So it is knowledge or a means of knowledge which follows some other knowledge. Perception precedes inference. Inference is defined as a process of knowing something not by perception, but through the instrumentality or medium of a mark (linga) that is invariably related to it. There are two types of inference. 1) Inference for oneself (Swartha-Anumana) and 2) inference for others (Parartha-Anumana).

Verbal Testimony (Sabda Pramana):

It is testimony of a trustworthy person (Aptavacana), i.e. one who knows the truth and communicates it correctly. The communicator or the speaker must be both competent and honest. According to Nyaya, the Vedas are the valid source of suprasensible or extra-empirical knowledge because their author is the all-knowing God.

Comparison (Upamana Pramana):

Its scope is narrow but practically it is useful. It is generally about the connection between a name and a thing or being signified by that name. One has not yet seen a gavaya (wild cow). One is told that it is an animal like a cow with which one is acquainted. One then goes to the jungle and sees the gavaya and knows that it looks like a cow but is not a cow. Therefore, it must be a gavaya.

2. Vaisheshika Darshan

Kanad is the founder of Vaisheshika philosophy. The term Vaisheshika is derived from the term visesa which means particularity or distinguishing feature. The Vaisheshika philosophy is pluralistic realism which emphasizes that diversity is the soul of the universe. According to it, the entire universe is reduced to seven padarthas.

The seven Padarthas- Padartha literally means 'the meaning of a word word' or 'the object signified by word'. All objects of knowledge or all reals come under padartha. Padartha means an object which can be thought and named. Originally the vaishesika believed in the six categories and the seventh, that of abhava or negation, was added later on. All that is real comes under the object of knowledge and is called a padartha. The seven padarthas are : (1) substance (dravya), (2) quality(guna), (3) action(karma), (4) generality (samanya), (5) particularity(vishesa), (6)inherence(samavaya), and non-being(abhava).

The Nine Substance-SUBSTANCE or dravya is defined as the substratum where actions and and qualities inhere and which is the coexistent material cause of the composite things produced from it. The vaishesika philosophy is pluralistic and realistic but not materialistic since it admits spiritual substance. The nine substances are : (1) earth (prithvi), (2) water (Ap), (3) fire(tejas), (4) air(vayu),(5) ether(akasha), (6) time(kala), (7) space(dik), (8) spirit (atman) and (9) mind or the internal organ (manas). All of them are objective realities. Earth, water, fire, air and manas are atomic and eternal. The first four produce composite things; manas does not. Earth, water, fire, air and ether are the four gross elements. These and manas are physical. Soul is spiritual: time and space are objective and not subjective forms of experience. Ether, space, time and soul are all –pervading and eternal. Atoms, minds and souls are infinite in number. Ether, space and time are one each.

3. Samkhya Darshan:

Samkhya is undoubtedly one of the oldest systems of Indian philosophy. Kapila is the founder of the system. The word 'Samkhya' is derived from the word 'samkhya' which means right knowledge as well as number. The system is predominantly intellectual and theoretical. Right knowledge is the knowledge of the separation of the purusa from the prakrti. Yoga, as the counterpart of the Samkhya, means action or practice and tells us how the theoretical metaphysical teachings of samkhya might be realized in actual practice. Thus Samkhya Yoga forms one complete system, the former being the theoretical while the latter being the practical aspect of the same teaching.

Samkhya is dualistic realism. It is dualistic because of its doctrine of two ultimate realities: Prkrti(matter), and Purusa(self, spirit). Samkhya is realism. In that it holds that both matter and spirit are equally real. With regard to the self, Samkhya is pluralistic because of its teaching that purusa is not one but many.

Prakrti:

We experience the world of a manifold of objects. According to Samkhya, prakrti is the ultimate(first) cause of all objects, including our body senses, mind and intellect. It is both-the material and the efficient cause of the physical world. Being the ultimate cause,prakrti itself is uncaused, eternal and all pervading; and being the subtlest and finest, Prakrti cannot be perceived, but can only be inferred from its effects.

Prakrti is the non-self and is devoid of consciousness and hence can only manifest itself as the various objects of experience of the purusa, the self. According to the Samkhya, prakrti is constituted of three gunas, namely, sattva, rajas and tamas. The term guna ordinarily quality or nature. But in the context of prakrti, guna is to be understood in the sense of constitute. Sattva is the component whose essence is purity, fineness, subtlety, lightness, brightness and pleasure. It is sattva which is most closely associated with ego, consciousness, mind, and intelligence.

4. Yoga Darshan:

Yoga philosophy emphasizes on the means to achieve liberation. Almost all the Indian philosophers from Yajnavalkya to Aurobindo considered Yoga as indispensable method to attain liberation. There are many similarities in Sankhya and Yoga Darshan. Both of them maintained that liberation can be attained by knowledge. But for the attainment of this knowledge one requires the suppression of bodily and mental modifications and gradual control over body, senses, mind, intellect and ego. Sankhya's metaphysical thought are accepted to Yoga. Like Samkhya Yoga accepts dualism of Purusha and prakriti. Yoga accepts all the three sources of valid knowledge accepted by Samkhya. It also accepts all the twenty five elements of Samkhya philosophy and added one more element viz. God. Yoga is the practical path for the realization of the self. Yoga philosophy is systematically explained in Patanjali's Yoga Sutra. According to Yoga Sutra there is no modification in the Self, but there are modification in Chitta Vrittis. However after attainment of knowledge these modification of Chitta Vrittis ceases. The control of these modification is very essential. In the words of Patanjali, " Yoga is the cessation of the modifications of chitta." The chitta must be controlled and concentrated. For this Yoga philosophy has prescribed the following eight fold path called as ashtanga marg. This eight fold path is as follows;

1. Yama- Yama is the control of the body, mind and speech. They are five viz. a)Ahimsa,b)Satya,c)Asteya,d)Brahmacharya,e) Aparigraha.

2. Niyama- niyama is following the rules of good conduct. It includes external and internal cleanliness. They are also five viz. a)Sauc-Cleanliness, b)Santos-Contentment, c) Tapa-penance, d) Swadhyay-study of religious scriptures, e)Ishwar Pranidhan-Remembering and Surrendering to God.
3. Asana-yoga prescribes various types o postures, they help in the concentration of mind and removing the bodily sufferings.
4. Pranayam-Pranayam is control of breath. By pranayam the aspirant controls the inhaling and exhaling of breath which helps in the concentration of chitta.
5. Pratyahar- The introversion of the different sense organs by restraining them from their object is known as Pratyahara.
6. Dharana-It is the concentration of Chitta on some object. This object may be external or internal. It is the beginning of Samadhi.
7. Dhyana-when the knowledge of an object of concentration is continued in a process it is known as dhyana.
8. Samadhi-the most important stage in yoga is Samadhi. All the above stages are preparatory for Samadhi. In this stage there is no separate cognition of the subject or the process of concentration.

5. Mimamsa Darshan:

Purva Mimamsa is popularly known as Mimamsa. The term Mimamsa means inquiry or investigation. There are two Vedic philosophical systems which are known as Purva Mimamsa or Mimamsa and Uttar-Mimamsa or Vedanta. The former is also known as Karma-Mimamsa or Dharma-Mimamsa and the latter as Jnana-Mimamsa or Brahma Mimamsa. Sage Jaimini is the founder of Mimassa system. Jaimini wrote Mimamsa Sutras. Shubarswami wrote a commentary on the Sutras. According to them, holy Vedas are impersonal texts. They are neither written by god nor by any human author. They are infallible authority in regard to obligatory duties. The special features of Mimasa philosophy are that it does not accept god as the revealer or even as the creator of universe. It claims author of Vedas or even as the creator of universe. It claims that the impersonal self existent intrinsically valid, authorless. Vedas are the only authority or verbal testimony in regard to religious duties, rites and ceremonial rituals. Mimamsa philosophy emphasizes on validity of knowledge. According to Kumarila Bhatta, “ valid knowledge is that which provides the experience of an unknown object, that which is not contradicted by other

knowledge and that which is free from other defects. There are two divisions of knowledge perceptual and non perceptual. Non perceptual valid knowledge has five sources- inference, comparison, testimony, postulation and non perception.

In Mimamsa Vedas occupy special place. The Vedas are eternal, impersonal and reservoirs of knowledge. One who follows the eternal principles of Vedas may reach to the Summun bonum of religion. According to Mimamsa religion means the fulfillment of duties prescribed by Vedas. The first mimamsa sutra says athatodharmajignyasa. One must perform duties as suggested by Vedas. Good life means living according to the Vedas. In mimamsa school ritualism was given lot of importance. One should selflessly act upon duties prescribed by Vedas. Mimamsaka accepts three purushartha i.e. objectives of life viz. Dharma, Artha and Kama.

6. Vedanta Darshan:

Uttar Mimamsa is popularly known as Vedanta Darshan. Badrayan is considered as the proponent of Vedanta darshan. Mimamsaka emphasizes on religion, obligation where as Vedanta emphasizes on knowledge. Vedanta literally means the end of Vedas. Vedanta is originally the name given to Upanishad because they are the end of Vedic literature and also because they impart ultimate form of Vedic knowledge. The word Upanishad is derived from the root 'sad' which means i) to sit down ii) to destroy iii) to loosen. 'upa' means nearby and 'ni' disciple near his teacher in a devoted manner to receive the instruction about the highest reality. Vedanta darshan is mainly based on Upanishad for interpreting and analyzing the statement of Upanishads Vedanta Sutra or Bramha Sutra have been given Upanishad, Bramha Sutra and Bhagvat Gita are called as prasthan trayi . various Acharyas have written commentaries on these prasthan trayi. Distinct Vedanta philosophical systems have been emerged in due course advocated by different Acharyas. Some of them are as follows;

1. Shankaracharya'a Kevala Advaita
2. Ramanujacharyas Visistadvait
3. Madhvacharya's Dvaitavad
4. Vallabhacharya's Shuddhadvaitavad
5. Nimbakacharya's Dvaitadvaitavad.

Although in the above systems there are some differences but yet there are some similarities. All of them accept Moksha as the Summun bonum or the highest purushartha. Moksha is considered as eternal. All of them accept the authority of Vedas.

2.5 GENERAL FEATURES OF THE DARSHANAS

The systems of Indian Philosophy are systematic speculations on the nature of the reality in harmony with the teachings of Upanishads which contains various aspects of the truth they aim at the knowledge of reality with a view to transforming and spiritualizing the human life. Philosophy in India began in wonder. Philosophy is the realization of the eternal truth in back ground of time and culture. The philosophical systems of various countries have been influenced by their own culture. In various system of Indian philosophy we find there is a diversity of thought but in the diversity some unity is also observed. Following are the some of the features of Indian philosophy.

1. Spiritual Orientation:

Generally Indian philosophy is termed as Spiritual. According to Radhakrishnan it is the spiritual nature of India which enable it to resist the ravages of time and the accidents of history. "The spiritual motive dominates life in India." Almost all the systems of Indian philosophy aim at realization of soul. Knowing the nature of self is considered as one of the important goal.

2. Liberation: the Ultimate end:

The idea of liberation is common to many systems of Indian philosophy except few like Charvaka. Liberation is called by different names like Moksha, Nirvana, Kaivalya etc. Almost all the systems of Indian Philosophy consider Moksha as one of the important objective/ purushartha of life. It is believed that liberation enables a man to free himself from the shackles of ignorance and freedom from the bondage of worldly miseries.

3. Respect for the past:

almost all the systems of Indian philosophy have faith in Vedas, the Gita and the Upanishads. Many philosophical systems regard scripture as testimony. Faith in scripture is not a kind of blind faith. Dr. R.N. Sharma said, "Even philosophers like Shankara, who regard themselves no more than commentators, favour the use of logic when faced with contradictions in Scriptures." According to Radhakrishnan, " This respect for the past has produced a regular continuity in Indian thought.."

4. Interrelation in various systems of Indian philosophy:

Various systems of Indian philosophy adopted the method of khandan and Mandan. They used to present the philosophical thought of their opponent in purvapaksha attempt to criticize it logically then while maintaining their position formulated new forms of reasoning this is how the progress of philosophical thought process takes place. Logical reasoning plays an important role in the free and full development of Indian thought.

5. Synthetic Approach:

in Indian philosophers the synthetic approach is observed. They approach the problem with an open mind and an unprejudiced mind from the beginning the Indian thinkers believed that truth was many sided, and different views contained different aspects of truth which no one could fully express. There is a balanced approach emphasizing individual freedom as well as social welfare. “ The Indian philosophical systems had as their aim , not only individual salvation but also the spiritual transformation of society.” Dr, R.N.Sharma.

6. The law of Karma:

All schools of Indian philosophy except Charvaka believe in the law of karma. There is no escape from the consequences of one’s action. The fruits of action must be reaped in this life or in future life.

2.6 SUMMARY

The meaning of the word ‘philosophy’ is ‘love of learning’. It signifies a natural and necessary urge in human beings to know themselves and the world in which they live. Upanishads are the great treasure of the knowledge of self. Many of the Indian philosophical systems are inspired by Upanishadic thought. Traditionally Indian philosophy is called as Dashan which means vision and also the instrument of vision. It stands for the direct and immediate intuitive vision of Reality.

The main objective of Upanishadic teaching is to know the self. It seeks identity between and ultimately culminates in Brahman.

There are mainly nine systems of Indian Philosophy, the six astika systems of Indian philosophy are regarded as Sad Darsana.

2.7 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- Q1. State and explain the Upanishadic philosophy in detail.
- Q2. Explain the meaning of Upanishads and also discuss the concept of Atman.
- Q3. How Upanishad explain the identity between Atman and Brahman.
- Q4. Give a brief information of Sad Darsana.
- Q5. Write a note on the nature of world.
- Q6. Describe the general features of Indian philosophy.

PHILOSOPHY OF BHAGAVAD GITA

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2. Nature /dimension of self
- 3.3 Philosophy of non- attachment
- 3.4 Unit end questions

3.0 OBJECTIVES

- To be acquainted with the rich philosophical tradition of Bhagavad Gita.
- To understand the nature and dimensions of self.
- To be aware of the philosophy of non – attachment or Karma yoga.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the Bhagavad Gita we are presented with the dialogue that took place between Krishna (the Avatar of Vishnu), who is also the charioteer of a prince named Arjuna. The Gita is set in the brink of a war that's about to break out between Arjuna and various relatives and friends. Among the combatants on both sides, Arjuna found brothers, uncles, teachers, sons, nephews, and friends- to whom he was bound by a thousand ties of love, respect, and affection.

Clearly foreseeing that the destruction accompanying the war would be followed by family disintegration and social chaos, he was reluctant to accept the responsibility, and said to Krishna that he would like to retire from the battlefield, go into a forest, and lead the life of a religious mendicant. Confused, he asked Krishna to show him the path of duty.

Krishna then begins sharing his divine knowledge with Arjuna, and tells him three paths that lead to 'salvation'. This salvation is in the form of the realization of Brahman, or the

realization of the ultimate impersonal divine essence of the universe.

3.2 NATURE/ DIMENSION OF SELF (ATMAN)

The first argument used by Krishna to persuade Arjuna to fight was that the self was immortal. He explains to Arjuna the imperishable nature of the Atman, for which there is no past, present and future. The Atman never dies, therefore Arjuna should not grieve. It is the body that could be injured or killed, and that therefore Arjuna need not feel troubles because he was going to kill his kinsmen in the battle of Kurukshetra. The Atman transcends the five elements, namely, earth, water, fire, air and ether, it cannot be cut, burnt or dried. It is unchanging and eternal.

Upon the death of one body the self only transmigrated to another, in which it was reborn, just as a man changed his old clothes for new ones. The body is always changing, and even in youth, middle age and old age, does not remain the same. The change at death is also a change of the body at different stages of life. There is no escape from this continually revolving cycle of birth and death.

Throughout the discourse in the Gita, Krishna makes it clear that Arjuna is merely killing a body that houses a soul (Atman), and that he cannot hurt the soul inside the body. Krishna tells Arjuna to *“be intent on action, not on the fruits of actions; avoid attraction to the fruits and attachment to inaction”*. He teaches Arjuna to act without worrying on gain or loss, and to act without attachment. He teaches that *“a man of inner strength whose senses experience objects without attraction and hatred, in self control, finds serenity”*. Arjuna can gain ‘salvation’ through acting without expectations or worries, and that this leads to a purified mind and the serenity of Moksha. By acting without the distraction of sense pleasures, gain, and expectation, Krishna tells Arjuna that *“one finds the pure calm of infinity”*, and this infinity is the ultimate truth of Brahman; which leads to salvation.

Everyone experiences conditions like pleasure and pain, heat and cold, due to contact of objects with the senses. The senses carry the sensations through the nerves to the mind. One should be able to withdraw the senses from objects, like the tortoise which withdraws all its limbs within. Krishna asserts that only one who has the capacity to be balanced in pleasure and pain alike is fit for immortality. This leads us to the next argument, i.e. of Karma Yoga.

3.3 PHILOSOPHY OF NON - ATTACHMENT / KARMA YOGA = SELFLESS ACTIVISM

Work when performed as a spiritual discipline is called Karma Yoga. It is the predominant topic of the Bhagavad Gita.

Arjuna's dilemma to fight against his kinsmen was caused by his confusion about the two ideals, which, from time out of mind, have moulded the Hindu pattern of life. These are the disciplines of **action and renunciation.**

Both disciplines are necessary to preserve the social stability; but their spheres must not be confused. Arjuna obviously was not ready for renunciation because he was conscious of his duty to society and was still attached to his relatives and friends, whose death he anticipated with sorrow. He talked about renunciation only as an escape from the unpleasant duties of life.

Krishna characterised this attitude as 'lowness of spirit, unbecoming a noble mind, dishonourable, and detrimental to the attainment of heaven, which every warrior covets.' He advised Arjuna to plunge into action and fight in a spirit of non-attachment:

'He who sees non-action in action, and action in non-action, he is wise among men, he is yogi, and he is the doer of all actions.'

'He who is free from the notion of egotism, and whose understanding is undefiled- though he slays these men, he really slays them not nor is he stained by the result of slaying.'

This non-attachment is the secret of work as a spiritual discipline.

There is a difference between mere karma or action from karma yoga, or action as a spiritual discipline. Karma is what is done, a deed. Activity is seen everywhere, both in physical nature and in man. The body cannot be kept alive if one remains inactive. The preservation of the social order, too, demands constant and vigilant action. Even religious disciplines, such as prayer, worship, and meditation, are forms of activity. Though actionlessness may characterize a certain form of spiritual experience, it cannot be attained without previous practice of the discipline of action.

When work is done without any desire for personal gain it becomes spiritual action. Such work is utterly different from the mechanical action seen in the inorganic world.

Ordinary karma has a binding quality. It creates and leaves behind subtle impressions, which at a future time and under

favourable conditions become the causes of new actions. The new actions likewise create another set of impressions, which in their turn become the causes of yet other actions. So man works impelled by necessity; he has no freedom. Now the question arises as to how one can avoid the bondage of the causal law and work as a free agent. The solution lies in karma yoga. Karma yoga is the secret of action. **It gives the worker evenness of mind in gain and loss, success and failure.**

How is one to acquire evenness of mind? There are two elements in all voluntary actions. First, there is the immediate feeling of pleasure or pain arising from the contact of the senses with their objects; and second, the longing for the result which generally provides the incentive for action. The sensations of pleasure and pain, though inevitable, are impermanent; therefore calm souls endure them without becoming distracted. Even when sensations are pleasant one should not be attached to them, because after they disappear one misses them, and if they persist too long one feels bored. As regards the result, it should not be the incentive for action. The illumined person does not work for a result.

'To the work alone,' the Bhagavad Gita says, 'you have the right, never to its fruit. Do not let the fruit of action be your motive; and do not be attached to non-action.'

'If an action is done without attachment to its fruit, evenness of mind is sure to follow.'

It is **not renunciation of action** itself, but **renunciation of the longing for the fruit**, that is the secret of karma yoga. As long as a man remains conscious of his social obligations or sees wrong being done to others, he cannot remain inactive. It is true that at an advanced stage of spiritual progress one gives up all actions and remains absorbed in contemplation, thereby enjoying real peace. But mere abstention from action is not spiritual non-action, which is experienced when one forgets oneself in the contemplation of God.

From the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 3, verse 6.

"He who, restraining the organs of action, sits thinking of the sense objects in mind, he of deluded understanding is called a hypocrite."

Hinduism recommends total renunciation of the world for the attainment of the highest good. What is needed is not renunciation **of** action, but renunciation **in** action. The ordinary duties of life should not be abhorred, but selfishness must be suppressed.

The eighteenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita explains various factors of karma-yoga, such as knowledge, the doer, understanding, firmness, and happiness. The doer's knowledge, without which he cannot perform any voluntary action, should be characterized by an all-embracing sense of unity in the midst of diversity. Likewise, the doer himself should be free from attachment and egotism, endowed with fortitude and zeal, and unruffled by success or failure. Right understanding is that by which he can discriminate between good and evil, bondage and liberation, work and rest. Right firmness is accompanied by unswerving concentration and control of the mind and senses. Right happiness may be like 'poison' at first but is like 'nectar' in the end; it is born of direct self-knowledge and acquired by steady practice.

From what has been said it will be noticed that one can practise karma yoga without believing in a conventional religion or God, or adhering to any creed. Simply through unselfish action one can gradually attain to the state of inner peace and freedom which is reached by a religious devotee through love of God or by a mystic through contemplation.

Check your Progress

1. The Atman transcends the five elements, namely,,,,, and
2. Is it possible to hurt the soul? Why?
3. What is the path prescribed by Arjuna gain salvation?
4. One should be able to withdraw the senses from objects, like the which withdraws all its limbs within.
5. When performed as a spiritual discipline is called Karma Yoga.
6. Which ideals confused Arjuna?
7. What is the difference between karma and karma yoga?
8. What is the secret of Karma Yoga?
9. Identify the few factors of Karma Yoga.

3.4 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. Comment on the Nature of Atman in detail.
2. Bring out the nature of Karma as discussed in the Bhagavad Gita.

JAINA PHILOSOPHY

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Jaina metaphysics
- 4.3 Classification of reality
- 4.4 Syadvada
- 4.5 Anekantvada
- 4.6 Summary
- 4.7 Unit end questions

4.0 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the subject matter of Jaina philosophy
- To know Jaina metaphysics.
- To understand the concept of substance in Jainism.
- To understand the Jaina theory of syadvada.
- To understand the Jaina theory of anekantavada.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The word Jainism is derived from “jina” which means conquerer-one who has conquered his passions and desires. The jainas recount the name of twenty four tirthankaras through whom their faith is believed to have come down from unknown antiquity. The first of these was Rishabhadeva the last one Vardhamana also called as Mahavira.

The philosophical outlook of Jainism is common-sense realism and pluralism. The objects perceived by us are real and many. The world consists of two kinds of reality, living and non - living. Every living being has a spirit or a soul (jiva), however imperfect its body may be. Avoidance of injury to life –Ahimsa plays an important role in jaina ethics. Not only this but Jainism also has respect for the opinion of others this attitude of Jainism is justified by their theory of anekantavad and a consequent logical theory of sadyavada that every judgment is subject to some condition and as such true in its own sense. The entire philosophy of jainas can be conveniently discussed under the three heads i.e. theory of

knowledge, metaphysics and Ethics. Let us discuss Jaina metaphysics more in detail.

4.2 THE JAINA METAPHYSICS

The jainas hold that every object has innumerable characteristics. Every object is what it is because of the positive and negative characters. That which possesses a character is called as the substance. According to Jainism there are two kinds of character found in every substance, the essential character and the accidental character. The essential character remains with the substance as long as the substance lasts. The substance would cease to be a substance without its essential character. This essential unchanging character is called as guna. The accidental characters of a substance come and go; they succeed one another. It is through such characters that a substance undergoes change and modification. Such accidental changing character is called paryaya. Thus according to Jainism a substance is defined as that which possesses both qualities (gunas) and modes (paryaya), and the world is composed of substances of different kinds. Change and permanence are both real. Substance is real (sat). Reality consists of three factors: permanence, origination and decay. In a substance there is its unchanging essence and, therefore it is permanent, there are again the origin and decay of its changing modes. Hence all the three elements that characterize reality are there in a substance.

Check Your Progress:

1. State the Philosophical outlook of Jainism.
2. Define the concept of substance according to Jain Metaphysics.

4.3 CLASSIFICATION OF REALITY

The substance is classified into extended substance and non extended substance. There is only one substance namely time (kala) which is devoid of extension. Substances possessing extension are called asastikaya, and are further subdivided into two kinds namely, the living and the non-living. The Living substances are identical with souls or sprites and are further classified into those that are emancipated and those that are not emancipated i.e.

those that are in bondage. The souls in bondage are of two kinds, those that are capable of movement and those that are immobile. The immobile living substances have the most imperfect kinds of bodies. They live in five kinds of bodies made of earth, water, fire, air and plants respectively. They have only the sense of touch, they possess only tactual consciousness. The mobile living substances have bodies of different degrees of perfection, and variously possess two to five senses like for example worms have two senses –touch and taste, ants have three senses like- touch taste and smell, bees possess four senses namely touch, taste, smell and sight. Whereas higher animals like, beasts' men and birds have five senses namely those of touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing. Non living substances possessing extension are dharma, adharma, akasha and pudgal.

Jiva - The living substances:

Jains believe that souls (Jiva) exist. They are real entities. Each has a separate existence from the body that houses it. Jiva is characterised by cetana (consciousness) and upayoga (knowledge and perception). Though the soul experiences both birth and death, it is neither really ruined nor created. Decay and origin refer respectively to the disappearing of one state of soul and appearance of another state, these being just the modes of the soul.

Ajiva - Non-Living Substances:

Pudgala - Matter - Matter is categorised as solid, liquid, gaseous, Energy fine Karmic materials and extra-fine matter or ultimate particles. Paramanu or ultimate particles are considered the basic unit of all matter. One of the qualities of Paramanu and Pudgala is that of permanence and indestructibility. It fluxes and changes its modes, but its basic qualities remain unchanged. According to Jainism, it cannot be created nor destroyed.

Dharma-tattva - Medium of Motion and Adharma-tattva - Medium of Rest:

Also known as Dharmstikya and Adharmstikya, they are singular to Jain thought, portraying the principles of motion and rest. They are believed to penetrate the whole universe. Dharma-tattva and Adharma-tattva are by themselves not motion or rest, but mediate motion and rest in other bodies. Without dharmstikya motion is not possible and without adharmstikya rest is not possible in the universe.

Akasa - Space:

Space is a substance that admits souls, matter, the principle of motion, the principle of rest, and time. It is all-pervading, infinite and made of uncounted space-points.

Kala - Time:

Time is a material entity according to Jainism and all activities, changes or alterations can be accomplished only through time. In Jainism time is compared to a wheel with twelve spokes divided into descending and ascending halves with six stages, each of massive duration, approximated at billions of sagaropama or ocean years. According to Jains, sorrow increases at each progressive descending stage and happiness and bliss grow in each progressive ascending stage.

These are the un-created existing constituents of the Universe which lend the necessary dynamics to the Universe by interacting with each other. These constituents act according to the natural laws and their nature without interference from external entities. Dharma or true religion according to Jainism is vatthu sahvo dhammo translated as "the intrinsic nature of a substance is its true religion".

Check Your Progress

1. What is Dharma-tattva of Adharmatattva?
2. Explain the concept of kala in Jainism?

4.4 SYADVADA OR THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY OF KNOWLEDGE

The jainas point out that the different kinds of mediate and immediate knowledge that we possess about objects, shows that objects have innumerable characteristics. As the imperfect being looks at the object from one particular point of view at a particular time only knowledge of one particular aspect can be known or can have only the partial knowledge. All judgments that we pass about the object therefore are necessarily relative and are limited.

The jainas are fond of quoting the story of six blind men and the elephant. The blind men put their hands /or touch the different parts of the elephant and tried to describe the whole animal from the part touched by them. The man who caught ear said that the elephant was like a country fan; the person who touched the leg said that the elephant was like a pillar; the holder of the trunk said that it is like a python; the filler of the tail said that it is like a rope; the one who touched the side said it to be like wall and the one who touched the forehead said it to be like beast and all of them started quarrelling saying that their assertion was only right/correct.

But for the man who is not blind and who can see the whole of the elephant can easily know that each blind man is mistaking the part which he touches to be the whole of the animal. Similarly all the philosophical disputes are mainly due to mistaking the partial truth for the whole truth. Our judgments can be true only from one's own stand point and is subject to certain conditions. In view of these facts the jainas insists that every judgment be qualified by some words like 'somehow' so that the limitation of the judgment and the possibility of other alternative from other point of view may be born mind.(somehow the elephant is like a pillar).Thus sadyavada is the theory of [conditioned predication](#),. The Sanskrit etymological root of the term *syād* is "perhaps" or "maybe", but in the context of *syādvāda*, it means "in some ways" or "from a perspective". As reality is complex, no single proposition can express the nature of reality fully. Thus the term "*syāt*" should be prefixed before each proposition giving it a conditional point of view and thus removing any dogmatism in the statement. Since it ensures that each statement is expressed from seven different conditional and relative viewpoints or propositions, *syādvāda* is known as *saptibhaṅgīnāya* or the theory of seven conditioned predications.

These seven propositions, also known as [saptibhaṅgī](#), are:

1. *syād-asti*—in some ways, it is,
2. *syād-nāsti*—in some ways, it is not,
3. *syād-asti-nāsti*—in some ways, it is, and it is not,
4. *syād-asti-avaktavyaḥ*—in some ways, it is, and it is indescribable,
5. *syād-nāsti-avaktavyaḥ*—in some ways, it is not, and it is indescribable,
6. *syād-asti-nāsti-avaktavyaḥ*—in some ways, it is, it is not, and it is indescribable,
7. *syād-avaktavyaḥ*—in some ways, it is indescribable.

8. Each of these seven propositions examines the complex and multifaceted nature of reality from a relative point of view of time, space, substance and mode.

Check Your Progress:

1. What is Sapta bhangi - nyaya
2. Judgments are relative? Discuss.

4.5 ANEKANTAVADA

The Jaina metaphysics is a realistic and relativistic pluralism. It is called Anekantavada or the doctrine of manysidedness of reality. Matter and spirit are regarded as separate and independent realities. According to the Jainism, sat is neither eternal nor ephemeral. It also cannot be regarded as both eternal and ephemeral in different forms. Sat is always Changeable. But it never loses its own self. So every object has more than one attribute.

The Kevali can have direct knowledge of all these different attributes of an object. But an ordinary mortal can see object only from one stand point at a time. So when we consider an object we must keep in view its different attributes. Theory of regarding reality as all sided, eternal and ephemeral, animate and inanimate etc. is termed as Anekantavada. It is also known as Parinama Niyatvavada. Syadvada is based on this theory.

According to the Jainas, an object can be viewed in three ways. The knowledge, which views the part as the whole is known as Durniti. If knowledge is regarded as it is, without judging it to be either partial or absolute, then it is termed as Naya. When the knowledge is accompanied by the consciousness that it is limited, relative and sopadhi and that it can be interpreted in different ways according to different standpoints, it is termed as Pramana or syadsat.

To denote Pramana the epithet syad must precede Naya. Syad is supposed to be the signal of truth. It is relative and it has gradual knowledge. Syad eliminated the contradiction between divergent stand points. Rejecting syad vadatanta mounts to the adoption of anta Veda which goes counter to all experiences.

According to the Jainas, Pramana cannot be nirupadhi and aikantika. Affirmation and negation both are to be found in every paramarsa. From the stand point of Dravya, the object is sat, eternal, universal and one, while from the stand point of paryaya, it is a sat, particular, ephemeral and many. The Jainas have anekantavada by the anecdote of an elephant and six blind persons. These blind persons wanted to have an idea of the shape of an elephant. Touching the different parts of the body of the elephant with their hands, they mistook the particular parts for the elephant. Thus different persons touched different parts - ears, trunk, forehead, legs, belly etc. and they formed their own conception about the shape of elephant accordingly. One of them compared it to a fan, another to a pillar. For another blind person it resembled a wall and so on. For every one of them, his own knowledge was absolute and correct, while that of others was wrong and contrary to facts. According to the above mentioned illustration all philosophical schools embody one sided truth. Similarly, all the philosophers sharpen their own theories and criticize the theories of others.

4.6 SUMMARY

The philosophical outlook of Jainism is realism and pluralism. The objects perceived by us are real and many. The world consists of two kinds of reality, living and non -living. According to Jainism a substance is defined as that which possesses both qualities (gunas) and modes (paryaya), and the world is composed of substances of different kinds. Change and permanence are both real. Substance is real (sat). Reality consists of three factors: permanence, origination and decay. In a substance there is its unchanging essence and, therefore it is permanent, there are again the origin and decay of its changing modes. Hence all the three elements that characterize reality are there in a substance. The substance is classified into extended substance and non extended substance. There is only one substance namely time (kala) which is devoid of extension .The jainas point out that the different kinds of mediate and immediate knowledge that we possess about objects, shows that objects have innumerable characteristics All judgments that we pass about the object therefore are necessarily relative and are limited. According to the Jainas, an object can be viewed in three ways. The knowledge, which views the part as the whole is known as Durniti. If knowledge is regarded as it is, without judging it to be either partial or absolute, then it is termed as Naya. When the knowledge is accompanied by the consciousness that it is limited, relative and sopadhi and that it can be interpreted in different ways according to different standpoints, it is termed as Pramana or syadsat.

4.7 UNIT END QUESTIONS

4. Bring out the classification of substance according to Jainism.
- 2 Explain the theory of sadyavada put forth by jainas.
3. Explain the metaphysics of Jainism.

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BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

Unit structure

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Three signs of Reality
- 5.3 Theory of Nonself Anatmavada.
- 5.4 Schools of Buddhism
- 5.5 Evaluation of Buddhist Philosophy
- 5.6 Unit end questions

5.0 OBJECTIVES

- To understand basic philosophical principles of Buddhism.
- To understand fundamental ethico religious teachings of Buddhism
- To appreciate the relevance of Buddhist Philosophy in the modern era.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The life of Siddhartha or Gautam Buddha. (Who is often regarded as the light of Asia) the founder of Buddhism is well known to one and all. He was born in a Royal family of kapilavastu in the sixth century B.C. Early in life disgusted by the sight of disease, old age, decay, & death, Siddharth renounced the world, and went in search of truth and peace. With great determination he practised intense meditation to search the mystry of the world's miseries. These painstaking efforts fetched him with enlightenment & Gautama was transformed into `Buddha'.The message of his enlightenment laid the foundation of both, Buddhist religion and Philosophy. Prince Siddhartha has gone, but Buddha remains. The enlightenment which dawned upon the mortal Siddhartha (about the four Noble Truths & the eight fold path reaching Nirvana transformed him into immortal Buddha) is useful even today.

Like all great teachers & seers of ancient India, even Buddha's teachings were passed on from generation to generation through dialogue & conversations. However the 3 main written sources which have reached us may be named as follows:

Tripitakas: - 3 baskets of teachings.

1] Vinaypitaka:

Which deals with rules of conduct for the congregation of Bhikkhus (sangha)

2] Suttapitaka:

Which mainly contains sermons and dialogues of Buddha.

3] Abhidhammapitaka:

It contains philosophical theories.

After passing away of the great teacher Buddha Philosophy & religion developed & spread to the eastern world. Various schools & subschools were grown. However in this section we are going to concentrate on the most basic philosophical doctrines and the fundamental schools of Buddhism. They are

- a) Three signs of reality
- b) Theory of non-self
- c) Schools of Buddhism

Clear understanding of basic luminous ideas of Buddhism will definitely help us in appreciating Buddhist Philosophy in modern context of science & Philosophy.

5.2 THREE SIGNS OF REALITY

Philosophers across the world and across the ages have occupied themselves with the riddle of 'true nature of reality'. Especially a few of them have made a serious thinking, pondering about the 'change', the dynamic nature of the world. Buddha also has described the nature of reality. This description is, needless to say, the result of deep meditations which helped him to achieve Buddhahood. The 3 most salient features of reality on the view of Buddha are.

- 1] Impermanence (Anityavada)
- 2] Suffering
- 3] Non substantialism

Ethical teachings of Gautam Buddha are based on the views about the nature of reality.

5.2.1 The doctrine of Impermanence. (Anityavada):

A fantastic Philosophy of **dynamism** was given by Buddha, 2500 years ago. Time and again Philosophers and poets have talked about change, but Buddha has developed a logical theory of change. He reduces substances, souls monads, things, to forces, movements sequences, processes, and adopts a dynamic conception of reality. Life and the world is believed to be a stream of becoming.

Thus all things change. Buddha gives the example of fire to indicate the continuous flux of becoming called the world.

To quote Buddha:

“Worlds on worlds are rolling over from creation to decay, like the bubbles on the rivers, sparkling, bursting borne away.”

It is interesting to note that the ancient Greek Philosopher Heraclitus has also used the example of fire to indicate the ever changing nature of the world.

“This world is an eternally living fire.” says Heraclitus.

The transitory nature of the Reality can be explained further as follows:

All things mental & physical are transitory. Impermanence is the inexorable unavoidable law of all existence. There are 5 inevitable things about the world they are

- What is subject to old age must grow old.
- What is subject to sickness must be sick.
- What is subject to death must die.
- What is subject to decay must decay.
- What is liable to pass away must pass away.

These things can never be overruled by any worldly or non-worldly agency like God.

There is neither being nor non-being but becoming. Everything is becoming change or flux. It is a phenomenon enduring for a moment & then passing away. It is produced by proceeding phenomena and produces succeeding phenomena. e.g. A tree as a phenomenon (existence) is produced by a seed & various other conditions like damp soil, water, sunlight etc.

Thus all existing things are a sum-total of impermanent qualities. They are devoid of permanence substantiality. The world of becoming is governed by the Law of causality. (**Pratityasamutpada vada**)

It is without beginning or end. Same law applies to inner reality of individuals. All individuals are series of momentary states of consciousness. Thus, all existences are essence less and impermanent. This is the universal law. This Anityavada is further developed into ksaniakavada by followers of Buddha.

To conclude, we may say, impermanence, transiency, becoming are the most important signs of reality on the view of Buddha.

Check your progress.

- 1) Who was Gautama Buddha?
- 2) What are the main literary sources of Buddha's Philosophy?
- 3) State the theory of impermanence or Anityavada.

5.2.2 Suffering:

Many Philosophical and religious teachings in the world have been stimulated by transient nature of the world and suffering in human life. So is the case in Buddha's Philosophy. However Buddha has not stopped at the dark description of misery & suffering, (an inevitable condition of human life) but he also shows the path to transgress this condition as well as to reach the stage of Nirvana where there is complete extinction of pain or suffering.

The essence of Buddha's enlightenment encompassed in the 4 noble truths, which is a complete philosophical system by itself. Thus to know about the fact of suffering we need to study the 4 noble truths.

4 noble truths:

The whole of teachings of the Buddha is summed up in 4 noble truths.

- a) There is a suffering

- b) There is a cause of suffering
- c) Suffering can be stopped
- d) There is a specific way to stop the suffering.

5.2.2 a) Suffering:

Siddhartha was overwhelmed with grief and sorrow at the sudden sight of disease, old age & death. He was deeply influenced by misery & tyranny in the world. He renounced the world in order to search the remedy for this suffering. During his deep contemplations he discovered the cause, and remedy on suffering. Not only this but he also discovered a state of being which can be totally untouched by suffering and grief. Thus he found the way to peace on earth and precisely preached it to the world.

As such in Buddha's Philosophy the first noble truth is suffering. Buddha points out 'Birth is attained with pain; decay, disease & death are painful.' Separation from pleasant and unsatisfied cravings lead to pain& suffering. The cause and limiting conditions of individuality are painful. To quote a line from Dhammapada.

"Not in the sky, nor in the depths of the ocean, nor having entered the caves of the mountain, may such a place is not to be found in the world where a man might dwell without being overpowered by death."

The whole world is on fire; where is the scope for merry-making. Thus whatever results from attachment ultimately lead to sorrow and suffering. Therefore the wise do no lament knowing the nature of the world. Mere lamenting doesn't solve this problem. When the house is on fire it must be extinguished by water. Going into the details of the cause of fire isn't going to stop the fire.

This practical spirit of Buddha precisely has led to the anti-metaphysical approach. He believes the urgent issue for mankind is the 'attainment of peace' not discussion of indeterminable question like.

Is the world eternal? Is the soul same as the body? This practical consideration takes Buddha towards the 2nd noble truth, namely understanding the cause of the suffering.

5.2.2 b) The second noble truth about the cause of suffering: The chain of twelve links.

The concept of Dvadas Nidana or Bhava cakra (Twelve Sources or the wheel of rebirth) while finding out the cause of suffering Buddha has given a psychological analysis and metaphysical speculation which together unravel the mystery of the suffering. This analysis explains the chain of birth & rebirth, producing the condition of sorrow again & again. So it is often called as Bhava cakra or dvadas Nidana since it consists of 12 chains.

Moreover, we need to note at this juncture that, this psychological & metaphysical analysis is essentially based on Buddha's special conception of natural causation. (Known as Pratityasamutpada) According to it nothing is unconditional; the existence of everything depends on some conditions. As every existence depends upon some conditions so suffering (as an existence) depends upon some conditions, which may be described as follows in a nutshell.

1] Ignorance	} अविद्या संस्कार	past life
2] Impressions		
3] Consciousness of embryo	} विज्ञान नामरूप पदायांतन स्पर्श वेदना तृष्णा	present life.
4] Mind body of embryo		
5] 6 organs of knowledge		
6] Sense contact		
7] Sense experience		
8] Thirst		
9] Clinging	} उपादान भाव जाति जरामरण	future life.
10] Tendency to be born		
11] Rebirth		
12] Old age disease death		

- 1] **Suffering: (Dukha)** which is often described as jaramarana is due to birth. If we were not born, we wouldn't have faced jaramaran misery along with it.
- 2] **Birth:(Jati)** Birth has its condition. It is the 'will to become' the force of the blind tendency to be born. If the will to become didn't exist we wouldn't have been born.

- 3] **Will to become: (Bhav)** what is the cause of this blind tendency? Our mental clinging or grasping (Upadana) the objects of the world is the condition responsible for our desire to be born.
- 4] **Mental clinging: (Upadan)** Clinging towards the worldly objects arises due to our thirst.(trsna). It is nothing but craving to enjoy objects, sights, sounds etc.
- 5] **Craving: (Trsna)** We wouldn't have any desire for objects, had we not tasted or experienced them before. Previous sense experience with some pleasant feelings (vedana) is the cause of thirst or craving.
- 6] **Sense experience: - (Vedana)** Sense experience couldn't arise without contact or sparsa.
- 7] **Sense object contact: (Sparsa)** This contact again wouldn't arise had there not been the six organs of cognition. The five external senses & one internal i.e Manas. (Mind)
- 8] **Six sense organs:** These six organs are obviously result of the mind body organism, which is Nama- rupa, the perceptible being of man.
- 9] **The embryonic organism: -** This perceptible being couldn't develop in the mother's womb & come into existence; if it were dead or devoid of consciousness Vijnana.
- 10] **Some initial consciousness: -** Embryonic existence is only the effect of the past impressions. i.e. samskara, of our past experience.
- 11] **Impressions of our past life: -** The last state of the past life, which initiates our present existence, contains in a concentrated manner the impressions or effects of all our past deeds. The impressions which make for rebirth are due to ignorance. (Avidya) about truth.
- 12] **Ignorance:** If the transitory painful nature of the worldly existence were perfectly realized, there would not arise in us any karma resulting in rebirth. Ignorance, therefore, is the root cause to impressions or tendencies that cause rebirth.

To conclude we may point out that overcoming ignorance is the key to break the Bhava Cakra. Which will give us relief from suffering.

Buddha explains the existence with the concept of bhava or 'will to live'. It is internal tendency or pre - disposition to be, leading to birth or existence of material body. Thus Buddha explains creation or existence or evolution in terms of non-materialistic inner tendency. The modern Bergson's Philosophy of evolution resembles to Buddha's concept of "will to be" to a very great extent. Bergson's contention, that the living body isn't caused simply by collection of pieces of matter but it is the outward manifestation or explosion of an internal urge, seems to be recognised ages ago in Buddha's Philosophy.

This is how, Buddha's 2nd noble truth gives in depth analysis of the fact of human condition namely – suffering.

5.2.2 C) Nirvana:

The third noble truth about the cessation of suffering.

The third noble truth i.e. total stopping of suffering follows from the 2nd noble truth that says misery depends upon some conditions. If these conditions are removed misery would cease to exist. Thus it is rightly described as cessation of pain.

First of all it is necessary to point out here that Buddha has given an optimistic message in this context, namely liberation from misery can be attained in this birth, if certain conditions are fulfilled.

Etymologically Nirvana निर्वाण means 'blowing out', or "cooling something.' As such, Nirvana doesn't mean stopping of physical existence but it means stopping of the blazing 'desire' in man. Buddha himself had attained Nirvana yet he physically lived for years after this.

Thus Nirvana means complete destruction of craving or will to be. Delusion of individuality, desire for mind body complex & egoism are the causes of suffering. As such destruction of egoism & will to live leads to extinction of attachment, aversion, delusion & suffering, Nirvana doesn't mean extinction of activity In fact activity done with noble motives like compassion don't lead to bondage. Only actions with selfish motives tend to bind a man & create impressions.

Nirvana is the extinction of desire, doubt, sensuous pleasures, based on the deep reflection of true nature of the world. It is grasping at nothing, possessing nothing. It is perfect calm tranquillity of mind undisturbed by desires & passions Nirvana is unmatchable & unsurpassable. Nagasena, a profound Buddhist teacher while describing to king Milind, uses various metaphors like; nirvana is profound like an ocean, lofty like a mountain peak,

sweet like honey etc. However Nagasena also says that all these can scarcely explain what nirvana is to an imperfect man.

To conclude we may say that as certain conditions produce suffering, 'like Avidya & bhav'; some other conditions like perfect control of passions & constant contemplation of truth produce perfect wisdom & nirvana.

5.2.2 d) The fourth Noble Truth about the path to liberation.

The eight fold path:

The fourth Noble Truth discusses the way towards Liberation or Nirvana. After Buddha had attained nirvana his enlightened heart filled with compassion for all those beings who were still suffering in pain. He felt that the raft which he constructed with toil & with which he got across the flood of misery, should be left for others & not allowed to perish. The eightfold path suggested by Buddha is nothing but the raft which can help one & all to get across the flood of misery & suffering. The eightfold path consists of moral conduct, concentration and insight. It consists of 8 steps so it is called as eight fold path. This gives the essence of Buddhas Ethics. This path is open to both a layman & a monk. The noble path consists in the acquisition of the following eight good things. They are as follows.

1] Right views: Samyagdrsti

Right view means knowledge of 4 noble truths. It is knowledge of these truths alone, and not any theoretical speculation regarding nature & self helps in moral reformations & enhancement.

2] Right Resolve: Samyaksankalpa

Right Resolve refers to a strong determination to reform life in the light of the truth.

3] Right Speech: Samyagvak

Right Speech has both positive & negative dimension. Negatively it means control of speech i.e. refraining from lying, frivolous talk etc. Positively it means guiding speech towards right resolves leading to right kind of action.

4] Right conduct: - Somyakkarmanta:

Right conduct includes panchshil or 5 vows, which is abstention from wrong action.

Panchshil consists of Abstening from a) killing 2) Stealing 3) sensuality 4) living 5) Intoxication.

5] Right livelihood: Samyagajiva:

Right livelihood refers to maintaining life by honest means. Which will automatically lead to personal as well as social purification.

6] Right effort: Samyagvyayama:

Right efforts or constant effort to maintain moral progress by banishing evil thoughts & entertaining good ones. This moral rule suggests that one can't progress steadily unless he maintains a constant effort to root out old evil thoughts & prevent evil thoughts arising anew, and also constantly concentrating positive ideas.

7] Right mindfulness: Samyaksmti:

Right mindfulness consists in constant remembrance of the perishable nature of things. The necessity of constant supervision is further stressed here. This is necessary for keeping the aspirant off the attachment to things & grief over their loss. It is constant mindfulness about the truth.

8] Right concentration: - Samayaksamadhi:

One who has successfully stepped upto this last step of the ladder is prescribed to attain Nirvana through 4 deeper & deeper stages of concentrations or meditation. They are

- a) **Vichar (विचार):** means concentration on reasoning & investigation regarding the truths. It results in pure joy of thinking.
- b) **Dhyan (ध्यान) :** means undisturbed mediation totally free from thinking which results in joy of tranquillity.
- c) **Detachment:** It consists in even detachment from the joy of tranquillity. However he is yet conscious of this ease & equanimity, though indifferent to the joy of concentration.
- d) **Samadhi (समाधी):** The 4th stage of concentration is detachment from bodily ease as well. There is perfect equanimity and indifference. This is the stage of nirvana or perfect wisdom.

The eightfold path given by Gautam Buddha once again takes us to an important characteristic of Indian Philosophy. In Indian Philosophy knowledge and morality are thought to be

inseparable, because perfect knowledge is impossible without morality. Thus eightfold path is about reformation of life ideas, will, and emotions in the light of truth.

Check your progress:

1. State the 4 Noble Truths propounded by Buddha.
2. Discuss in detail Dvadsa Nidana or the cause of suffering.
3. Describe fully 8 fold path leading to liberation, or Buddha ethics.
4. Explain the concept of nirvana.
5. What is suffering?

5.2.3 Nonsubstantialism:

Yet another important characteristic of the reality, on Buddha's view is the Non-substantial or non-materialistic nature of the world.

Even though, Buddha denies the existence of the permanent self & God or the creator of the world, He can hardly be regarded as a materialist. The theory of Non – substantialism is a logical continuation of the doctrine of impermanence. This theory says life is no thing or state of a thing, but a continuous movement or change. Similarly the so called substances (relatively permanent substances like a mountain, stars etc.) are in reality in continuous movement and change.

A thing or a substance is only a series of states of which the 1st is said to be the cause of the second, for they seem to be of same nature. The seeming identity from moment to moment consists in a continuity of moments. This may be called as the continuity of ever changing identity, which creates the appearance of a constant substance. However as a result of this rapid change the spectator is deceived into the belief that the universe is a permanent existence consisting of permanent substances. e.g. A glowing stick moved in a circular way creates the appearance of a complete circle.

To account for the continuity of the world in the absence of permanent substance, Buddha takes the help of the law of

causation, the principle of eternal continuity of becoming. Thus the wheel of the cosmic order goes on “without maker, without known beginning, continuously to exist by the province of the law of causality. This cosmic order is known as Pali, Niyama or the process of going on.

At this juncture, we may point out that the main difference between Upanisads and Buddha is the belief of Upanisads in the metaphysical reality of an immutable substance, which is also a true self of man. However Buddha doesn't believe in any such substance.

Moreover the doctrine of Non-self also implies that the world is non-substantial and soul less. All external things are aggregates of changing qualities. There is no permanent substance apart from the impermanent or transient qualities. The permanent identical substance is a fiction of the imagination. All forms of existence material & psychological are impermanent and soulless. They are subject to unavoidable law of becoming.

To conclude we may say that Buddha staunchly believes that the substances appear to exist but in reality the world is only a process and reality is Non- substantial in nature.

Moreover the doctrine of Non- self also implies that the world is non-substantial and **soullers**. All external things are aggregates of changing qualities. There is no permanent substance apart from the impermanent or transient qualities. The permanent identical substance is a fiction of the imagination. All forms of existence material & psychological are impermanent & soullers. They are subject to the inexorable law of becoming.

Check your progress

1. Non – Substantialism is an extension of which doctrine?
2. How Buddha explains the Non- substantial nature of reality.

5.3 THEORY OF NON SELF ANATMAVADA

In Mahandianasutta Buddha says “Look upon the world, as void, having destroyed the view of oneself as really existing, so one may overcome death; the king of death willn't see him who thus regards the world.”

According to Buddha, there is no self existing, which is said to have the so called continuity and memory. This common belief which is also strongly supported by Upanisadic-philosophy isn't in agreement with Buddha's theory of impermanence. So Buddha clearly denies the existence of such a soul.

The doctrine of Nonself implies two things. They are

- 1) The self is an aggregate of ever changing mental & bodily process.
- 2) The world is non-substantial void.

From the point of view of 1st implication, it is further noted that, Buddha doesn't deny the continuity of the stream of successive states of consciousness that compose his life. An individual's life is nothing but an unbroken series of such states. Each of this state is dependent on the earlier state of existence. Which gives rise to the appearance of a continuity. In fact their continuity of life series is explained with the doctrine of the dependent origination or conditional existence of things. (Pratityasamutpada) This continuity is often explained with the example of an oil lamp burning throughout the night. Every moment the flame is new & yet it is totally caused by the earlier flame. So there is an unbroken succession of different flames. As such, rebirth is not transmigration of the same soul into new body, but it is causation of the future life by present. This conception of soul as an unbroken stream of consciousness is also expressed in William James Philosophy. This Philosophy of nonself is also reflected in Hume's famous quotation, where he states-

“For my part when I enter most intimately into what I call myself, I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold, light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure. I never can catch myself at any time without a perception & never can observe anything but the perception.”

'Memory' is in this way explained even without the soul. However the illusion of a permanent soul causes attachment and misery.

Nature of man as an individual:

If there is no soul in man then the question arises what is exact nature of man? According to Buddha man is only a conventional name for a collection of different constituents namely.

- a) The material body. (kaya)
- b) The immaterial mind (manas or chitta)
- c) The formless consciousness (Vijana)

The existence of man depends on this collection. It dissolves when the collection breaks up. Just as a chariot breaks up when wheels, shafts etc are removed.

The doctrine of Panca – skandhas or changing elements:

Man is also regarded as a combination, of 5 kinds of changing states pancaskandhas’.

They are

- 1) **Form (rupa):** consisting of various factors which we perceive in a physical body having a specific form.
- 2) **Feelings (Vedana):** Feelings may be of pleasure pain& indifference.
- 3) **Perception (Sanjna):** refers to understanding and naming.
- 4) **Predispositions (Sanskaras):** Sanskaras are the pre dispositions or tendencies generated by the impressions of past experience.
- 5) **Consciousness (Vijnana):** It is the pure consciousness itself. The last four taken together are called as Nama. Thus an individual is an empirical being is nothing but NamaRupa.

The theory of nonself plays very important role in Buddha’s teachings. Buddha points out that people who suffer from the illusion of the self don’t know its nature clearly. Still they claim that they want the salvation for this soul. Buddha very wittily remarks in this respect that it is like falling in love with most beautiful maiden of the land who is never seen by anybody.

From the point of view of 2nd implication of the theory of Nonself, also means that the world is non substantial or soul - less. There is no permanent substance apart from impermanent qualities. Thus all forms of existence, material psychological are impermanent and soul – less.

Check your progress

1. Buddha’s theory of Non- self is reflected in which modern Philosophies?
2. What is the nature of an empirical individual according to Buddha or Explain the doctrine of pancaskandhas
3. Discuss the theory of Nonself in detail.

5.7 SUMMARY

Buddhist Philosophy is basically very practical in its approach. Buddha himself had attained Nirvana or liberation. However he wanted the entire humanity to be free from suffering and pain and attain Nirvana. He has given the cause as well as remedy in form of eight fold path for human suffering. Therefore his analysis of human condition is practical and complete.

However this practical approach and subtle 'theoretical analysis' has itself yield very rich philosophy, which has always attracted people in all the ages and in all the corners of the world.

5.8 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. Discuss fully eight fold path leading to liberation.
2. Discuss the theory of Dvaclasanidana or Bhavcakra fully.
3. Write a note on
 - 1) Theory of Anityavada
 - 2) The concept of Nirvana
 - 3) Suffering
 - 4) Non substantialism
 - 5) Theory of nonself

5.9 REFERENCE

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SCHOOLS OF BUDDHISM

Unit structure

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 The Madhyamika school of Sunya-vada of Nihilists, phenomenologists, Relativists
- 6.3 The Yogacara school of subjective idealism
- 6.4 The Sautrantika school of Representationism
- 6.5 The Vaibhasika school of Direct Realism
- 6.6 Evaluation of Buddhist Philosophy
- 6.7 Summary
- 6.8 Unit end question
- 6.9 Reference

6.0 OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the basic classification of Buddhist Schools of thought
2. To know the philosophical importance of these schools.
3. To appreciate the contribution of ancient Buddhist thought in the field of Metaphysics and Epistemology.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Gautam Buddha was basically an ethical preacher and reformer and certainly not a metaphysician. He wanted to give a full proof remedy for human suffering. Precisely due to this Buddha maintained silence when he was bombarded with metaphysical questions. However in spite of Buddha's dislike towards metaphysical speculation his teachings were full of various metaphysical insights. These insights were developed by some of his followers which have reached us in the form of rich metaphysical speculations. These speculations have given rise to about 30 different schools, of Buddhism (not counting the minor ones) some of them enter deep metaphysical thinking, without paying much attention to Buddha's warning against speculation. This somewhere underlines the basic human need for metaphysical thinking.

We are going to study 4 main schools of Buddhism. Namely

- 1] शून्यवादी, माध्यमिक : Nihilists or Relativists.
- 2] विज्ञानवादी, योगचारी : Subjective idealists.
- 3] बाह्य अनुमेयवादी : Critical Realists, Representationalists
- 4] बाह्य प्रत्यक्षवादी : Direct Realists.

The first two schools come under महायान, Whereas the last two सौत्रातिक वैभासिक, come under हिनयान.

The fourfold classification of Buddha Philosophy is based upon the criteria or two important questions.

1] Metaphysical criteria or the 1st one is a metaphysical question (about the nature and status of reality)

“Is there at all any reality, mental or non-mental?”

a) Nihilists:

According to Nihilist both mental non mental is a void माध्यमिक school holds that there is no reality mental or non-mental all is void. Therefore they are regarded as Nihilists.

b) Idealists

According to Idealists mental alone is real non mental is a void. योगचारी therefore hold that only mental is real. The material world is void of reality. Consciousness alone is real. Therefore they are regarded as (consciousness) idealists.

c) Realists सर्वास्तित्ववादी :

As per the view of Realists mental and non mental both are real. Therefore they become critical realists or Direct realists. ‘सौत्रातिक वैभासिक’ - This school of Buddhism especially holds exactly opposite view. i.e. they believe that material non-material are real. They are therefore called as Realists. (Sarvastivadins)

However this answer of Realists about the nature of reality takes us further to an epistemological question.

2] Epistemological criteria:

If mental & non-mental world is real, then the next logical question is raised namely "How this reality is known to exist? The third group of thinkers namely realists give two different answers.

- A) **सौत्रांतिक** Critical Realists - Critical realist hold that external objects are not perceived but known by inference.
- B) **वैभासिक** Direct realists are of the view that the external world is directly perceived Thus on the basis of above mentioned two criteria, (metaphysical and epistemological) Buddhist Philosophy is divided into four schools. This classification is important from the point of view of contemporary western thought which devotes great energy in the above mentioned questions.

6.2 THE MADHYAMIKA SCHOOL OF SUNYA-VADA NIHILISTS, PHENOMENALISTS, RELATIVISTS:

***The founder** – Nagarjuna, Asvaghosha.

The founder of this school is said to be Nagarjuna. (2nd century A.D) writer of Buddhacharitra Asvaghosa is also said to be the founder Madhyamika school.

***The Philosophical Argument:**

This school basically holds that mental and non – mental reality doesn't exist. It is void. Therefore they are called Sunyavadis. The argument to support this view runs as follows: - The self (the knower) and the object (the known) and knowledge are mutually interdependent. So if one is false, the others also must be so.

(Just as the fatherhood of a person is proved false if his children are proved to be false.)

When we perceive a snake in place of a rope, which later on turns out to be false, then the mind which knows it, and the knowledge also turns out to be false. Therefore nothing mental or non – mental is real. The universe is Sunya or void of reality.

***Special Connotation:**

From the above argument and the word sunya it seems that Madhyamikas believe that everything is unreal. However a deeper study of the school suggests that Sunyavad really denies only the

phenomenal world and not all reality. Sunya means the indescribable nature of reality, which is only the negative aspect of reality. A thing cannot be said to be either real or unreal, or both real, unreal or neither real & unreal. Sunyanata precisely emphasizes this indescribable nature of reality. Sunya only means the conditional character of things, their constant changeability and therefore indescribability. Therefore according to the experts शून्यवाद doesn't mean non existence, (nihilism) but it means 'theory of Relativity.'

***Special contribution:**

From the above argument and the word शून्य it seems that the world is transient and therefore it is indeterminable. This is the world of phenomena. Madhyamika scholars add here the concept of 'Noumena', (a reality in itself.). It is argued that the relativity of the world around is felt when we think about the world in an ordinary context of phenomena, but when the person arrives at Nirvanana thus what would be the nature of resultant experience? It can't be transient in the same way. The Madhymaikas therefore believe that there is a transcendental reality.

Nagarjuna therefore speaks of two truths empirical or phenomenal and transcendental or noumenal. This higher truth can only be described in negation to the experience of phenomena. This precisely explains Buddha's silence on certain issues. This is the special contribution of Madhyamik, Needless to say this Philosophy comes quite close to certain Upanishadic visions and especially Advaita Vedanta.

***Criticism:**

The Yoga cara school scholars point out that the mind (chitta) can't be regarded as unreal. Because then all thinking and reasoning would be false. Madhyamikas, hence can't use any argument even to prove their own position.

Check your progress

1. Who is the founder of माध्यमिक school ?
2. What is the special contribution of this school ?
3. Describe the nature of reality according to माध्यमिक school of Buddhism?

6.3 THE YOGACARA SCHOOL OF SUBJECTIVE IDEALISM

*The founders:

Vasubandhu, Asanga, are the pioneers of Yogacara School. They were called as yogacara. Since they practised or were experts of yoga.

*Philosophical Argument:

Yogacare scholars believe that it is suicidal to deny the reality of citta. They hold the view that the external reality isn't different from its consciousness. Therefore they are called as "**subjective Idealists.**" Thus the mind, consisting of a stream of different kinds of ideas is the only reality. The mind alone is real.

As in case of dream: even the objects perceived in the outside world are actually created by the mind, so are the external objects, because their existence can never be proved independent of mind or without the existence of conscious mind e.g. Dharmakirti says the blue colour and the consciousness of blue colour are not separate since they can never be perceived separately.

Scholars further point out that admission of any external reality leads to many difficulties.

An external thing may be atomic (**partless**) or composite. (With parts) Neither of it can be perceived completely. A composite thing is transient and ever changing, so it is impossible to perceive it. This difficulty doesn't arise, if the object be supposed to be nothing other than consciousness.

*Special connotation (Alay Vijana):

This view is labelled as idealism because it admits that there is only one kind of reality which is of the nature of consciousness, and therefore it is subjective.

However one of the chief difficulties of subjective idealism is to explain :

- 1) continuity in the existence of objects of the external world. (e.g. when I leave my room does the table exist behind me or no?)
- 2) How and why objects aren't created at the will of the subject? (or the perceiver)

Objects are regarded as transformation of the Alay vijnana, the cosmic mind, which is stirred up into the waves of mental

modes. Object cognitions are the modes of cosmic mind. Object cognitions arise from the 'Alay Vijana' or 'receptacle consciousness'. The cosmic mind transforms itself, on the one hand, into different, subjects and into different objects, on the other. Thus all perceptions are the result of fruitions of the needs or dispositions conserved in Alayjnana. One pure consciousness is the ground of all conserving mind. Thus there are no external objects. They are transformations of Alay vijinna into the forms of knowable objects. The concept of Alay Vijnana helps to answer both the difficulties, mentioned above.

***Special contribution :**

Asang, one of the main founders of subjective idealism believed in the concept of **Tathata**. Tathata is the eternal reality which exists at all times. It is eternal and unchangeable. It is the supreme reality, the essence if all beings. It is the essence of the whole universe; It is Noumenon, which is totally inseparable from the empirical world of phenomena which are the manifestations of Tathata. Asang Further maintain that phenomena cann't exist apart from their 'noumenon' or 'suchness'. It is grasped by absolute knowledge which is super normal. Thus the concepts of 'Alay Vijnana' & the concept of 'Tathata', are the special contributions of subjective idealists.

Criticism:

In order to prove the continuous existence of the external world, like all other subjective idealists (Berkley) had to take the help of 'cosmic mind'. However It is extremely difficult to prove this concept logically.

Moreover soutrantika scholars raise the objection against the basic thesis of vijnanavada.

The objection is:

- 1) If there were no external objects, it would be meaningless to say 'consciousness appears as the external object'.
- 2) Our day to day common **sensical** experience tells us that objects are felt directly as being outside the self. Therefore identifying objects with their consciousness seems to be defective.
- 3) Even our language supports our common sensical view. If a pot were perceived as identical with the self then one would say 'I am the pot and not 'there is a pot'.

Therefore it is concluded that the existence of the world can't be the subjective reality'.

These two schools belong to Mahayana head of Buddhism.

Check your progress

1. Who are the founder members of Subjective idealism?
2. Describe the philosophical argument propounded by योगाचार school to support their view?

6.4 THE SAUTRANTIKA SCHOOL OF REPRESENTATIONISM

The founders:

Yashomitra is one of the founding members of Sautrantika School. The name of 'sautrantika' is given to this school because it attaches exclusive importance to the authority of the sutra pitaka.

The philosophical Argument:

The Sautrantikas are representationists. They advocated indirect realism. Bahya anumeyavada. They recognise the reality of the external objects. But they regard them as objects of inference, on the basis of following arguments.

- 1) External objects produce their cognitions. Imprint their forms on mind. Cognitions are copies or representations of their objects, These objects are the archetypes.
- 2) Cognitions are formless and homogeneous. Different external objects produce different cognitions & impress their forms on them, which are perceived by us. This explains the diversity of cognitions.
- 3) The object cognitions appear at certain times only while subject cognitions are uniformly present.
- 4) External objects exist and produce perceptions of colours, sounds, tastes, pleasure, pain etc which are their basic condition.

Special Connotation:

According to sautrantika school perception of the extend world depends on four different conditions and not simply on the mind. These 4 conditions are

- 1) There must be an object to impart its form on consciousness.
- 2) There must be the conscious mind (or the state of the mind) to cause the consciousness of the form. (of the objects present)
- 3) There must be the fully functioning sense organs to determine the kind of consciousness of that object. (may be visual, tactual etc.)
- 4) There must be some favourable auxiliary condition, such as light, convenient position. Perceptible magnitude etc.

To give an example:

- 1) There is a blue lamp in the room.
- 2) I am looking at the lamp.
- 3) My eye sight is good.
- 4) There is enough day light and I am standing in front of the lamp. So what results from this is the knoweledge of the ' blue light.'

All these conditions combined together bring about the perception of all objects.

The effect of these conditions is the copy or idea of the object, produced in the mind. We infer the object from this idea. Thus the idea of the object in the mind is nothing but the representation of the object outside.

Contribution:

The most important contribution of Sautrantikas is the doctrine of momentariness. They have developed the doctrine of impermanence into the ontological doctrine of momentarities. **क्षणवाद** Momentariness of the world as well as momentariness of the individual self.

Criticism:

The sautrantika position in epistemology resembles to 'copy theory of ideas' which was common among western Philosophers like Locke. Critical realists have also upheld this theory.

However *Vaibhasika thinkers point out that reality is essentially directly known, its experience cannot be said to be dependent on some inference. This doesn't match with our common - sensical understanding.

Check your progress

1. Why the sautrantika school is called as Representationist school?
2. Who is the pioneer of the school?

6.5 THE VAIBHASIKA SCHOOL OF DIRECT REALISM

Founders :

The 'Abhidhamma treatises' form the general foundation of Philosophy of Realists. The commentary of Vibhasa is particularly followed so the school gets its name Vaibhasikas.

Philosophical Argument:

Like sautrantikas, vaibhasikas admit the reality of both mind & the external objects. However unlike sautrantikas they hold that external objects are directly known in perception. The Argument for believing in the direct perception (as the way to know the external reality) runs as follows:

If all external objects are inferred from their cognitions, then there are no objects of perception. This contradicts all actual experience. This doesn't match with our day to day common sense experience.

Special Connotation:

The Vaibhasikas recognize the reality of mind and matter. Mind is composed of elements. Matter is also composed of elements. There is no permanent soul. Existence is either transient or eternal. Space & Nirvana alone are eternal.

The objects we see cease to exist when they are not perceived. They have a very brief duration like a lightening flash.

The atoms are immediately separated and their aggregation is but instantaneous. In spite of this however, objects exist independently.

Contributions:

Vaibhasikas are hard core realists. They don't stop at the theory of perception. But further give the ontological analysis of perceived objects. Thus it is upheld by the vaibhasika scholars that external objects are aggregates of atoms. An atom has six sides. It is invisible, inaudible, intangible, untestable & indivisible. Atoms can't penetrate one another. The perceptible object is an aggregate of imperceptible atoms.

Criticism:

*It is pointed out by some scholars, belonging to the other schools of Buddhism that vaibhasika analysis of the world & the process is based on a naïve psychological analysis without any metaphysical insights.

These last two schools belong to Hinayana, head of Buddhism.

Conclusion:

The original teachings of Buddha and his life was variedly interpreted by later thinkers. The Buddhism as such was divided into two main streams namely 1) Hinayana 2) Mahayana.

Hinayana is a religion without God. It proceeds on the words of Buddha 'Be a light into thyself.' In other words design your own salvation.

Mahayana on the other hand takes Buddha himself as a God. The Buddha is supposed to be the divine self. His own example can show us the path of salvation.

Hinayana further believed in Sarvastivada, which later developed into

Critical Realism (सौत्रांतिक)

Direct Realism. (वैभासिक)

Mahayana further interpreted Buddha's words as well as his silence and gave birth to two schools namely

- 1) Nihilists or relativists (शून्यवादी)
- 2) Subjective idealists. (विज्ञानवादी)

Check your progress

1. Why direct Realism is regarded as a naïve or simple theory?
2. Write a note on Vaibhasika school of Buddhism.

6.6 EVALUATION OF BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

Buddhism provided a positive alternative to Brahmanism, which was extremely strong philosophical and religious thought for years together in ancient India.

Many thinkers have strongly described Buddhist Philosophy as pessimistic since it lays emphasis on 'suffering'. It is also pointed out that the urge to get relief from the misery in the empirical world, has brought about tremendous progress of mankind. e.g. Medical science. Therefore 'suffering' is not always bad.

However a close consideration of Buddha's life & Philosophy suggests that he was pointing out at a better level of existence, which would be totally without suffering. Through his own life example. He was a 'friend of humanity' and reached far beyond the personal boundaries of happiness. In fact Buddhism as a religion became so popular and successful in the world. It was based on Compassion. It gave voice to the sufferings of the poor and downtrodden.

6.7 SUMMARY

We have discussed above, very briefly four most important schools of Buddhism. They take very different standpoints about the 'nature of reality' as well as about way to 'know the reality'.

The subtle philosophical speculations of these thinkers have further led to various theories like

1. The theory of 'momentariness' by Nagarjuna or 'transcendentalism'. Needless to say it has made Buddhist Philosophy and Indian Philosophy very rich.

The positions taken by ancient Buddhist Philosophers are echoed in Modern western thought as well.

CARVAKA PHILOSOPHY

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Epistemology
- 7.3 Metaphysics
- 7.4 Ethics
- 7.5 Summary
- 7.6 Unit end questions

7.0 OBJECTIVES

- To understand Carvaka Philosophy
- To know Carvaka theory of knowledge
- To make one aware of Carvaka Metaphysics
- To understand Carvaka Ethics

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The materialistic Philosophy known as Carvaka is the oldest heterodox school of thought. Materialism is the name given to the metaphysical doctrine which holds that matter is the only reality. The word used for materialism is also lokayatamata i.e the views of common people. A materialist accordingly is also called as lokayatika or lokayata system. The word Carvaka has become synonymous With Indian materialism. According to one view “Carvaka” was the name of the sage who originally propounded materialism. Whereas for others the word Carvaka refers to the people with sweet/nice words (caru-nice,vak- words). Carvakas preach the doctrine of Eat ,Drink and be marry.

7.2 THE CARVAKA EPISTEMOLOGY

The epistemological problems such as: How does knowledge originate? What are the different sources of knowledge? are discussed in the theory of knowledge. Cârvão philosophy

stands for empiricism in its theory of knowledge. According to Carvaka Perception is the only dependable source of human knowledge. Carvakas are very critical about the other sources of knowledge. For Carvakas both reason (inference) and verbal testimony fail to give certain knowledge.

1. Inference is not certain:

Inference is an uncertain leap from the known or the observed to the unknown or the unobserved. The smoke is perceived on the hill. From this perceived smoke, we take a leap to the unperceived fire. Logicians point out that inference is based on a universal relation between Hetu (reason) and the Sadhya (fire). But it is not beyond doubt. Universal relation of invariable concomitance cannot be established conclusively. We do not have knowledge of all the cases of fire and presence of fire. We see some cases of smoke and presence of fire. How can we pass from some cases to all cases? Even causal relations cannot be established by means of perception. Validity of an inference cannot be based on some other inference, because it will involve a *Petitio principii* (arguing in circle)

Even validity of verbal testimony depends upon inference. But since inference itself is not a source of valid knowledge, how can we accept verbal testimony as a source of valid knowledge? So testimony supported by inference or reasoning is as uncertain as inference.

To prove that inference was not a reliable source of knowledge Cārvākas examined and refuted each of the various means of knowing the connection between the middle term and the predicate individually unlike syllogism in logic.

External perception, or perception which involves the use of the senses, could not be the required means because although, it is possible that the actual contact of the senses and the object could produce the knowledge of the particular object, yet there can never be such contact in the case of the past or the future. Therefore if external perception were the means on knowing the connection then inference related to objects of the past and future could not happen.

Internal perception, or perception which involves the mind could, not be the required means either, because one cannot establish that the mind has any power to act independently towards an external object and is thought to be dependent on the external senses.

Nor could inference be the means, since if inference were the proof of inference, one would also require another inference to establish this inference, and so on, leading to the fallacy of an Ad infinitum regression.

Nor could testimony be the means, since testimony can be classified as a type of inference. Moreover, there is no reason for one to believe word of another. Besides, if testimony were to be accepted as the only means of the knowledge of the invariable connection between middle term and predicate, then in the case of a man to whom the fact of the connection had not been pointed out by another person, there could be no inference.

Comparison (Upamana) could also be rejected as the means of the knowledge of the connection, since objective of using Upamana is to establish a different kind of knowledge than is being sought here, the relation of a name to something so named.

Absence of a condition (Upadhi), which is given as the definition of an invariable connection to restrict too general a middle term, could itself not be used to establish inference because it is impossible to establish that all conditions required to restrict the middle term are known without recourse to inference and inference, as has been proven earlier, cannot establish itself

Inference therefore cannot be regarded as the safe and valid source of knowledge according to Carvaka.

2. Testimony is not the safe source:

For Carvakas verbal testimony in so far as it consists of the words or shabd heard by our ears is quite valid however they denies the validity of the testimony of shabad if it is to be based on the reliability of the authority taken for granted. Therefore authority or testimony cannot be regarded as valid source of knowledge.

Since neither inference nor authority can be proved to be the valid source of knowledge, perception alone is to be regarded as valid source of knowledge.

Check Your Progress

1. Explain the term Carvaka.
2. Why inference is not a valid source of knowledge?

7.3 METAPHYSICS

Metaphysics is the theory of reality. The Carvaka theory of reality follows from their epistemology which states that perception is the only source of knowledge. If perception is the only valid source of knowledge we can rationally assert only the reality of supernatural and transcendental beings. It recognizes neither God who controls the universe nor conscience which guide man. They do not believe in the concept of the life after death. It thus draws away man's mind from the thought of higher life and establishes materialism.

According to Carvaka metaphysics:

The world is made up of only four elements:

All most all the schools of Indian Philosophy hold the view that material world is made up of five elements –earth, water, fire, air and ether, the first four are known through sensation & the last one is known through inference. Whereas the Carvaka recognizes only four elements .The Carvaka fail to recognize ether because its existence cannot be perceived, it has to be inferred.

There is no soul:

The knowledge of existence of the soul within us is the most evident, uncontroversial knowledge which is accepted by all the philosophical thinkers. Consciousness is the very essence of the soul. The Carvakas admit that the existence of Consciousness is proved by perception but they deny that consciousness is the quality of any unperceived non material substance called soul. According to them consciousness is perceived to exist in the living body composed of the material elements as such it must be the quality of the body itself. What people mean by a soul is nothing more than this conscious living body. The non material soul is never perceived.

The objection which is raised is that we do not perceive consciousness present in any of the four material elements accepted by the Carvakas how can it then be considered as the quality of the body? In reply the Carvaka point out that the qualities not present originally in any of the component factor may emerge subsequently when the factors are combined together. For example, betel leaf, lime, and nut none of which is originally red, comes to acquire reddish tinge when chewed together. In a similar way it is possible to think that material elements combined in a particular way give rise to consciousness, however there is no evidence of its existence apart from body into a non material body called soul.

If the existence of the soul apart from the body is not proved, there is no possibility of proving its immortality. The death of the body would mean the end of the individual as such all questions related to, previous life, after life and life after death becomes meaningless.

There is no God:

Existence of God is not acceptable to Carvaka as God can not be known through perception. The material elements produce the world and the supposition of God as the creator of the world is unnecessary for them. The objection that is raised is: Can the material elements by themselves give rise to this wonderful world? We see that even the production of objects like earthen jar requires an efficient cause, in addition to its material cause, in order to give the material that desired shape/form. The four elements supply only material cause. so do we not require over and above an efficient cause, like god who turns these material elements into a wonderful world? In reply the Carvaka state that the material elements have got each its fixed nature. It is by the nature and laws inherent in them that they combine together to form this world. There is thus no necessity of God. Objects of the world can be explained more reasonably as the fortuitous products of the element. As Carvaka theory tries to explain the world by its nature it is sometimes called naturalism. The Carvaka theory on the whole may also be called positivism, because it believes only in positive facts or observable phenomena.

Check Your Progress

1. What according to Carvaka, are the constituents of the world.

7.4 ETHICS

Ethics is the science of morality. It discusses the problem like: What is the highest goal of life or what is the summum bonum which a man can achieve? What should be the end of human conduct? What is the standard of moral judgement? The carvakas discuss these problems in conformity with their metaphysical theory/position.

Charvaka regard sensual pleasure as the summum bonum of life. Eat, drink and be merry. The ethics of Carvaka is crude individual hedonism. The pleasure of the senses in this life is the sole end, as once the body is reduced to ashes there is no hope of coming back again. The Charvaka metaphysics which denies the existence of the soul does not permit then to believe in the concept of rebirth.

Some Indian philosophers like mimamsaka believe that the highest goal of life is haven neither is this acceptable to Carvakas as it is based on the unproved existence of the life after death.

Many other philosophers consider liberation as the ultimate goal of human life. Liberation is conceived as the total destruction of all sufferings. Some think that liberation can be attained only after death when the soul is free from the body. Whereas others think that it can be attained even in this life. Carvakas rule out both the possibilities as they deny the existence of the soul. According to Carvakas the total cessation of suffering can take place only after death which intern means when the soul gets liberated from the bondage. Liberation free from pain is an impossible ideal.

Out of the four human values artha, dharma, kama and moksha only kama or sensual pleasure is regarded as the ultimate end and artha is regarded as the mean to realize that end. Dharma and moksha are altogether rejected. Pleasure is regarded as mixed up with pain but that is no reason why it should not be acquired. Nobody casts away the grain because it has husk or sop cooking his food because beggars ask their share.

According to the Carvakas since our existence is confined to the existence of the body we must regard the pleasure arising out of body as the only good thing and should not through away any opportunity to enjoy it. A good life is a life of maximum enjoyment. Pleasure therefore is the highest goal.

7.5 SUMMARY

The school of materialism in India is very old however it got associated with Carvaka. According to one view Carvaka was the name of the sage who propounded materialism whereas According to others it is not a proper name but a common name given to a materialist, and it signifies persons who believes in eat, drink and be merry or a person who is sweet tongued. Another synonym of carvaka is lokayata which means a commoner, or a man with low or unrefined taste. However by rejecting the popular notions of that time Carvaka seems to have saved philosophy from dogmatism.

According to Carvaka perception is the only source of valid knowledge for establishing this position they criticize the possibility of the other sources of knowledge like inference and testimony, which are regarded as valid sources of knowledge by many philosophers.

The Carvaka theory of reality follows from their theory of knowledge. Since perception is the only source of knowledge God, Soul, Life before birth, life after death, rebirth cannot be accepted.

The material world is made up of four elements as ether the fifth element cannot be perceived. As the existence of soul can be known through perception the other related concepts such as immortality of the soul, life after death, enjoyments of fruits of action in heaven and hell all become meaningless.

God whose existence cannot be perceived, fares no better than the soul. The material elements produce the world as such presupposition of the creator is unnecessary.

The ethics of pleasure which is propounded by Carvaka is condemned by some philosophers as pleasure is understood only in terms of gross sensual pleasure directed toward the satisfaction of one's own desire. But the distinction is found between cunning (dhurta) and cultured (sushikshita) Carvaka makes it clear that not all of them were for the gross and uncultured type.

7.5 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. What is the valid source of knowledge according to Charvaka?
2. Explain in detail Carvaka metaphysics.
3. Bring out the important features of Carvaka ethics.

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PRE - SOCRATIC PHILOSOPHY

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Natural Philosophers
- 8.3 The problem of change (Parmenides and Heraclitus)
- 8.4 Summary
- 8.5 Unit end questions

8.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through the unit, you will be able to know:

- The beginning of philosophy in the ancient times (Greek Philosophy)
- Natural Philosophers
- Problem of Change

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Western Philosophy begins with the speculations of the Greeks. The ancient Greek philosophical tradition broke away from a mythological approach to explaining the world, and it initiated an approach based on reason and evidence. Freed from religious bias, the Greek thinkers supported science and are called as the founders of Philosophy and science in the west. In the early Greek thought science means an independent and free enquiry into natural events, systematically and

methodically without being burdened with religious requirement. The early Greek thinkers tried to give rational explanation of natural phenomena. It is also interesting to note that these early thinkers tried to grapple with the whole reality with their limited resources. Initially concerned with explaining the entire cosmos, the Presocratic philosophers strived to identify its single underlying principle.

8.2 NATURAL PHILOSOPHERS (THALES, ANAXIMANDER AND ANAXIMENES)

The Western philosophical tradition began in ancient Greece in the 6th century BCE. The first philosophers are called “**Presocratics**” which designates that they came before Socrates. The Pre-Socratic’s were from either the eastern or western regions of the Greek world. The Pre-Socratic’s most distinguishing feature is emphasis on questions of physics; indeed, Aristotle refers to them as “Investigators of Nature”. Their scientific interests included mathematics, astronomy, and biology.

As the **first philosophers**, though, they emphasized the **rational unity of things**, and **rejected mythological explanations** of the world. Only fragments of the original writings of the Presocratics survive, in some cases merely a single sentence. The knowledge we have of them derives from accounts of early philosophers, such as Aristotle’s *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, *The Opinions of the Physicists* by Aristotle’s pupil Theophrastus, and Simplicius, a Neoplatonist who compiled existing quotes.

The first group of Presocratic philosophers were from Ionia. The **Ionian** philosophers sought the single principle of things, and the mode of their origin and disappearance.

8.2.1 Thales of Miletus (c. 624 BC – c. 546 BCE):

Thales was a pre-Socratic Greek philosopher from Miletus in Asia Minor, and one of the Seven Sages of Greece. Many, most notably Aristotle, regard him as the first philosopher in the Greek tradition.

According to Bertrand Russell, "Western philosophy begins with Thales." Thales attempted to explain natural phenomena without reference to mythology and was tremendously influential in this respect.

Almost all of the other Pre-Socratic philosophers follow him in attempting to provide an explanation of ultimate substance, change, and the existence of the world—without reference to mythology. Those philosophers were also influential, and eventually Thales' rejection of mythological explanations became an essential idea for the scientific revolution. He was also the first to define general principles and set forth hypotheses, and as a result has been dubbed the "first man of science," as he gave a naturalistic explanation of the cosmos and supported it with reasons.

Water as the First Principle:

Thales most famous philosophical position was his cosmological thesis, which comes down to use through a passage from Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. The chief aim of Thales was to account for the fundamental stuff of which the universe is made. Hence according to him the universe is fundamentally **water**, because water admits of being vaporous, liquid and solid.

When water is heated it assumes the form of vapour; when chilled it becomes solid and when it is allowed in its natural course then it is a flowing stream. Hence water succeeds in explaining all the possible states of being solid, liquid and vaporous. For this reason water can be said to be fundamental stuff of the universe. Even the earth, according to Thales, is a disc floating on water.

Aristotle the biologist conjectured that Thales chose water to be the ultimate stuff, for food is always wet and this liquid food nourishes the body, even the generating seeds are wet.

The most important thing about Thales is that he gave birth to scientific way of thinking. It is said that he predicted the eclipse which took place in 585 B.C. According to Russell Thales discovered how to calculate the distance of a ship at sea with the help of observations taken at two points and how to calculate the height of a tree or pyramid from the length of its shadow.

However, he regarded magnet as something living for it attracts things towards itself. Again Thales is said to have said that all things are full of gods. Hence Windelband holds that the

philosophy of Thales and of other Milesians to be hylozoistic (those who think matter is alive) .

The philosophy and science of Thales may appear to us to be very crude, but he laid down the foundation of scientific worldview in the sense that his speculation was wholly naturalistic. It was neither anthropomorphic nor theocentric.

The most important thing about Thales is that he gave birth to scientific way of thinking. The philosophy and science of Thales may appear to us to be very crude, but he laid down the foundation of scientific worldview in the sense that his speculation was wholly naturalistic. It was neither anthropomorphic nor theocentric.

Check your Progress

1. Who are the Presocratic philosophers?
2. What did the First Philosophers emphasise upon and rejected at?
3. The first group of Presocratic philosophers were from
4. How did Thales attempt to explain natural phenomena?
5. According to Thales, the universe is fundamentally water, because water admits of being, liquid and

8.2.2 Anaximander (611-547 BCE)

Anaximander also belonged to Miletus. He was a man of daring venture of thought. Anaximander was the first writer on philosophy. He was a cosmologist like Thales. However for him the primary substance was **'boundless something'** – a formless, infinite and eternal mass not yet parted into particular kinds of matter. In positing 'boundless mass' as the fundamental stuff of which the world is constituted, he indirectly lays down an important principle, namely, a formless general principle can account for the particulars, but not vice – versa.

For example, formless earth mass can be converted into particularised things like pitchers, bricks, tiles, etc. But the earthen pitchers cannot be directly shaped into tiles or goblets. In order to

give rise to tiles or bricks, the earthen pitcher has to be reduced again to the formless mass of earth, this distinction of formless matters and particulars will be found again the theory of Aristotle known as the doctrine of *matter* and *form*.

Anaximander appears to have stated that the world is governed by the opposites like hot and cold, wet and dry it is by the working of the opposites that the world goes on. In this context it can be said that the earth, air, water and fire cannot be the ultimate stuff of the universe, for they have opposite characters. For example, fire burns and water dampens. If any one of them be allowed to work unfetteredly then the world would become either dry or watery and the world as such would cease to be.

According to Anaximander the world has evolved in due course. At one time there was water everywhere. There were only watery creatures. By drying up of water, land appeared and creatures of the sea were left on the dry land. Those creatures from the sea which could adapt themselves to the dry land alone have survived. One can easily see the germ of the organic evolution in the speculative adventure of Anaximander. Anaximander held that the earth is cylindrical in shape and moves freely in the space is once again a foreshadow of the theory of gravitation.

Anaximander calls his infinite boundless matter 'God'. This is the first philosophical concept of God. This God, no doubt, is matter. But it is not mythological or anthropomorphic. Clearly it maintains monism. Besides, the doctrine of creation of the universe by god has been completely ignored. The 'boundless reality' is not the Creator – God.

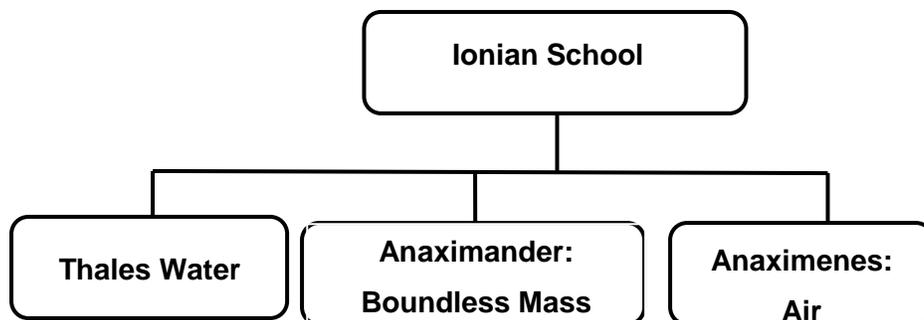
8.2.3 Anaximenes (588-524BCE) :

Like Thales and Anaximander, Anaximenes belonged to Miletus. Like Thales, Anaximenes regards 'air' as the primary stuff of the universe. Why air, and, not water? It is only a matter of conjecture. Most probably Anaximenes paid more attention to the living than to any other things. Here breath, i.e., air is the predominant thing. Therefore for Anaximenes air is the predominant thing. Therefore for Anaximenes air is the fundamental stuff of which the world is composed.

Anaximenes chose air as the first substance because of its mobility, changeability, and inner vitality. As a matter of fact air was considered to be the breath of the universe. Hence this breathing universe was considered to be a living organism for this reason Anaximenes is really a hylozoist. Hyle is the living matter.

For Anaximenes, this primary air is regulated by the opposed principles of condensation and rarefaction. Condensation simply means compression of the air in a narrow space and rarefaction means expansion of the air in the greater space. By rarefaction air assumes the form of fire, and, by successive condensation it gives rise to water, earth and stone.

Anaximenes accounts for all the important elements and states of material things through his fundamental stuff of air. Further, the world is not only vaporous, liquid and solid, but is also sound, colour rough smooth etc. How to explain this world of quality? The principles of condensation and the rarefaction admit of *quantitative* differences. Hence, here is involved the principle that quantity can explain the quality. Later on Pythagoras laid down his famous statement 'what exists, exists in number'. In the modern times no scientific explanation is considered reliable unless it is put into quantitative formulae. Hence, the thinking of Anaximenes is a step forward towards the scientific world –view.



Check your Progress

1. Anaximander was the first writer on
2. A formless general principle can account for the
3. What is the view of Anaximander with regard to earth?
4. Who gave the first philosophical concept of God.
5. For Anaximenes what is the fundamental stuff of which the world is composed?
6. Why did Anaximenes chose air?

8.3 THE PROBLEM OF CHANGE (PARMENIDES AND HERACLITUS)

8.3.1 Heraclitus:

Heraclitus of Ephesus was a contemporary of Parmenides. But their philosophies were opposed. According to Parmenides reality is one, eternal and unchangeable being. For Heraclitus, reality is change, flux, and *Becoming*.

The main teaching of Heraclitus is that everything is in constant flux. Rivers and mountains and all seemingly permanent things are in constant flux. All is flow and becoming. No one can step into the same river twice, for when a man enters into a river, then he meets one stream of water and the next moment the first stream passes away, yielding to a newer stream of water. One can easily see that no man can ever remain the same for even two moments. Man keeps on changing from moment and moment. The doctrine of flux will remind the teaching of Lord Buddha relating to momentariness.

Heraclitus: From fire all things originate, and return to it again by a never-resting process of development. All things, therefore, are in a perpetual flux.

constitutes reality. Yet, there is an abiding *order* in the ever-changing fire. All things come from fire and return to fire. There is the *downward* way and also the *upward* way. According to the downward way, through condensation fire changes into water and earth. And according to the upward way, through rarefaction, water and earth give way to fire. This order of succession produces the illusion of permanence. He also extended the teaching seeming opposites in fact are manifestations of a common substrate to good and evil itself.

8.3.2 Parmenides:

Parmenides was the founder of the School of Elea. Parmenides had a large influence on Plato, who not only named a dialogue, *Parmenides*, after him, but always spoke of him with veneration.

The single known work of Parmenides is a poem, *On Nature*, which has survived only in fragmentary form. His own philosophy has been presented in 'the way to truth'.

Xenophanes had declared 'All is one'. This was the starting point of Parmenides. How could he establish this truth? He like the rest of the people found that the world of sensible things is always *becoming*. Things come into the world and the next moment they perish. They are as much *are* as they *are not*. What can we say about this flux? Heraclitus declared that *flux alone is real*.

To Parmenides it appeared impossible. For him, real is eternal, unchangeable and indestructible. For him it appeared self – contradictory to hold that a thing which is passing away to be real. What is the point involved in saying that the real is permanent and unchangeable?

For Parmenides, One alone is real, and, manyness and changes are unreal. This distinction is a matter of intuition and at most a postulate of his philosophy. But in real life changes and plurality of things are pappable. What can we say about them? For Parmenides plurality and changes are given by the senses. At most they can be called 'mere appearances'. But what is the reason for regarding them as 'appearances'. Quite obviously they are and yet they cease to be.

If the world of senses is illusory, then how do we know the One? Of course, through thought. Hence, Parmenides makes a distinction between *the appearance and reality*, sense and thought. He gives predominance to thought.

The above interpretation of Parmenides as the identity of thought and Being is essentially the tenet of Idealism. These ideas strongly influenced the whole of Western philosophy, perhaps most notably through their effect on Plato.

Parmenides holds that reality is one, eternal and indestructible

Parmenides explains how reality (coined as "what-is") is one, change is impossible, and existence is timeless, uniform, necessary, and unchanging. He explains the world of appearances, in which one's sensory faculties lead to conceptions which are false and deceitful.

Check your Progress

1. What is reality according to Heraclitus?
2. No one can step into the same river
3. *What is the nature of reality according to Parmenides?*

8.4 SUMMARY

Early Greek thinkers were free thinkers. They tried to explain things according to natural causes like earth, water, fire and air. Thinkers like Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Heraclitus and Parmenides did not take help of supernatural Gods. Hence, Greek philosophy is called scientific in spirit.

8.5 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. Give a brief analysis of Pre Socratic Philosophy
2. Thales is regarded as the first Philosopher in the Greek tradition, Comment.
3. Explain Anaximander's cosmology in detail.
4. Why does Anaximenes regard air as the primary stuff of the universe?
5. Explain Parmenides' and Heraclitus' view of change in detail.

SOPHISTS: EPISTEMOLOGY AND ETHICS

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Sophist
- 9.3 The Sophist Epistemology
- 9.4 The Sophist theory of Morality
- 9.5 Unit End Questions

9.0 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the pre Socratic Philosophy with its emphasis on Man as the central theme
- To know about Sophists Epistemology and Ethics

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The sophists were concerned about man himself. Their questions were not related about the *object or content* of knowledge but about *knowledge* itself. The Sophists asked questions about the origin, nature and the kind of certainty which human knowledge can yield. If looked closely, we find that this kind of question is not about knowing any object but about knowing itself.

The following chapter will give us a brief idea about Sophist's Epistemology and Ethics.

9.2. SOPHIST

The practice of charging money for education and providing wisdom only to those who could pay led to the condemnations made by Socrates, through Plato in his dialogues, as well as Xenophon's *Memorabilia*.

The Greek word *sophist* (*sophistēs*) derives from the words *sophia*, and *sophos*, meaning "wisdom" or "wise" since the time of Homer and was originally used to describe expertise in a particular knowledge or craft. Gradually, however, the word also came to denote general wisdom and especially wisdom about human affairs (for example, in politics, ethics, or household management).

In ancient Greece, *sophists* were a category of philosopher-teachers who travelled around Greek cities and specialized in using the techniques of philosophy and rhetoric for the purpose of teaching *arete*—excellence, or virtue—predominantly to young statesmen and nobility. These were useful skills in Athens, where being persuasive could lead to political power and economic wealth. Although there were numerous differences among Sophist teachings, a prominent element in their philosophy was skepticism. Sophists taught their beliefs for a considerable price. Overall, Sophists identified as either agnostic or atheistic.

Sophists became popular following the development of thought and society in Athens, Greece in the fifth century B.C. They offered practical education with teachings that included speculation of the nature of the universe as well as the art of life and politics. They believed that law was an agreement between people and that justice is nonexistent. Among the Sophists, Protagoras, Gorgias, Prodicus, Hippias, Thrasymachus, Lycophron, Callicles, Antiphon, and Cratylus are the most well-known.

Most Sophists claimed to teach *arete* 'excellence' in the management of one's own affairs and especially in the administration of the affairs of the city. Up to the fifth century B.C. it was the common belief that *arete* was inborn and that aristocratic birth alone qualified a person for politics, but Protagoras taught that *arete* is the result of training and not innate. The Sophists claimed to be able to help their students better themselves through the acquisition of certain practical skills, especially rhetoric (the art of persuasion). Advancement in politics was almost entirely dependent upon rhetorical skills. The Athenian democracy with its assembly (*ekklesia*), in which any citizen could speak on domestic and foreign affairs, and the council of five hundred (*boule*), on which every Athenian citizen got a chance to serve, required an ability to speak persuasively. The Sophists filled this need for rhetorical training and by their teaching proved that education could make an individual a more effective citizen and improve his status in Athenian society.

Check your Progress

1. Who were the Sophists?

9.3 THE SOPHIST EPISTEMOLOGY

9.3.1 Protagoras:

Protagoras of Abdera (c. 490-420 B.C.E.) was the most prominent member of the sophistic movement and Plato reports he was the first to charge fees using that title.

From a philosophical perspective, Protagoras is most famous for his relativistic account of truth – in particular the claim that *‘man is the measure of all things’* – and his agnosticism concerning the Gods.

Protagoras was one of the most well-known and successful teachers. He taught his students the necessary skills and knowledge for a successful life, particularly in politics, rather than philosophy. He trained his pupils to argue from both points of view because he believed that truth could not be limited to just one side of the argument. Therefore, he taught his students to praise and blame the same things and to strengthen the weaker argument so that it might appear the stronger.

These techniques are based on the belief that truth is relative to the individual. Arguments on both sides of a question are equally true because those debating a question can only truly know those things which exist in their own mind and therefore cannot make a definitely true statement about objective realities outside the mind (phenomenalism). Truth is what it appears to be to the individual.

Protagoras wrote about a variety of subjects and some fragments of his work survived. He is the author of the famous saying, “Man is the measure of all things, of the things that are, that they are and of things that are not, that they are not.” which is the opening sentence of a work called *Truth*.

However, the question which arises is what is meant by knowledge?

Knowledge means that which is true for all and for all the moments of human life. Is Perception knowledge in that sense? No.

But it is nonetheless knowledge of the object as it appears to a percipient at a particular moment and true for him at that moment alone. Is it true for another? No, for perception of one true to him alone at one particular moment of time, and, a thing is what appears to another at another moment of time. It appears then no two perceptions of the same man are the same, and not two perceptions of two men are quite the same. And yet for all practical purpose perception alone is knowledge. This knowledge is *relative* to different men at different times.

Hence the famous saying of Protagoras *Homo Mensura*, i.e. man is the measure of all things. In other words, what appears to me is true for me and what appears to you is true for you. Is there no knowledge which is valid and acceptable to all men universally? NO. Then the conclusion of *homo mensura* not only shows the relativism, of knowledge, but also its universality as impossibility. This is known as scepticism. In other respects, it also means all statements are true and none are false. Gorgias another Sophist holds that based on this perception, no knowledge is possible, and even if knowledge be available, it cannot be communicated to others.

Few thinkers point out that Protagoras used the term man not as an individual men but the *universal* man, the rational man. It is reason which is one and the same in all, and what reason tells us is universal and valid for all. In this sense, 'man' taken as a 'rational being' is certainly the measure of all things. But on close analysis of Protogoras philosophy, we know that he does not uphold the claims of thought or reason in constituting knowledge. For him, knowledge is perception. Against this view, Socrates maintained that *knowledge is thought*. Hence the Protogorean aphorism of *homo mensura* necessarily leads to scepticism and nihilism. Here 'man' really means 'men' for Protagoras.

9.3.2 Gorgias:

Gorgias is another well-known Sophist. Gorgias' writings showcase his ability of making ridiculous and unpopular positions appear stronger. Gorgias authored a lost work known as *On Nature of the Non-Existent*, . in this book he laid down three of his tenets, namely,

1. There is nothing
2. Even if there be anything, it cannot be known.
3. Even if there be any knowledge of anything, it cannot be communicated.

In explaining the first tenet Gorgias is said to have borrowed Zeno's arguments leading to falsity of motion and plurality. If there

be anything then it can be known only through perception. But perception tells us that things are many and that they are in motion. Further, perception is the only knowledge. And perception tells us that everything has come into being from its earlier state. But this arising of things can be either from Being or non – Being. But quite obviously a world of becoming cannot come from an unchanging Being. Again, nothing can arise from non – Being. Hence, there is nothing in the world.

The second tenet of Gorgias is, ‘Even if there is anything, we cannot know it’. It means we do not know what the real object is. What we find here is that the sophists were interested in the refutation of the statements of their opponents. Naturally they concentrated on the logic of proof and contradiction. Naturally, any judgement can really be tautology.

The third tenet, ‘Even if we could know anything, we cannot communicate our knowledge to anyone else.’

Gorgia’s attempts to persuade his readers that thought and existence was different. Hence, whatever our knowledge be, it cannot be about things. Hence, what kind of knowledge can be obtained to be communicated at all? It further means, ‘My perception is mine, and yours is yours’. There is nothing which two persons can perceive alike. Hence each man is shut up in his cocoon like existence from which nothing can go out and into which nothing can enter. Hence, no knowledge can ever be communicated. Here the theory of Gorgia’s refuted his practice, for he was teaching and communicating his knowledge to his pupils.

Check your Progress

1. What was the prominent element in the philosophy of the Sophists?

1. Protagoras taught that *arete* is the result ofand not innate.
2. Protagoras is most famous for his relativistic account of truth – in particular the claim that ‘.....’
3. Explain the reasoning of Protagoras to train his students to argue from both points of view?
4. Explain scepticism that follows from the conclusion of *homo mensura*.
5. Mention any two tenets of Gorgias.

9.4 THE SOPHIST THEORY OF MORALITY

The Sophists held that morality consists in pleasure. What is pleasant, agreeable and desirable feeling for one is morally right for him, and, what is agreeable and desirable for another is morally right for him. Here in morality the individual state becomes the measure of morality. As these states are relative to individuals, so morality differs from persons to persons. Therefore, the sophists were pragmatist and utilitarian in moral philosophy.

What is true of individuals is true also for justice, law and goodness of the State. For the sophists, the State law is based on customs and conventions. The law of one State is not the same as the law of other States. Even in the same State the law framed by one ruling party is changed by the next ruling party. Under the circumstances goodness and justice are relative. It is really based on the principle of 'might is right'. The brute majority of the ruling party in the State frames the laws for the weaker ones. Hence justice is the right of the strong. Plato opposed the doctrine of 'might is right' and taught 'right is might'.

In religion too the sophists were non – committal. Protagoras is supposed to have written a book called 'On the Gods' in which he states: With regard to the gods, i cannot feel sure either that they are or that they are not, now what they are like in figure; for there are many things that hinder sure knowledge, the obscurity of the subject and the shortness of human life.

Thus Protagoras was really sceptical about the existence of God. But he advised the traditional worship of gods, perhaps as a measure of prudence. Protagoras is said to have been charged for his irreverence because of his scepticism about the existence of gods.

Check your Progress

1. The Sophists held that morality consists in
2. What is Protagoras view with regard to God?

9.5 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. 'Man is the measure of all things', explain it with reference to Protagoras view point.
2. Briefly explain the epistemology of Sophists.
3. Elucidate Sophists theory of Morality.

PLATO

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Refutation of the Sophists Views
- 10.3 Plato's Theory of Knowledge
- 10.4 Plato's Theory of Forms/Ideas
- 10.5 Critical Remarks
- 10.6 Summary
- 10.7 Unit End Questions

10.0 OBJECTIVES

- To know the importance of Plato's philosophy.
- To explore Plato's theory of Knowledge
- To understand theory of Forms/Ideas
- To understand Plato's Metaphors

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Plato was born in 429/7 in Athens in an aristocratic family. He was given the best education that an Athenian citizen of that time could get. He was named Aristocles after his grandfather.

His teacher gave him the name "Plato" meaning "broad," on account of his broad shoulders and robust figure.

Plato was tremendously influenced by the personality, life and teaching of Socrates. He drew unabated inspiration from Socrates and remained a most faithful and devoted disciple of Socrates. Plato wrote abundantly in the form of dialogues. The central figure in these dialogues is Socrates. Plato put his philosophy into the mouth of Socrates.

10.2 REFUTATION OF THE SOPHISTS VIEWS

It is difficult to separate Plato's epistemology from his ontology. Plato assumed that we can have knowledge that is objective and universally valid. He was primarily interested in the question 'what is the true object of knowledge'.

To explain what knowledge is Plato discusses what knowledge or truth is not. Protagoras, the Sophist advocated that "Knowledge is perception". Plato refutes the Sophists views that "Knowledge is perception" and "Knowledge is opinion".

10.2.1 "Knowledge is perception":

According to Protagoras, man is the measure of things. Truth is relative. What I perceive or feel is true for me, what you feel or perceive is true for you, and there is no other criterion of knowledge. Knowledge and sensation are identical. Real knowledge is impossible. Plato criticizes this theory on the following grounds-

1. If perception is knowledge, animals too perceive. Therefore animals also must be regarded as the measure of all things.
2. For Protagoras, what appears to each individual true is true for that individual. If so, supposing Protagoras' theory appears false to me, does it really becomes false? Will Protagoras admit that his theory is false?

3. This theory becomes false in its application to our judgement of future events. The frequent mistakes which man makes about future show this.
4. Are all perceptions equally true? Perception yields contradictory impressions. The same object appears large when it is near and it appears small when it is far. In different lights the same object appears to be of different colours. The piece of paper looks of different shapes from different angles. If perception is knowledge, which one of such perceptions is true?
5. For Protagoras all perceptions are equally true. So a child's perceptions must be just as much correct as those of his teacher. His teacher therefore can teach him nothing. So this doctrine renders all teachings, all discussions, proof or disproof impossible.
6. If all perceptions are true, why do we commit mistakes at all? Things appear to us to be such-and-such. But later on, we realize that we have been wrong in thinking so. How to explain error?
7. This theory destroys the objectivity of truth and renders the distinction between truth and falsehood wholly meaningless. To say that whatever I perceive is true for me is simply gives a new name to my perception but does not add any value to it.
8. Meaningful perception is never the work of a single sense. Different sensations given by different senses must be combined, organized; compared, contrasted, etc. this is the activity of mind and not of the senses themselves. Therefore knowledge does not consist of sense-impressions only; it also involves the functioning of the mind or reason.

10.2.2 "Knowledge is Opinion":

The Sophists hold that on every subject more than one opinion is possible. So "Knowledge is Opinion". For Plato, the relativity of knowledge was unacceptable. His aim was to prove such view as false on the following grounds---

1. Opinion may be right or wrong. Wrong opinion is clearly not knowledge. Even right opinion is not knowledge. We often feel intuitively or instinctively that something is true though we cannot give any definite grounds for our belief. The belief may be correct but it is not knowledge. The man who has 'right opinion' knows that a thing is so. But he does not know why a thing is so.
2. An opinion is always shaky and uncertain. It can always be easily shaken and knocked down by sophistry and persuasion. Even right opinion can be shaken by the art of rhetoric. Therefore even right opinion is unstable and uncertain. Opinion is always probable and knowledge is always firm, certain and confident.
3. Knowledge is not a mere instinctive belief. Knowledge must be full of complete understanding and rational comprehension. It must be grounded on reason and not on faith.

Check Your Progress

Which theories did Plato refute?

10.3 PLATO'S THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

If knowledge is neither perception nor opinion, then what is it? Plato's constructive answer to this question is given such Dialogues as Phaedo, Republic and Sophist. For Plato, knowledge is knowledge of concepts. It is not liable to mutation according to the subjective impressions of any individual. Knowledge of concepts or Ideas or Forms gives us the objective truth. Knowledge of Forms or Ideas is founded on reason and not on sense impressions.

Plato's constructive answer to the question, "What is Knowledge?" is given in such dialogues as the Phaedo, Republic and the Sophist. Plato's views can be summarized as follows...

10.3.1 "Knowledge is Awareness of Eternal Ideas.":

According to Plato, Knowledge is neither sense perception nor true opinion nor true opinion with explanation. Through sense experience we become aware of the constantly changing sensible objects. These changing objects are simply passing shadows. Truth lies beyond the passing shadows and it can be grasped only by 'Reason'.

Truth is eternal, unchanging and universal. To know one must pass from the particular to universal. True knowledge is awareness of the universal concepts (Ideas or Forms). Socrates always sought clear definitions of concepts. Socrates hold that through concepts alone Truth can be known. The objects of our experience are constantly changing and the Universals or the Ideas are stable and unchanging. Concepts constitute true knowledge. Universal Ideas alone are real. Knowledge is awareness of the universal and eternal Ideas.

10.3.2 "Knowledge is Recollection or Reminiscence":

According to Plato, we do not derive concepts from particular sensations. Rather particular sensations help us to become aware of concepts or Ideas. The soul does not receive these ideas from outside as absolutely unknown to it. The soul is already familiar with the Ideas. Learning is simply remembering what we already know. Knowledge is nothing but recollection of previously known truths and realities.

Plato advocates immortality of the soul. As the Ideas are independent of sensible objects, the soul is also independent of the physical body. According to Plato, our soul was dwelling in the eternal world of Ideas. So the soul knew these Ideas at first hand. When the soul enters into human body, it loses its original knowledge. In the course of experience and reflection, the soul regains the same knowledge. Knowing is essentially philosophical reawakening.

For Plato, all knowledge is recollection of what was experienced by the soul in its disembodied state before birth. Knowledge must be present in the mind at birth. It must be recollected from a previous existence. It takes great efforts to bring the half lost Ideas back to mind. The process of being reminded is education.

10.3.3 “The Simile of the Line”: “Levels of Knowledge”:

Knowledge	Reason →	Philosophy (Dialectic)
	Discursive Thought →	Sciences
Opinion ←	Common Sense →	Belief
	Imagination →	Conjecture

In Republic, Plato explains the development of human mind from ignorance to knowledge. The entire range of human knowledge is expressed by a vertical line. This line is divided into two main segments of “Knowledge” and “Opinion”. The segment of “Knowledge” is further divided into ‘Reason’ and ‘Opinion’. (1) The segment of ‘Reason’ acquires Philosophical Knowledge and Discursive Thought produces various sciences.(2) The segment of ‘Opinion’ is subdivided into Common Sense and Imagination. Common Sense clings to various beliefs and Imagination makes use of mere conjectures.

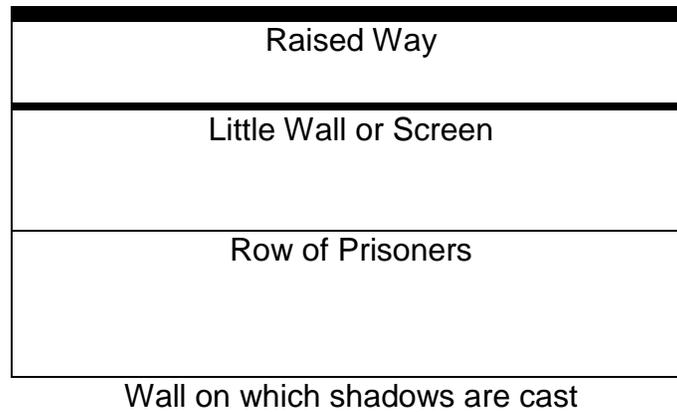
The ascent of the soul from the lower segment of the 'Line of Knowledge' to the higher segment is progress. It is not an automatic progress. It requires mental effort and intellectual discipline. The soul is moved by the impulse of 'Eros' or 'Love'. This is the famous concept of Platonic Love.

Before birth as human body the soul dwelt disembodied in the pure contemplation of the world of Ideas. Sinking down in the world of senses, it forgets the Ideas. Man at first perceives and loves beautiful objects. It leads to appreciate beauty and culture in mind. Then man begins to love wisdom. Wisdom or Reason enables him to look upon the "wide ocean of intellectual beauty, full of lovely and majestic forms". This development ends in the complete rational cognition of the world of Ideas.

10.3.4 "The Allegory of the Cave":

Plato has given the most famous "Allegory of the Cave" in Republic. The Allegory of Cave describes the ascent of the soul from the region of Darkness (Conjectures and Imaginations) to the region of Light (Dialectic and Truth). The man who reaches the region of Light can guide the state affairs and deserves to be the 'Philosopher King'. In the analogy of Cave, Plato shows the ascent of the mind from illusion to truth and pure philosophy. Plato also shows the difficulties in the progress of soul towards Truth.





There is an underground Cave which has an opening towards Light or Fire. Human beings live in this Cave. They cannot freely move as their necks and legs are chained like prisoners from their childhood. They can only face the inside wall of the cave. They have never seen the light of the Sun. The Sun, the Fire, the Light is behind them. Between the Fire and the prisoners there is a raised path. Along the raised path various carriers containing statues and figures pass. The chained prisoners cannot see the carriers but only the shadows of these objects on the wall they face. The prisoners behold only shadows of Reality and echoes of Truth. If any of the prisoners is suddenly released and happens to see the Realities, he would be blinded by the glare of the Light. If he comes out of the Cave, he will see the world of Sun illuminated objects. When the enlightened man returns to Cave, he will fumble and falter in the darkness of the Cave. He would appear 'ridiculous' in the eyes of inside prisoners. If this man tries to enlighten the inside prisoners, these prisoners would become irritated and would even put the 'Enlightened' to death.

Check your progress:

1. What is knowledge according to Plato?
2. What are the levels of knowledge for Plato?
3. State the importance of the Allegory of the Cave.

10.4 PLATO'S THEORY OF FORMS

The concepts of Socrates became metaphysical substances or realities for Plato. Plato believed that the concept cannot be mere abstract idea in the mind, but it must have a reality of its own. Plato's Ideas/Forms indicate objective reality.

According to Aristotle, Plato's theory of Forms has three sources namely Heraclitus, Parmenides and Socrates. Heraclitus declared that "Everything Changes". Plato applied this to the world of senses and declared the visible world as appearance. Parmenides taught that "Reality is unchanging and eternal". Plato said that the 'Ideas' must be real, unchanging and eternal universals. Socrates taught that knowledge comes through concepts. Plato said that 'Ideas' or 'Concepts' point to Reality.

Plato's theory of Forms/Ideas maintains two distinct levels of Reality. First level is that of visible world of sense experiences and second higher level is that of Forms/Ideas which are real, eternal and unchanging. According to Plato we can identify beauty in various objects of our experience because we have the conception of Beauty in abstract. We can identify the beautiful objects as beautiful because these objects participate in the more general Form of Beauty. The theory of Ideas represents Plato's attempt to cultivate human capacity for abstract thought. The objects of our

experience do change grow old, decay and lose their beauty. But the Form of Beauty is invisible, unchanging, eternal and imperishable. The characteristics of Forms/Ideas are as follows----

1. Forms/Ideas are realities or substances. They have independent existence. Ideas are the First Principles of universe. They are the essences of all worldly objects.
2. Forms/Ideas are not purely mental things. They do not reside in any Mind. Ideas are substances independent of any Mind. They have 'objective reality' of their own.
3. Ideas are 'universal'. An Idea is not the idea of any particular thing. For example, the Idea of horse is not the idea of this or that particular horse. It is the general concept of all horses. It is the universal horse
4. Form/Idea is a 'unity'. It is the 'One' among 'Many'. The Idea of man is one although individual men are many.
5. Forms/Ideas are the cause or ground of sense objects. They are absolute realities by which individual thing must be explained.
6. Forms/Ideas are eternal, unchangeable and imperishable. Beautiful objects arise and pass away. But the Idea of Beauty neither begins nor ends. It is eternal. The beautiful objects are only fleeting copies of the eternal idea of Beauty. Even all men were destroyed; the Idea of 'man' remains untouched by the birth, death, old age, decay or death of individual men.
7. Forms/Ideas are both transcendental and immanent. The Ideas are immanent in many sense objects. They are transcendental as they have a reality of their own apart from the objects of senses.
8. Forms/Ideas are beyond space and time. They reside in the distinct world of their own. Plato separates the world of Ideas from the world of sense objects. The sense objects are poor imperfect 'copies', 'shadows' or 'imitations' of Ideas. They derive their existence and nature from the Forms/Ideas.

9. Forms/Ideas are apprehended through reason and not through sense organs. Finding the common element in the manifold objects is the work of reason. The knowledge of Forms/Ideas is apprehended by rational cognition and laborious thought.
10. Each Idea embodies perfection of its own kind. Its perfection is the same as its reality. The Idea of man is that of a perfect man and all individuals derive their Being from the Idea of perfect man.
11. There are many kinds of Ideas. Plato at first concerned moral and aesthetic universals. There are Forms/Ideas of all things, qualities, relations, values, etc. There are Forms of man, dog, house, tables, chairs, colours, sounds sizes, etc. There are Ideas of truth, goodness, beauty, etc.
12. All Forms/Ideas constitute a single organic system. There is a hierarchy of Ideas. Just as one Idea presides over several individual objects, similarly the Idea of Good presides over all other Ideas. The Idea of Good is the source of all other Forms/Ideas. The universe is a logical system of Ideas. It is the organic unity governed by a universal purpose. Reality is rational and meaningful.
13. The Forms/Ideas are perfect and changeless. The sense objects are ever changing. Plato believes that imperfection is due to 'Matter'. 'Ideas' and 'Matter' are not reducible to one another. According to Plato, the Demiurge (God) like an artist, fashions sense objects after the pattern of Ideas. Plato's God is not a creator of Ideas or of Matter. Demiurge is only a world designer.

Check your progress:

1. State the characteristics of Plato's Forms/Ideas.
2. Explain the relation between the world of Forms and the world of sense objects.

10.5 CRITICAL REMARKS

1. Plato was the first person in the history of the world to produce a great all embracing system of philosophy. He was the original thinker. He took the thoughts of his prececeders as foundations below ground upon which he built the palace of philosophy. Plato was the founder of Idealism. He has greatly influenced the western philosophy.
2. Plato introduces Dualism. He ignores the interconnection between senses and reason. Plato completely separates and opposes the visible world of experience and the world of Ideas.
3. Aristotle was dissatisfied with Plato's theory of Forms. He severely criticized the theory of Ideas. According to Aristotle, Plato's abstract Forms/Ideas cannot explain the concrete facts of experience. Plato's changeless and motionless Forms/Ideas cannot explain the motion and change of worldly things.
4. Plato's Forms/Ideas do not explain the world that we experience. Plato says, worldly things are the 'copies' or 'imitations' of Forms/Ideas. However the questions 'Why these copies exist at all?' or 'How do these imitations arise?' remain unanswered.
5. According to Plato, Ideas are the essence of things. Yet Plato separates the Ideas from things and places these Ideas in a transcendent world of their own. Aristotle argues that the essence of a thing must be in the thing itself and not outside of

it. Complete separation of the world of Ideas from the world of things is logically unjustifiable.

6. Plato uses poetic metaphors instead of logical arguments to explain his views. He says that sense objects are mere 'copies' or 'imitations' of Ideas. The Allegory of the Cave is also a poetic metaphor.

10.6 SUMMARY

Plato was the first person in the history of the world to produce a great all embracing system of philosophy. Plato was tremendously influenced by the personality, life and teaching of Socrates. Plato put his philosophy into the mouth of Socrates.

Plato was primarily interested in the question 'what is the true object of knowledge'. Plato refutes the Sophists views that "Knowledge is perception" and "Knowledge is opinion".

According to Plato, knowledge is awareness of Eternal Ideas. Knowing is recollection or reminiscence. There are two levels of knowledge namely opinion and knowledge. Opinion is divided into common sense imagination. Knowledge is divided into reason and discursive thought. Plato uses The Allegory of the Cave to explain the development of the human mind from ignorance to knowledge.

Plato's theory of Forms/Ideas maintains two distinct levels of Reality namely visible world of sense experiences and the transcendental world of Forms/Ideas. The world of Ideas has independent existence beyond the world of sense experience. For Plato, the Forms/Ideas are the ultimate reality. The theory of Ideas

represents Plato's attempt to cultivate human capacity for abstract thought.

10.7 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. How does Plato refute the 'Sophists' views on Knowledge?
2. Explain Plato's theory of Knowledge.
3. Elaborate Plato's theory of Forms/Ideas.
4. Write notes:
 - The Simile of Line
 - The Allegory of Cave
 - "Knowledge is recollection"

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ARISTOTLE (384 B.C---322 B.C)

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 11.0 Objectives
- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 The philosophy of Aristotle
- 11.3 Four causes
- 11.4 Form and Matter
- 11.5 Actuality and Potentiality
- 11.6 Summary
- 11.7 Unit End Questions

11.0 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the concept of causation according to Aristotle.
- To know the four causes accepted by Aristotle
- To understand how four causes are reduced to Form and Matter
- To identify the difference between actuality and potentiality
- To be familiar with Aristotle's theory of soul.

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Aristotle was born in 384 B.C.in the small town of Stagira on the northeast coast of Thrace. He joined Plato's academy when he was 17 years old and lived with Plato for the next twenty years till the death of Plato. He was profoundly influenced by Plato's thought and personality. Aristotle was quite different from Plato in his mental constitution and orientation Plato was a poet, a mystic and an ethico religious thinker. But he did not give importance to poetry. In contrast Aristotle was a scientist logician and an austere thinker.

The work of Aristotle includes Organon (logic),the physics, De Aximo, Eudemian, Ethics, Nichomechaen Ethics etc Towards his final conviction he held that," form " and the meaning of nature and history are to be found embedded in "matter"

11.2 THE PHILOSOPHY OF ARISTOTLE

Aristotle's fundamental problem was to solve the problem of being and becoming. Democritus had developed the theory of atoms and through their mechanical impact had tried to solve the world process and becoming. Plato on the other hand advanced the doctrine of ideas which the form of particulars kept on striving to realize the perfecting of ideas. In both cases we have to **know** the real relation between being and becoming.

To know a thing is to know its cause. Metaphysical knowledge is concerned with the final cause. It wants to know the final cause of all things. A final cause is the end or and purpose for which a thing is. Aristotle aimed at the teleological explanation of the universe. For Aristotle the whole cosmos realizes a supreme end, embodied in it. This is best seen in the working of an organism and also in the production of a work of art. Hence the end is in the universe and not outside it. Aristotle reconciles mechanism and teleology through his conception of form and matter, which has been deduced from the analyses of causation.

11.3 THE FOUR CAUSES

In the world around us we see things constantly changing. According to Aristotle the word 'change' means many things including motion, growth, decay, generation and corruption. Some of these changes are natural, where as other are the products of human artifact. Things are always taking a new form, they always change and as such several questions regarding the process of change can be raised .The four questions which can be raised regarding anything that changes are 11.What is it? (2) What it is made of? (3)By what it is made? & (4) For what end it is made? The responses to these questions represent Aristotle's four causes.

According to Aristotle, everything, whether it be a natural object, a living thing, or a manufactured article is explicable by means of all four causes. The four causes are:

(1) **The material cause**-by which he understands crude or undifferentiated stuff, that from which the thing in question is made Aristotle illustrates the formless material out of which the sculpture plans to fashion his statue. For example in the wax statue wax is the material cause, or bronze in case of statue made out of bronze.

(2) **The formal cause** is the pattern or structure which is to become embodied in the thing when it is fully realized; it is that which the

thing essentially is. The formal cause of a statue is the general plan or idea of the statue as conceived by the sculpture.

(3) **The efficient or moving cause** is the active agent which produces the thing as its effect, it is that through which the thing is produced. The efficient cause of the statue includes the chisels and other instruments used by the sculpture in his work.

(4) **The final cause** is the end or purpose towards which the process is directed; it is that for the sake of which a thing is made. In sculpturing it is the fully realized in completed statue.

Check your progress:

1. Give an account of four causes mentioned by Aristotle

11.4 FORM AND MATTER

According to Aristotle there are pluralities of individual substances. Every individual substance is an admixture of matter and form. By form Aristotle understands the universal aspect of a thing' the essential unity shared by all things of the same type. Matter on the other hand is that which confers particularity and uniqueness, matter and form are inseparable aspects of individual thing. Aristotle strongly insists that the universal and particular are fused into the complete unity of the individual. The individual object changes grows there must be something underlying this change, something which persists this change, something to which the different quality pertains. This particularizing and individuating principle is matter. This matter is inseparable from its form, coexists with it. Thus when we say an object changes its form, he does not mean that form itself changes or becomes different, no form as such can change into another form it is matter which assumes different forms, one form following other series of forms, new form fashions the matter the form does not change, the different forms already exist both form and matter are eternal principles of things. In order to explain the change we must assume a substratum (matter) that persists and changes and qualities or forms which though never changing are responsible for the rich growing world around us.

Philosophers prior to Aristotle had accepted the material cause of the universe. The Ionians had admitted one or the other kind of matter as the cosmic reality e.g. water, air etc. Heraclitus had accepted fire as the world ground .Empedocles admitted four elements and Anaxagoras some identified kind of matter Plato had admitted ideas as the moving force in the world of becoming, but it was Aristotle who combined all the four kinds of causes into a consistent form of philosophical explanation of the world.

According to Aristotle the formal and the final cause are really identical. Formal cause means what a thing is in its essence. It is what it is. The final cause is the becoming of what it is, or the end of what it is after the essence of the thing has been actualized or realized. What a table is in its essence is the formal cause is the formal cause of the table and when it has been actualized then this was the very end energy put into it towards which the wood had been shaped. Again the efficient cause means the movement or becoming by means of the skill and energy put into it .But why is the wood cut and chiseled in a skillful manner? Because the end i.e. table had to be realized. Hence it is the final cause which guides and regulates the efficient cause. Hence it is the final cause which is the real cause behind the efficient cause. Hence final cause is the real cause of becoming and movement in the world. Therefore we can say that the final cause is really the efficient and the formal cause too. Thus the end is the real beginning. The final end is the idea of the prime mover for Aristotle. The conclusion of Aristotle is that all the three causes, efficient, formal and final are really one and Aristotle calls this as the form, of the thing. However the material cause cannot be reduced to any kind of cause. So ultimately there are only two things namely the form and matter which can explain all the becoming and the development in man and nature.

Check your progress:

1. Explain Aristotle's concept of form and matter.

11.5 ACTUALITY AND POTENTIALITY

According to Aristotle all things are involved in the process of change. Everything possesses the power to become that which its form has set as a goal/end. There is dynamic power to strive towards their end in all the things. In certain cases it is external towards objects where as in others cases it is striving to achieve ends pertaining to ones internal nature. This self contained end of anything Aristotle called its entelechy. That things have ends led Aristotle to consider the distinction between potentiality and actuality. This distinction is used by Aristotle to explain the process of change and development.

According to Aristotle, potentiality and actuality are the stages in the development of a substance. The potential is the earlier stage and actual is the stage which comes later. The potential is that which lies latent within the thing. Aristotle himself defines the distinction by means of particular instances: as the acorn is to an oak, the material of the building to a completed structure. This distinction is purely relative the same thing may in relation to a thing be actual and in relation to something else merely potential. For example oak is an actuality of acorn but mere potentiality of an oak table. This distinction between actuality and potentiality is parallel to the distinction between form and matter, for when the thing has reached its growth it has realized its meaning, its purpose, or form. That which is potential has been realized. Aristotle therefore calls matter the principle of potentiality and form the principle of actuality.

Check your progress:

1. Explain Aristotle's concepts of actuality and potentiality

11.6 SUMMARY

Each science is concerned with the cause or reason or principle underlying the activity of its special subject matter. Aristotle says that the science which knows to what end each thing must be done is the most authoritative of the sciences and more authoritative than any ancillary science. In addition to specific

sciences there is another science the first philosophy or what we call metaphysics which goes beyond the subject matter of science and is concerned about causes, which are the true foundations of knowledge. The problem of metaphysics for Aristotle was the study of being and its principles and causes.

According to Aristotle everything in this world is made up of four causes they are material cause, formal cause, efficient cause and the final cause. According to Aristotle the formal and the final cause are really identical. According to Aristotle all the three causes, efficient, formal and final are really one and Aristotle calls this as the form, of the thing. However the material cause cannot be reduced to any kind of cause. So ultimately there are only two things namely the form and matter which can explain all the becoming and the development in man.

Closely allied to the antitheses between form and matter is that between *potentiality and actuality*. *Potentiality and actuality are the stages in the development of a substance. The potential being the earlier and actual is the later. The potential lies latent in the actual. When a thing has reached its growth it has realized its meaning, its purpose that is its form, which means matter has taken over the form. The development process described in terms of antitheses of potential and actual, of form and matter, is governed by causes.*

The soul is the vital principle in the living thing. Body cannot be soul because body is not life it is that which has life. Body than is the matter to the soul. Soul is the realization of the body and is inseparable from it. The soul is thus the cause and principle of the living body as a source of movement, as final cause and as the real substance of animates bodies.

The different types of soul form a series such that higher presupposes the lower, but not vice versa the lowest form of soul is vegetative or nutritive which exercises the activities of assimilation and reproduction. It is found not only in the plants but also in the animals yet it can exist by itself. These activities are necessary for the living things to continue to exist. For plants sensation is not necessary because they do not move but draw there nourishment automatically.

Higher in the scale is the human soul which has the power of thought and deliberations. And aims at truth not for its own sake but for practical and prudential purpose. All the powers of the soul are inseparable and perishable from the body. Soul preexists before the body and is immortal.

11.7 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. Explain with example the four different causes put forth by Aristotle.
2. Discuss fully, giving suitable illustration Aristotle theory of causation.
3. Explain Aristotle's concept of form and matter
4. Bring out Aristotle's concept of Potentiality and Actuality.
5. Explain Aristotle's concept of soul

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ARISTOTLE

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 12.0 Objectives
- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Aristotle's concept of soul
- 12.3 Aristotle's theory of soul
- 12.4 Summary
- 12.5 Unit end questions

12.0 OBJECTIVES

- To understand the concept of soul according to Aristotle.
- To be familiar with Aristotle's theory of soul.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Aristotle was born in 384 B.C. in the small town of Stagira on the northeast coast of Thrace. Aristotle distinguishes between two types of soul in order to indicate three different ways a body can be organized. He called these the vegetative, sensitive and the rational self. They represent various capacities of the body for activity, the first being simply the act of living, the second both living and sensing, and the third a body that includes living, sensing and thinking.

12.2 ARISTOTLE'S CONCEPT OF SOUL

According to Aristotle, form is dynamic and purposive. It is the soul of the organic body. The body is the instrument and it is the soul which moves body. No soul can exist without the body. A body that is actually alive has its life from the source of actuality that is form. Soul then is the form of the organized body. Neither can exist without the other and are not identical. The soul as Aristotle defines it is "the first grade of actuality of a natural organized body."

Aristotle distinguishes between three types of soul in order to indicate three different ways a body can be organized. He called

these the vegetative, sensitive and the rational self. They represent various capacities of the body for activity, the first being simply the act of living, the second both living and sensing, and the third a body that includes living, sensing and thinking.

The human soul combines in itself all the lower forms of soul the vegetative, nutritive and sensitive, having in addition to these the rational soul. The rational soul has the power of scientific thought. Besides rational thought the mind has the power of deliberation. The mind thus not only understands the truth in nature of things but also guides human behavior. The human soul possesses the power of conceptual thought, the faculty of thinking the universal and necessary essence of things; as the soul by perception apprehends objects so by reasons beholds the concepts. Reason is, potentiality, whereas soul can think or conceive; conceptual thought is actualized reason.

Check your progress

1. State Aristotle's concept of soul.

12.3 ARISTOTLE'S THEORY OF SOUL

Aristotle's theory, as it is presented primarily in the *De Anima* (for a complete account, see [\(Aristotle's Psychology\)](#)), comes very close to providing a comprehensive, fully developed account of the soul in all its aspects and functions, an account that articulates the ways in which all of the vital functions of all animate organisms are related to the soul. In doing so, the theory comes very close to offering a comprehensive answer to a question that arises from the ordinary Greek notion of soul, namely how precisely it is that the soul, which is agreed to be in some way or other responsible for a variety of things living creatures (especially humans) do and experience, also is the distinguishing mark of the animate. According to Aristotle's theory, a soul is a particular kind of nature, a principle that accounts for change and rest in the particular case of living bodies, i.e. plants, nonhuman animals and human beings. The relation between soul and body, on Aristotle's view, is also an instance of the more general relation between form and matter: thus an ensouled, living body is a particular kind of in-formed matter.

Given that the soul according to Aristotle's theory is a system of abilities possessed and manifested by animate bodies of suitable structure, it is clear that the soul is, according to Aristotle, not itself a body or a corporeal thing. Thus Aristotle agrees with the *Phaedo's* claim that souls are very different from bodies. Moreover, Aristotle seems to think that all the abilities that are constitutive of the souls of plants, beasts and humans are such that their exercise involves and requires bodily parts and organs.

It is noteworthy that Aristotle's theory does not mark off those vital functions that are mental by relating them to the soul in some special way that differs from and goes beyond the way in which vital functions in general are so related. It is certainly not part of Aristotle's theory that the soul is specially and directly responsible for mental functions by performing them on its own, whereas it is less directly responsible for the performance by the living organism of other vital functions such as growth. As this aspect of his theory suggests, Aristotle is confident that once one has a proper understanding of how to explain natural phenomena in general, there is no reason to suppose that mental functions like perception, desire and at least some forms of thinking cannot be explained simply by appealing to the principles in terms of which natural phenomena in general are properly understood and explained.

Check your progress

1. Explain briefly Aristotle's theory of soul.

12.4 SUMMARY

Soul according to Aristotle's theory is a system of abilities possessed and manifested by animate bodies of suitable structure, it is clear that the soul is, according to Aristotle, not itself a body or a corporeal thing. Soul according to Aristotle's theory is a system of abilities possessed and manifested by animate bodies of suitable structure, it is clear that the soul is, according to Aristotle, not itself a body or a corporeal thing.

12.5 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. Discuss in detail Aristotle's theory of soul.
2. Write a note on Aristotle's view on soul.

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ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 13.0 Objectives
- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Life and work
- 13.3 Philosophy and Theology (Reason and Faith)
- 13.4 Ethics
 - 13.4.1 Freewill
 - 13.4.2 Virtues
- 13.5 Unit end questions

13.0 OBJECTIVES

1. St. Thomas Aquinas thoughts will be understood.
2. The distinction between Philosophy and Religion as taught by St. Thomas will be learnt.
3. Aquinas' influence on Christianity will be known.
4. Ethical views of Aquinas will be learnt.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) lived during the medieval era when the Christian religion became dominant and the interest in the Aristotelian teaching was revived. He was considered as one of the greatest thinkers of middle ages. He was well-known Saint of Christian religion who wrote Christian Theology and is being taught for many centuries. This was a critical juncture of western culture when the revival of Aristotelian study reopened the question of the relation between faith and reason. During this time many universities were founded. Thomas completed his studies at the University of Paris, which had been formed out of the monastic schools on the Left Bank and the cathedral school at Notre Dame. Thomas defended the mendicant orders. The Catholic Church has given the central importance to Thomas work for understanding its teachings concerning the Christian revelation. They also reaffirmed his textual commentaries on Aristotle. His work is considered as cultural resource which is now receiving increased recognition.

13.2 LIFE AND WORK

Thomas was born in 1225 at Roccasecca, a hilltop castle which is midway between Rome and Naples. His father was count of Aquino. At the age of five, he entered at Monte casino where he studied from 1230-1239. When Thomas was fourteen years old he was transferred by his family to the University of Naples. It was here that he came into contact with the “new” Aristotle and with the Order of Preachers or Dominicans, a recently founded mendicant order. He went paris to study, His thoughts were influenced by Albert the Great, who was interested in Aristotle’s philosophy. Returned to Paris, he completed his studies, became a Master and for three years occupied one of the Dominican chairs in the Faculty of Theology. He got his doctorate in Theology in 1257, but he did not become an archbishop. Rather he accepted a professorship at Naples. He wrote his magnum opus *Summa Theologian*, which is the official theology of Catholic Christianity. He wrote *On Being and Essence* and *The Principles of Nature* and he also wrote commentaries on Boethius' *On the Trinity* and *De hebdomadibus*, which are philosophical works. His work also includes the *Summa contra gentiles*, after this he began the *Summa theologiae*. In 1268, at Rome, he began the work of commenting on Aristotle with *On the Soul*. In 1274, on his way to the Council of Lyon, he fell ill and died on March 7 in the Cistercian abbey at Fossanova, which is perhaps twenty kilometers from Roccasecca. After his death in 1323, he was canonized and in 1567 he was given the title of ‘Doctor of the Church’. Among his followers and companions he was known as the ‘Angelic Doctor’ because of his firm and authoritative voice.

13.3 PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY (REASON AND FAITH)

He accepted two main sources of knowledge, viz. the Holy Bible and Church tradition, and human reason. There is no necessary conflict between faith and reason. Faith begins with God and proceeds toward the world. On the other hand reason begins with empirical world and proceeds towards God. Thus reason is complementary to faith or Holy Scripture. He tried to prove the existence of the Creator God on the basis of experience of the world.

Thomas was in his primary and official profession a theologian, but we find among his writings philosophical works, and the dozen commentaries on Aristotle. His intention was to bring together Christian religion and Aristotle’s philosophy. Even his theological works as such also contains a philosophical character.

So his best known work, the *Summa theologiae*, is often cited by philosophers when Thomas' position on this or that issue is sought.

Sometimes Thomas puts the difference this way: "... the believer and the philosopher consider creatures differently. The philosopher considers what belongs to their proper natures, while the believer considers only what is true of creatures insofar as they are related to God, for example, that they are created by God and are subject to him, and the like." (*Summa contra gentiles*, bk II, chap. 4). A religious person and philosopher looks at creatures from two different perspective, philosopher tries to know the nature of a creature whereas a religious person thinks about relation between creature and God, e.g. creatures are created by God.

One of the important difference between philosophy and Theology is with regard to their presupposition or their principles. The presuppositions of the philosopher are in the public domain, these presuppositions can be known by reflection. These principles can be subject to rational analysis and inquiry. However in theology presuppositions or starting points or principles that are held to be true on the basis of faith, that is, the truths that are authoritatively conveyed by Revelation, these principles are revealed by God. Some religious men may reflect on these truths and see other truths implied by them. Theologian discourses are characterized formally by the fact that its arguments and analyses are taken to be truth-bearing only for one who accepts Scriptural revelation as true. Philosophical discourse relies upon reflection for knowing upon the world. Whereas Theologians' discourses rely upon Faith. If a discourse relies only on truths anyone can be expected upon reflection to know about the world, and if it offers to lead to new truths on the basis of such truths, and only on that basis, then it is philosophical discourse.

In the following passage Thomas summarizes his position on the difference between Philosophy and Theology, and also talk about what need is there for discourse beyond philosophical discourse?

... it should be noted that different ways of knowing (*ratio cognoscibilis*) give us different sciences. The astronomer and the natural philosopher both conclude that the earth is round, but the astronomer does this through a mathematical middle that is abstracted from matter, whereas the natural philosopher considers a middle lodged in matter. Thus there is nothing to prevent another science from treating in the light of divine revelation what the philosophical disciplines treat as knowable in the light of human reason. (*Summa theologiae*, Ia, q. 1, a., ad 2)

Religion and Philosophy look at world from two different approaches. According to Thomas Aquinas religion or theological discourse begins with what God has revealed about Himself and His action in creating and redeeming the world and the world is understood in that light. A religious man believed that statements in religion are revealed by God, so he/she doesn't have any doubt about them rather a believer accepts them as true statements. Philosophical discourse begins with knowledge of the world, and if it speaks of God, what it says is conditioned by what is known of the world. The main difference between Theology and Philosophy is Theology starts with the God has revealed, it studies the world in the light of these revelations. It tries to understand the world in relation to God, so it begins with God and what he revealed about the world. Philosopher starts with the knowledge of the world, he uses reason and analysis in knowing the world, for him reason is important, for theologian faith is more important.

Although there are differences between philosophy and theology but they are not in contrast with one another. Theological discourses can be subject of philosophical discussion. Faith and reason complement rather than contradict each other, each giving different views of the same Truth. Thomas accepted two main sources of knowledge viz. the holy Bible and Church tradition, and human reason. There is no necessary conflict between faith and reason. Faith begins with God and proceeds towards the world. On the other hand, reason begins with the empirical world and proceeds towards God. Thus reason is complementary to Faith or Holy Scripture. Faith and reason are the two primary tools for processing the data of theology. According to Thomas confluence of both reason and faith was necessary for one to obtain true knowledge of God. Aquinas suggests here that there are in fact elements of what God has revealed that are formally speaking philosophical and subject to philosophical discussion--though revealed they can be known and investigated without the precondition of faith. Statements or principles of theology can be subject to philosophical analysis, e.g the nature of God, the nature of the human person, what is necessary for a human being to be good these types of subjects can become a subject of philosophical discussion. According to Thomas there can be a harmonious relation between the theology and the philosophy. Thomas' theological works are very often paradigms of that engagement between theological and philosophical reflection, and provide some of his very best philosophical reflections.

Reason has its own limits. All the truths of life cannot be known through reason. Some truths are beyond reason. Thomas Aquinas considers both reason and faith as important tools of knowledge but their fields are different, one may not be consider them as superior or inferior. Both of them doing an important work

in their field. From a broader approach both are complementary to one another. The knowledge of empirical world is known through reason.

Thomas Aquinas explained the work of Theology and Philosophy, Faith and Reason. The work of Philosophy or reason is limited to the empirical world, the field of theology is the Supernatural world or revelations of God, this is the world of Faith.

Thomas Aquinas tried to prove the existence of God on the basis of the experience of the world. God according to him, is pure form, pure actuality. We know God by faith. But we can also know him by rational arguments. Such knowledge is indirect or mediate. In knowing Him by reasoning we pass from the known to unknown. We also pass from the effect to the cause or from the Creation to the Creator. He is the first and the final cause (purposive cause) of the universe. In addition, He is absolutely actual and absolutely perfect in goodness, knowledge, and power. God did not create the world out of nothing. He is the cause of both the matter and the form, and thus creates the world out of matter and form. However, He created the matter out of nothing. God's will is determined by the good. He has therefore, chosen this world as the best of all possible worlds. He reveals Himself in the universe in all possible ways.

Check Your Progress

1. What is the difference between faith and reason?
2. Explain the life and important works of Thomas Aquinas.

13.4 ETHICS

St. Thomas Aquinas' thoughts were greatly influenced by Aristotle's philosophy and Christian religion. Aristotle determines human good on the basis of 'function'. If a person knows what is the function of Carpenter? What kind of work he does? Then he is able to know who is a good carpenter? Carpenter, goldsmith, cobbler, potter etc. have a specific work which they perform, whether a potter is good or not cannot be decided on the basis of whether he is able to do the carpenter's work or not. Whether a person is good or not is determined by his work. A person's activity differs from another because he has intelligence or his activity is a

rational activity. Every action of human being is performed with specific intention or purpose. A person is regarded as good if he or she performs his/her function. The human agent acts knowingly and willingly. If this is the human function, the human being who performs it well will be a good person and be happy.

Now Aquinas distinguishes in the *Summa Theologiae* between the imperfect happiness of this life and the perfect happiness of the next life in beatitude or union with God. In *Summa Theologiae* Aquinas distinguishes the incomplete or imperfect welfare with the welfare of the next life or union with the God. To what Aristotle calls Happiness, Aquinas calls it Imperfect Happiness. Imperfect Happiness is related to this life or the material life. Here the imperfect does not mean 'faulty' or 'false'. It simply means that their perfection is not as great in the scale of being as that of the angels. It can also mean incomplete in the constitution of some overall good. One gets the highest pleasure or happiness in the next life or future life only. This happiness is related to the God, one gets it through the vision of God. Through the knowledge of God one gets highest happiness or pleasure. Knowledge of God is possible through logical thinking, faith or intuition. Everyone may not get the knowledge through logical reasoning and it cannot be definite. The knowledge through intuition is highest knowledge it is eternal, but it may not be possible to get intuitive knowledge in this birth but one gets it in future birth. This knowledge gives man the highest happiness and all his/her actions are directed towards it. Aquinas claims that Aristotle understood that a complete life in accord with reason and virtue in this life is incomplete or imperfect happiness. (See his commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 1, lect. 16, #200–202). Indeed, Aristotle himself says that perfect happiness is to be associated with the divine. (*Nicomachean Ethics*, 1099b9–13)

13.4.1 Free will:

In philosophy one of the questions that is widely discussed since many ages is whether man is free to perform his/ her action or is his activity is determined by any other factors? Does he have freewill? The will is an intellectual power, its activity presupposes knowledge. St. Thomas Aquinas considered individual will as a fundamental part of human nature. According to him the exercise and development of will is an essential part of human perfection. As St. Thomas sees it, God created us in his image, with intellect and will. As an effect of sin, our wills are weak, but it is not God's intention that they remain weak. As a part of our path to salvation, we are called to strengthen our wills, and as a part of our ultimate happiness, our wills are to become perfected—to become like God's will.

In St. Thomas's vision of the human person, the will is a fundamental part of our nature that is essentially linked to our rational power. This rational power distinguishes us from the animals. The human will follows directly from the power of a reason. If a being is to be rational, it follows that it must have a free will: a man with the power of reason can judge his own actions. Man is endowed with free choice – i.e. to say with free judgment about acting or not acting. The destruction of human will would make us like herd animals.

According to St Thomas human beings are free creatures, they must choose their own paths they can chose the path leading to self –fulfillment or path leading to self destruction. Human being is free to make choices. According to him all perfections come from the Creator. Without freewill there is no point in morality, rewards, punishments, commands would be in vain, without freewill society cannot punish. Without freedom one cannot engage in ethical thinking. Man's ability to reason between two things is the proof of his freewill.

According to St. Thomas, freewill is not sufficient without God, for him God is the first source of existence or the first cause. St. Thomas says the freewill finds it desirable happiness in beginning, middle, and end in God. According to him man may truly desire God in all things, but man does not necessarily or usually act on that desire for the good. With freewill man makes movement or can act, i.e. to say Freewill is the cause of its own movement. Although God is considered as the first cause he does not deprive their actions being voluntary. Thomas says that He operates in each thing according to its own nature. Thomas argues that liberty is not necessarily dependent upon the first cause. Man chooses to act. People are free to judge or not judge particular objects. Hence, the will is free both in its exercise and in its specification, ie. choosing one good over the other. The specific act of the will cannot encompass the entirety of universal goodness because of its specificity. So even choosing to act over not acting does not fulfill the will's necessity toward goodness.

Man enjoys freedom of will. When it does not abide by the rule of reason or laws of God, he does wrong actions. Everything aims at good. Man also strives for good. Whatever man strives for is regarded as good by him or her. Suppose 'X' is evil. Man does not desire to strive for it because it is evil, but because he or she views it as good. This is done by man erroneously. So it is the improper use of reason or intellect. It is man who is responsible for moral evil. God cannot be held responsible for moral evil. Certain persons do misuse or abuse freedom of will and do evil deeds. God allows such people to do it and be ready for the punishment or painful consequences. God does not abolish man's freedom of will.

Even God's grace can act in man and with the cooperation of his or her will. St. Thomas also accepts the doctrine of original sin. Adam, the first man, disobeyed God. This resulted in the corruption of the nature of man. Adam realized this and felt guilty. Adam's sin is transmitted to future generations. Only God can redeem man and save him or her. Natural man must prepare himself or herself for the 'spiritual man'. The latter is one in whom God's grace operates and thus can achieve higher levels of perfection. This Aquinas asserts, is not possible for an Aristotelian man in whom God's grace does not operate. Aristotle's God is not the redeemer or savior God. This concept of God is the idea of God who is away from and indifferent to what happens in the world. He is the unmoved mover who is indifferent to human affairs.

13.4.2. Virtues:

Thomas's ethics is based on the concept of 'first principles of action' In his *Summa theologiae* he wrote: Virtue denotes a certain perfection of a power. Now a thing's perfection is considered chiefly in regard to its end. But the end of power is act. Wherefore power is said to be perfect, according as it is determinate to its act. Moral virtues are to be guided by reason.

Moral virtues are brought about by the direction of reason. Temperance is to seek pleasure rationally; courage is to react to the threat of harm rationally. The virtues of practical intellect are art and prudence; the virtues of theoretical intellect are insight, science and wisdom. Thomas distinguishes between pleasure or happiness of this life and the eternal pleasure or eternal happiness which one gets in the next life. For the present life acquisition of the virtues is necessary. But for the next life the grace of God is required in the form of virtues, these are theological virtues.

Thomas Aquinas talks about the cardinal virtues, according to him they are prudence, temperance, justice and fortitude. They are revealed in nature and are binding on everyone. Besides these virtues he talks about the theological virtues. There are three theological virtues faith, hope and charity. These are somewhat supernatural and are distinct from other virtues in their object, namely, God:

Now the object of the theological virtues is God Himself, Who is the last end of all, as surpassing the knowledge of our reason. On the other hand, the object of the intellectual and moral virtues is something comprehensible to human reason. Wherefore the theological virtues are specifically distinct from the moral and intellectual virtues. Mere moral and intellectual virtues may not lead a person in the attainment of his last end. It is only through theological virtues one can reach to God which is an ultimate end of

human action. Thomas identified the goal of human existence as union and eternal fellowship with God. This goal is achieved through the [beatific vision](#), in which a person experiences perfect, unending happiness by seeing the essence of God. The vision occurs after death as a gift from God to those who in life experienced salvation and redemption through Christ.

The goal of union with God has implications for the individual's life on earth. Thomas stated that an individual's [will](#) must be ordered toward right things, such as charity, [peace](#), and [holiness](#). He saw this orientation as also the way to happiness. Indeed, Thomas ordered his treatment of the moral life around the idea of happiness. The relationship between will and goal is antecedent in nature "because rectitude of the will consists in being duly ordered to the last end [that is, the beatific vision]." Those who truly seek to understand and see God will necessarily love what God loves. Such love requires morality and bears fruit in everyday human choices.

Thomas blended Greek philosophy and Christian doctrine by suggesting that rational thinking and the study of nature, like revelation, were valid ways to understand truths pertaining to God. According to Thomas, God reveals himself through nature, so to study nature is to study God. The ultimate goals of theology, in Thomas's mind, are to use reason to grasp the truth about God and to experience salvation through that truth.

Thomas distinguishes between Philosophy and Theology, according to him Philosophy emphasizes the reason whereas theology emphasizes faith, and he also believes that man is free to choose he can make choices regarding the end of life. A person can get the highest Happiness in the next life.

13.5 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. Explain Thomas Aquinas views on Theology and Philosophy.
2. How Thomas Aquinas distinguishes between reason and faith?
3. Describe Thomas Aquinas' views on Ethics
4. State and Explain Thomas Aquinas' views on Freewill.

SOCRATES' METHODS AND ETHICS

UNIT STRUCTURE

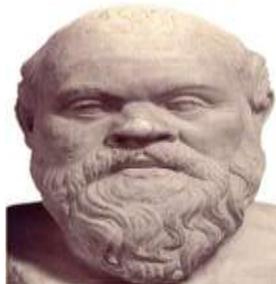
- 14.0 Objectives
- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 The Method of Socrates
- 14.3 Characteristics of Socratic Method
- 14.4 The Ethical theory of Socrates
- 14.5 Summary
- 14.6 Unit End Questions

14.0 OBJECTIVES

- To know about Socrates Philosophy
- To be acquainted with Socrates' Method (or Socratic Method)
- To understand Socrates' Ethics

14.1 INTRODUCTION

Socrates (about 469-399 BC) was a great Greek Philosopher. He completely gave himself to philosophical enquiry and as a result of this embraced martyrdom heroically. He did not write a single book on philosophy. Nevertheless he is rightly considered as great thinker of Athens. He accepts their responsibility, this he did by asking questions. Socrates also tried to arouse in youngsters the love of truth and virtue so that they could lead a good life. He is well known as a thinker who inspired Plato to do and to dedicate himself to philosophy.



Socrates

14.2 THE METHOD OF SOCRATES

One of the greatest contributions of Socrates to philosophy is his philosophical method. Socrates always insisted on making our ideas clear and defining correctly our concepts. Socrates professed ignorance in his discussions and debates.

Nevertheless he defeated those who claimed to know. That is known as Socratic irony.

Socrates also argued that through sincere dialogues the participants can discover truths, make their ideas and their meaning clear. Socrates was not a speculative thinker. His approach was practical. He would go to the marketplace and ask questions regarding moral and political notions used by the speakers in their discussions.

For instance people usually talk about politics but their ideas about politics are not clear. They are vague. They are not well – founded. He will so cross examine the participants that they feel the need to modify their ideas. Socrates would give relevant instances from day to day affairs and point out the incorrectness of the meanings of the notions or the ideas of the participants. Of course this does not mean that Socrates explicitly formulated his method of philosophical enquiry.

However historians of philosophy state that he put a philosophical method into practice. That is to say that his method of philosophising can be understood from his intellectual practice or rational discussions and debates. His thinking exemplifies a pattern of his philosophical procedure or method.

14.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCRATIC METHOD

The Socratic philosophical method has the following characteristics. They are:

1. Socratic Method is sceptical:

It begins with Socratic profession of ignorance of the truth of the subject matter under discussion. It is an expression of intellectual modesty or humility and honesty on the part of Socrates. This sceptical approach is not final but provisional and tentative. **‘Acceptance of ignorance’** of truth is the initial step in one’s pursuit of clear and correct knowledge of concepts.

2. It is conversational or dialogical:

Socrates believed that honest participation in a dialogue helped to clarify ideas and discover truths. Truth can be discussed or unfolded by questions and answer technique. Participants in the discussion and dialogue can begin with popular conceptions or hurriedly formed ideas.

In other words they can start with common sense beliefs and ideas. They may be borrowed from tradition or from the writings of poets and mythologists or preceding thinkers. When they critically analyze these ideas more correct or adequate conceptions emerge. This method, therefore, is known as *maieutic* method. It is the technique of intellectual midwifery. Just as a midwife (or nurse) helps a pregnant woman in the process of delivery, likewise Socrates assisted the participants to bring their ideas to birth. He never claimed to impart knowledge to others. His mother was a traditional midwife. Socrates accepted this model and called himself an intellectual midwife who through questioning and cross examination helped others to clarify their ideas and develop adequate conceptions regarding different topics such as justice.

3. Socratic Method is definitional and conceptual:

According to this method, the goal of knowledge is the attainment of correct definitions of social and ethical ideas such as justice, wisdom, courage, etc. Socrates insisted on defining terms and ideas.

4. Socratic Method is inductive or empirical:

Socrates always criticized provisional definitions by reference to particular examples or instances. In other words, tentative definitions and concepts were tested by reference to common experience.

5. Socratic Method is deductive too:

It begins with given definition or concepts, deduces its implications and then tests them. This definitional and deductive aspect of Socratic Method, historians of Philosophy suggests inspired Plato's dialectical method and exerted considerable influence on the development of Aristotelian logic.

Check your Progress

1. What did Socrates always insisted upon?
2. Define Socratic irony.

3. of truth is the initial step in one's pursuit of clear and correct knowledge of concepts.
14. Identify the goal of knowledge according to Socrates.

14.4 THE ETHICAL THEORY OF SOCRATES

In relation to Ethics, Socrates laid down three propositions:

1. Virtue is knowledge through concepts. So nobody does wrong knowingly. Therefore, vice is ignorance.
2. As virtue is knowledge, so virtue can be taught.
3. Virtue is one.

We will now look in detail the ethical theory of Socrates. For Socrates the key to a virtuous life was knowledge of the GOOD. If one knew the Good one would choose it. The question was, what is the Good? What is Best? Virtue would depend on knowledge.

Socrates believed that no one does wrong voluntarily. Evil is the result of ignorance. If people knew what was the right thing to do they would do it. We always choose what we think is the best or good for us. So, if someone chooses to do what we think is wrong, then that person made a mistake and must be educated to see the error. They mistook evil for the GOOD. Given options humans will choose the options that appears to be good for them. When they choose what other people call evil it is because they do not agree. They will continue to do the evil acts unless and until they no longer think of them as good. Socrates theory does NOT claim that people who do wrong do not know that the act is wrong.

Further, Socrates held that all virtue is one! Virtue is GOOD. Truth is GOOD. Beauty is GOOD. Knowledge is GOOD. The true, good and beautiful are all GOOD and united in the GOOD as ONE.

The ethical theory of Socrates not only influenced Greco – Roman moral theory, but even in the modern times has influenced modern theories of utilitarianism and hedonism.

Check your Progress

1. For Socrates the key to a virtuous life was knowledge of the
2. State the three propositions of the ethical theory of Socrates.
3. Why did Socrates held that all virtue is one?

14.5 SUMMARY

The most important thing about Socrates is that he gave a new turn to Greek thought. Through his portrayal in Plato's dialogues, Socrates has become renowned for his contribution to the field of ethics, and it is this Platonic Socrates who lends his name to the concepts of Socratic irony and the Socratic Method. According to Plato' Socrates also made important and lasting contributions to the fields of epistemology and logic, and the influence of his ideas and approach remains a strong foundation for much western philosophy that followed.

14.6 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. Explain Socrates' Method in detail.
2. State the characteristics of Socrates' Method.
3. Write in brief the ethical theory of Socrates.

PLATO AND ST. AUGUSTINE

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 15.0 Objectives
- 15.1 Background
- 15.2 The Tripartite Theory of the Soul
- 15.3 Critical analysis
- 15.4 Introduction
- 15.5 Theory of knowledge
- 15.6 Unit End Questions

15.0 OBJECTIVES

- To acquaint the reader with Plato's theory of Tripartite soul.
- To familiarize the reader with St. Augustine and his work.

15.1 BACKGROUND

In Book IV of the *Republic* Socrates and his disciples are attempting to answer whether the soul is simple (partless) or made of parts. This is Plato's Principle of Non-Contradiction. For instance, it seems that, given each person has only simple soul, it should be impossible for a person to simultaneously desire something yet also at that very moment be averse to the same thing, as when one is tempted to commit a crime but also averse to it. Both Socrates and Glaucon agree that it should not be possible for the soul to at the same time both be in one state and its opposite. From this it follows that there must be at least two aspects of soul.

15.2 THE TRIPARTITE THEORY OF THE SOUL

In the *Republic*, Plato (c. 427-347 BCE) introduces a new understanding of the human soul and rationality: the *Tripartite Theory of the Soul*.

Plato envisions each person as a body, which is inanimate, and a soul. The soul is what moves and controls the body. Plato further believes that the soul is not a simple thing, he fully recognizes that the soul is a very complex thing. To account for this

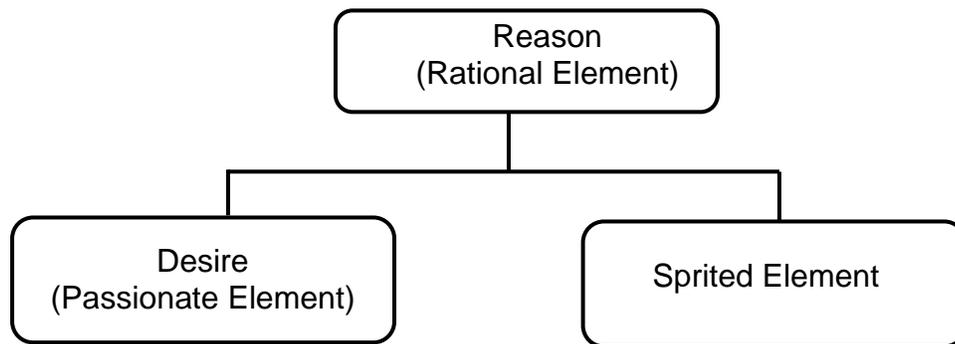
complexity he comes to the conclusion that the soul contains three separate parts, which control the different actions of a body. They are, "reason, "spirit," and "appetite." The first and most important part of the soul is reason. Then there is the Appetite or desire, followed by the Spirit.

These three parts of the soul also correspond to the different classes he observed in society (Guardians, Auxiliaries and Workers). Individual justice consists in maintaining these three parts in the correct hierarchy, where the logical part (aided by spirited) rules, and the appetitive obeys.

Plato maintains that these three parts of the soul when ruled evenly and correctly by the reason section, we will achieve a balanced morality. This balance of morality can be seen through certain virtues. Plato lists four virtues as being important, they are bravery, wisdom, temperance, and justice.

*"It is appropriate that the reasoning part should rule, since it is really wise and exercises foresight on behalf of the whole soul, and for the spirited part to obey and be its ally."
(Republic IV.441e4-6.)*

Plato's identification of these three distinct elements of a person's inner life is unique, and can be validated by directly turning inward to one's own experience of the self.



Tripartite Theory of the Soul:

1. The Rational Soul:

Reason being the most important part is also known as the intelligence of the soul. The mind (*nous*), our conscious awareness, is represented by the charioteer who is guiding (or who at least should be guiding) the horses and chariot. This is the part of us that thinks, analyzes, looks ahead, rationally weighs options, and tries to gauge what is best and truest overall. The reasoning section of the soul is responsible for the thinking things such as math and

numbers. More importantly it is the part of the soul that seeks knowledge and education, the reason part of the soul is why we are able to think things through and then make calculated and choices. This part of the soul is what makes philosophy possible, allowing us to think critically and analyze things from different perspectives. This part of the soul can be seen every time we get curious about something and seek answers instead of just accepting it as it is.

2. The Appetite Soul:

The Appetite includes all our myriad desires for various pleasures, comforts, physical satisfactions, and bodily ease and seeks instinctive fulfillment. This part of the soul pays close attention to our physical selves. It aims at seeking the physical pleasures or keeping us away from physical displeasure. A great example of this is how we all wish to be pain free, eat, sleep, and even our urges for material things which the reason and spiritual parts gain nothing from.

Plato notes that the desires can often be in conflict even with each other. This element of the soul is represented by the ugly black horse on the left. The appetitive part would be best represented by the belly and genitals.

3. The Spirited Soul: (Spirited element)

The third and last part to the soul is very important, it is the part of the soul that controls our spirit or passion. The spirited or hot-blooded part is that which gets angry when it perceives (for example) an injustice being done. This is the part of us that loves to face and overcome great challenges, the part that can steel itself to adversity, and that loves victory, winning, challenge, and honour. (Plato's use of the term "spirited" here is not the same as "spiritual." He means "spirited" in the same sense that we speak of a high-spirited horse, for example, one with lots of energy and power.) This element of the soul is represented by the noble white horse on the right. The spirited part is like the hot blood in the heart.

The spiritual part of the soul gives us the drive to make actions, or the moral compasses that we hopefully strive to listen to. Our passion for lives and others and even ourselves all stem from this part of the soul. An example of this portion of the soul is how we sometimes will tell white lies to others, although not nice, they usually are to keep that person admiring us.

Plato's Tripartite Soul			
Parts of the Soul	Rational	Spirited	Appetitive
Chariot	Charioteer	White noble	Black ugly horse

Part		horse on the Right	on the Left
Loves	Truth, Wisdom and Analysing	Honour and Victory	Pleasure, Money, Comfort, Physical Satisfaction
Desires	Truth	Self-Preservation	Basic Instincts – Hunger, Thirst, Warmth, Sex...etc.
The Virtue	Wisdom	Courage	Temperance
The Vice	Pride and Sloth	Anger and Envy	Gluttony, Lust and Greed
Body Symbol	Head	Heart	Belly/Genitals
Class in Republic	Guardians (The Philosopher King)	Auxiliaries/Soldiers (Keep the workers in their place)	Merchants/Workers (Self interested)

Plato's idea of the tripartite soul is an analogy to understand how human nature works. It is represented in a picture of a charioteer, and two horses. One horse is white, obedient, fit and of a pure breed where the second is black, a disobedient lumbering animal.

The charioteer represents 'reasoning'. He is in control of the two horses and is trying to guide them evenly along the journey of life. He is also knowledgeable and therefore is in charge. The white horse is called Passion; representing 'spirit'. Passion is ambitious and strives towards success. The black horse is called Desire. He represents the human appetite for example: Food, drink, sex and money. Together, these three aspects make up Plato's tripartite theory of the human soul.

15.3 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

A few people think that Plato believes these three elements of the soul should be **in balance** with each other, i.e., should each have its equal "say" in a person's life. But that isn't the way Plato sees it. He thinks the charioteer should be **in charge** of the whole system, should make the determining decisions about when to give each horse its rein and when to hold it back. The whole system should not be governed by the wishes of the horses (nor by the inertia of the chariot itself, the body) but by the rational decisions of the charioteer.

Finally, in Plato's vision, neither of the horses are good or bad in themselves. The appetites, for example, make great servants, but make very bad masters.

Check your Progress

1. Which philosopher and in which book a new understanding of human soul is introduced?
2. Identify the three parts of the soul.
3. Identify the different classes to which the three parts of the soul correspond to.
4. Reason being the most important part is also known as the of the soul.
5. The soul is represented by the ugly black horse on the left. The spirited part is like the hot blood in the heart
6. Plato's idea of the tripartite soul is an analogy to understand how works.

15.4 INTRODUCTION

Augustine of Hippo (November 13, 354 – August 28, 430) was Bishop of Hippo Regius. He was a Latin-speaking philosopher and theologian who lived in the Roman Africa Province. His writings were very influential in the development of Western Christianity.

15.5 THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

St. Augustine has advanced his theory of knowledge. He believed that the theory of knowledge should lead to 'possession and vision of God'. The theory of knowledge must lead to the contemplation of eternal things, which is very much mixed up with faith and knowledge. According to him, 'faith seeks, understanding finds'. Augustine believed that intellect is needed for understanding what faith believes. But to the question to what to believe and what not to believe, he takes help of revelation and Church which is the final authority in matters of faith. The church has been regarded as the viceregent of God on earth.

St Augustine was very much occupied in his life with the nature of Trinity, comprising Father, Son and the Holy Ghost. He appears to have adopted Trinitarian divisions, which are as follows:

- i. Knowledge has three stages of development, namely, sensation, empirical knowledge, i.e. judgements with the help of ideas, and finally contemplation on the divine essence.
- ii. Philosophy of the world has three aspects of creation out of Nothing, according to the Ideas and God. This nothing at times is called Matter.
- iii. Soul has three inseparable aspects of Being, Knowledge and Will. These three aspects are also held to comprise all reality.

St. Augustine following Plato makes soul superior to the body. Soul uses organs of sense as its instrument. He agrees that though sensation may be deceptive, but it can yet be used as the starting point for finding out God. To judge sensation, help of eternal and incorporeal ideas need to be taken. St Augustine thinks that these eternal ideas are in the mind of a *personal God*.

The question which now arises is that do we know God after we know the eternal ideas in the mind of a personal God? Augustine would say that in knowing the eternal ideas we see only darkly. Only in the next life, after our purification and reception of God's grace in the present life, we will have clearer vision of God.

The next question which arises is that do we know anything as true or certain? Augustine answers in affirmative and says that when there is perception, there is also perceiving being. Doubt with regard to the existence of perceiver cannot be raised, because 'if i doubt, then it means that I am there *to doubt*.' Doubt at once leads to the existence of doubter or the reality of consciousness.

For St. Augustine doubt implies 'will' and 'certainty by implication' which includes the norms of the good and the beautiful along with the logical truths. These Ideas are in the mind of God. Thus the inner certainty in the process of one doubt, not only of the self but the certainty of God too is implied.

For Augustine God is the most active will. So in relation to God, man remains passive. Man can know God even partly only when God chooses to will this for man. Not only man cannot know God by his own efforts, but even his receptivity with regard to God's knowledge is not possible without the Grace of God. According to the theological doctrine of Grace only when God chooses to reveal Himself then by His illumination alone man knows Him and the intelligible truths.

Augustine held firmly to this theory of divine illumination, For Augustine, being a man of faith, steadfastly believes on his

assertion that knowledge originates through divine illumination of ideas in the memory. In other words, the acquisition of knowledge is through God's illumination of thoughts in the memories of individual human beings. Knowledge of God is the foundation of all the knowledge existing in the world where he believes that man will acquire this knowledge if he himself is ready to know and understand God.

Check your Progress

1. Augustine believed that the theory of knowledge should lead to '.....'.
2. believed that intellect is needed for understanding what faith believes.
3. Name the three stages of development of Knowledge.
4. Identify the three inseparable aspects of Soul.
5. Where does one find the eternal ideas?
6. Doubt at once leads to the existence of a doubter and the reality of.....
7. For Augustine is the most active will.

15.6 UNIT END QUESTIONS

1. Discuss Plato's theory of tripartite soul.
2. Explain St. Augustine theory of Knowledge.
