UNIT 1: NATURE OF METAPHYSICS

UNIT STRUCTURE

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1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to :

- explain the nature of metaphysics
- discuss the relation of metaphysics with philosophy and epistemology
- describe the distinction of metaphysics from natural and formal sciences
- explain the relation of metaphysics with religion, mysticism and logic
- discuss the possibility of metaphysics.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Philosophy is an attempt to explain life and the universe as a whole. It is a rational speculation of life, its experience, and their ultimate value. It is

a speculation of the universe as a whole. So, philosophy is the most comprehensive of all enquiries and as such has the widest scope. The universe appears before us as a realm of phenomena. But behind phenomena there must be a reality from which the phenomena spring and by which they are ultimately explained. Metaphysics deals with the nature of this ultimate reality. In this unit, we shall discuss the nature of metaphysics and its relation to other disciplines.

1.3 NATURE OF METAPHYSICS

Metaphysics is a branch of philosophy which enquires into the nature of reality. It is an enquiry into the general nature of reality as opposed to appearances. It was called 'First Philosophy' by Aristotle. Metaphysics tries to determine the real nature of the world, life and God. It discusses the nature of the world including matter and life, the nature and existence of God, the immortality of the soul and freedom of the human will. Etymologically, the term 'metaphysics' is derived from two Greek words 'meta' and 'physica'. 'Meta' means 'after' and 'Physica' means physics'. Hence, the term 'metaphysics' literally means 'what comes after physics'. The term 'metaphysics' was introduced accidentally in the 1st century B.C. when Andronicus of Rhodes placed Aristotle's writings on first principles immediately after his writing on physics. Subsequently, the Scholastics used the term 'metaphysics' for studies which came after studies of natural phenomena. Later on, metaphysics came to mean the study of those phenomena which lie beyond nature.



LET US KNOW

Noumenon: A term associated with Kant, denoting things which lies behind the mind-imposed forms of time, space, and causation, and is therefore, unknowable.

Andronicus of Rhodes:(Fl.C. 60 B.C) A Greek Philosopher from Rhodes was the eleventhsscholarch of the peripatetic School.

Ontology is an important part of metaphysics. The term 'Ontology' is derived from two words 'Onto' and 'Logia', meaning 'real thing' and 'discourse' respectively. So, by Ontology we mean the science of reality as such or pure being. Pure being or reality as such is what only is or exists apart from any becoming- any changes, qualities or movements. Metaphysics deals with the nature of this pure being or reality as such.

Everything in this world has two aspects- an external aspect and an internal aspect. The external aspect is always changing whereas the internal aspect, unseen from outside, remains unchanged amidst changes in the external forms. Ordinary sciences deal only with the external aspects of things i.e. phenomena but not with reality as such or noumena. Metaphysics, on the other hand, deals with the internal, unseen, unchanging aspect of things. It deals with transcendental reality or noumenon.

Metaphysics starts with a reflective distinction between appearance and reality. For example, a straight stick half immersed in water looks bent. We say that the bent stick is the appearance and the straight stick is the reality. But the straight stick to be known as straight must appear straight to us and hence is itself an appearance. By 'appearances' we mean objects as they are given in our immediate experience or perception. All objects of our immediate experience are appearances. By 'reality' we mean objects as they are in themselves independent of our experience of them. Metaphysics deals with such questions-Is there any Reality behind the world of experience which is appearance? What is the nature of such a Reality if there be any? Is the ultimate reality material or spiritual?

Metaphysics deals with three issues. First, it makes a distinction between reality and appearance. Secondly, metaphysics provides a more comprehensive understanding of the world than which is provided by common sense and science. Thirdly, metaphysics refers to man's earliest attempt to understand the mystery of nature, its origin and future possibilities. In this sense, it is concerned with the first cause of the world.

Metaphysics investigates the nature of the world including matter and life, the soul and God or the Absolute. There are three main parts of

metaphysics viz. Ontology of Nature, Ontology of the Soul and Ontology of the Absolute. Ontology of nature investigates the nature of matter, time, space, causality, evolution, mechanism and teleology. Ontology of the soul investigates the nature, origin and destiny of the soul and its relation to body. Ontology of the Absolute investigates the nature and attributes of God or the Absolute and its relation to the world and the soul. It also discusses and examines proofs for the existence of God.

The aim of metaphysics is to apprehend reality. By reality we mean the ultimate reality which is the basis of everything and is beyond all contradictions. The ultimate reality is characterized by infinity, independence, transcendence and immutability. From the Indian point of view, metaphysics attempts to give spiritual perception, direct and immediate vision of reality.

Metaphysics investigates the nature of ultimate reality applying analytical and critical procedures. So, it is not totally speculative. It uses analysis as its method. But it also attempts to construct a comprehensive view of the universe and the ultimate reality. So, its method is constructive too. Metaphysical enquiry, therefore, combines in itself the elements of observation, analysis, deduction and common sense, intuition, dialectic and synthetic vision.

In order to bring out the nature of metaphysics clearly, we shall now discuss its relation to philosophy, epistemology etc.



LET US KNOW

Dialectic: The inverstigation of the truth of opposing opinions by logical discussions.

Plato (428-348 BC) Greek Philosopher. Major works- Theaetetus, Gorgias, Protagoras etc.

Aristotle (348-322 BC) Greek philosopher, Logician



Hegel (1770-1831) German idealist philosopher

Bradley: (1864-1924) British philosopher.

1.4 METAPHYSICS AND PHILOSOPHY

Different philosophers hold different views regarding the relation between metaphysics and philosophy. According to Plato, philosophy and

metaphysics are identical. Plato takes philosophy to mean 'knowledge of reality of being as such, of that which is.' It is the knowledge of 'the universal, unchangeable and eternal'. Like Plato, Aristotle also means by philosophy 'the science of being as such or of pure being'. Thus, Plato and Aristotle identified philosophy with metaphysics. Similar view was also held by modern idealists like Hegel and Bradley. Hegel holds that 'philosophy is the metaphysics of absolute reality which is a supreme conscious being'. Bradley in his 'Appearance and Reality' defines philosophy as 'an attempt to know reality as against mere appearance'. Thus, according to philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Hegel and Bradley, philosophy and metaphysics are identical. But it is not correct to regard philosophy and metaphysics to be identical because metaphysics is only a branch of philosophy. The logical positivists, who were a group of philosophers of the 20th century with a scientific bent of mind, deny the existence of any transcendental reality. According to them, what is given in our sense experience alone is real. Since metaphysical entities like God, Soul etc. cannot be perceived, they are thought to be unreal. Thus, the logical positivists deny the possibility of metaphysics. According to them, philosophy does not have any relation with metaphysics. But the above view of the logical positivists is untenable because sense experience is not the only source of knowledge. The Agnostics, on the other hand, do not deny the existence of any transcendental reality. They only maintain that such reality is unknown and unknowable. But a problem arises here i.e. if reality is unknown and unknowable then how can we know that it exists? To say that reality exists is to know something of it. Hence, reality is not unknown and unknowable. Therefore, the view of the Agnostics is also not acceptable.



LET US KNOW

Agonstics: A person who holds the existence of the ultimate cause, or God, and the essential nature of things are unknown and unknowable.

Logical positivists: Philosophers of 20th century with a scientific bent of mind. Moritz, Schlick, Otto Neurath, Rudlof Carnap, A.J. Ayer, Reichenbach are some important logical positivists.

In short, we can say that there is an intimate relation between metaphysics and philosophy. Metaphysics is an indispensable part of philosophy. But the scope of philosophy is wider than that of metaphysics. Philosophy includes not only metaphysics but also epistemology and axiology. Therefore, we can say that the relation between metaphysics and philosophy is the relation between part and whole.



ACTIVITY: 1

Give two exampls from day to day life showing the difference between appearance and reality.

Ans. .....

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is metaphysics? (Answer in about 63 words)

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Q 2: What are the three main parts of metaphysics? ((Answer in about 20 words)

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Q 3: What is the aim of metaphysics? (Answer in about 20 words)

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Q 4: State whether the following statements are True or False

a) Metaphysics deals with the nature of reality. (True/False)

b) Metaphysics is synonymous with ontology. (True/False)

c) Aristotle first introduced the term metaphysics. (True/False)

d) Metaphysics is not an indispensable part of philosophy. (True/False)

e) Plato identified philosophy with metaphysics. (True/False)

Q 5: Fill in the blanks:

a) The term ontology is derived from the words ——— and ———.

b) Aristotle called metaphysics————————.

c) Metaphysics starts with a reflective distinction between ——— and ————————

1.5 METAPHYSICS AND EPISTEMOLOGY

Epistemology is the science of knowledge. It is derived from the terms 'Episteme' meaning knowledge and 'Logos' meaning science. Epistemology is a science which enquires into the nature, origin, range and conditions of knowledge. It seeks to answer the following questions- What is knowledge? What is the origin and source of knowledge? What are the conditions of validity of knowledge? Is knowledge of ultimate reality possible at all or not? What is the range or limit of knowledge? Thus, epistemology is concerned with the investigation into the nature, conditions and limits of knowledge. Metaphysics, on the other hand, investigates the nature of reality.

Let us discuss the relation between metaphysics and epistemology in more detail. In discussing this relationship we are confronted with the question- whether the theory of knowing necessarily implies the theory of being.

The ancient philosophers did not attach much importance to epistemology as a necessary pre-requisite to metaphysical speculations. They dogmatically assumed an ultimate reality and deduced everything from it without any prior enquiry into the conditions, limits and possibility of

knowledge. They were rigid in assuming that it was possible to know the ultimate reality. This dogmatism on the part of the ancient philosophers led to conflicting theories of reality. For example, Thales regarded water to be the ultimate reality. Anaximenes regarded air, Parmenides regarded being, Heraclitus regarded fire, Pythagoreans regarded number as ultimate reality and so on. Thus, early Greek philosophers gave conflicting views of reality. So, before we indulge in metaphysical speculations, we must first know whether we are competent to know reality or not. If men are so constituted that they cannot know reality then metaphysics is impossible. A philosophy which does not include a discussion on the nature of knowledge is dogmatic. In modern times, Locke holds that epistemology is an indispensable preliminary to metaphysics. Kant carried on a transcendental enquiry into the problem of knowledge. To Kant, philosophy is merely the criticism of cognition. According to Locke and Kant, a metaphysical enquiry into the structure of reality should be preceded by an enquiry into the nature, conditions and limits of knowledge.

Thales(624-550 BC)Father of Greek philosopher.
Locke(1632-1704)British Empiricist Philosopher

But there are other philosophers who do not recognize the necessity of epistemological discussion in metaphysics. According to them, metaphysics is independent of epistemology. Bergson, for example, maintains that the mind can intuitively know the reality without taking the help of intellect. According to the Neo-Realists, there is no relation between metaphysics and epistemology. Both are distinct and independent sciences. The Neo-Realists hold that epistemology cannot give us any knowledge of the ultimate reality, for the existence of things is not dependent on knowledge.



Kant(1724-1804)German philosopher
Bergson(1859-1941) French Intuitionist Philos-opher

The Idealists, on the contrary, hold that metaphysics is dependent on epistemology. Metaphysics enquires into the nature of ultimate reality. But before we try to know the ultimate reality, we must make sure whether human knowledge is competent to know the ultimate reality. This can be known by an enquiry into the nature, conditions and limits of knowledge. Thus, epistemology is the fundamental basis of metaphysics.

Though epistemology is an indispensable preliminary to metaphysics, we must not identify the two. Epistemology and metaphysics are so intimately related to each other that one cannot stand without the other. Metaphysics depends on epistemology in so far as epistemology ascertains whether reality can be known at all. Epistemological enquiries are the foundation stones on which metaphysics can stand. Metaphysics, on the other hand, ascertains the nature of reality. Without a prior knowledge of the nature of reality, it is not possible to ascertain whether this reality can be apprehended by knowledge. Hence, epistemology is also dependent on metaphysics. A particular theory of knowledge leads to a particular theory of reality. Again, a particular theory of reality determines the theory of knowledge. Thus, the question of nature and validity of our knowledge and the question of the nature of ultimate reality are two sides of the same enquiry- two aspects of philosophy.



LET US KNOW

Cognition: The process of obtaining knowledge through thought, experience and the senses.

1.6 METAPHYSICS AND SCIENCE

According to Aristotle, metaphysics is the science of being as such or pure being. Although metaphysics is the science of pure being or reality as such, it is to be distinguished from natural sciences like physics, chemistry, astronomy etc. While natural sciences deal with a particular department of the world, metaphysics deals with the world as a whole. So, it is the most comprehensive of enquiries. Secondly, natural sciences deal with the phenomenal world which we perceive but metaphysics deals with the noumenal world or super sensible world. Thirdly, natural sciences give us knowledge of the characters of existent facts but not of their existence

or reality itself. It tells us what a thing is or how it is related to other things but not that it is. But metaphysics deals with things as it is in itself or reality. Moreover, the existence of physical things is taken for granted in natural sciences but metaphysics examines the grounds of existence. It claims to question whether there are really physical objects. Fourthly, empirical or natural sciences carry on them investigations of Nature on the assumption of certain basic concepts like space, time, causality, substance etc. These fundamental concepts are not thoroughly examined by these sciences but more or less assumed to be true. But metaphysics critically examines these fundamental concepts presupposed by the empirical sciences. It thus deals with the presuppositions of these sciences. Fifthly, metaphysics also differs from formal sciences like mathematics in being non-quantitative and non-numerical in method. It differs from empirical sciences because it does not increase our knowledge of particular facts or events but merely discusses the ways in which facts or events are to be interpreted.

Natural Science investigates whatever is perceptible to our senses. But the ultimate reality, which is the first cause of the world, is not given to our sense perception. So, science cannot investigate these phenomena. Therefore, it is left to metaphysics to investigate them. As distinguished from natural sciences, metaphysics may be considered as supra-scientific knowledge because it transcends scientific knowledge.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6: Does Metaphysics depend on epistemology?

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Q 7: What is the relation between metaphysics and epistemology according to the Idealists? (Answer in about 56 words)

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Q 8: Mention three points of difference between metaphysics and natural sciences. (Answer in about 73 words)

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Q 9: State whether the following statements True or False

a) Ancient philosophers gave much importance to epistemology as a necessary pre-requisite to metaphysics. (True/False)

b) According to Neo-Realists, there is relation between metaphysics and epistemology. (True/False)

c) Thales regarded air to be the ultimate reality. (True/False)

d) Metaphysics deals with the transcendental reality or noumenon. (True/False)

e) Metaphysics does not differ from natural sciences. (True/False)

10. Fill in the blanks:-

a) According to Bergson we can know reality through ———

b) Locke holds that epistemology is an indispensable —— to metaphysics.

c) Metaphysics deals with the nature of ————

1.7 METAPHYSICS AND RELIGION

Metaphysics as an enquiry into the meaning of reality has some affinity with religion. Both aim at interpreting the reality which lies behind them. Both are directly concerned with ultimate reality. But metaphysics differs from religion both in its spirit and method. Unlike religion, metaphysics deals with the ultimate problems of existence or being in a purely scientific spirit. Its object is intellectual satisfaction and its method is not one of immediate intuition alone as in religion but of critical and systematic analysis of our conceptions.

1.8 METAPHYSICS AND MYSTICISM

The fundamental aim of the mystic is to penetrate behind the veil of appearance to some ultimate reality. So, there is a common purpose between the mystic and the metaphysician. But there is a difference in their methods. The mystic does not have any interest in the world of appearance. His attitude towards appearance is purely negative. The metaphysician, on the other hand, ascertains the general character of the real as opposed to the merely apparent. But he also re-examines the realm of appearance in the light of his theory of reality to ascertain the relative truth of appearances. He arranges the various appearances in the order of varying approximation to truth. He shows not only what are the marks of reality but also how far each appearance succeeds in revealing the character of reality which is its ground. Thus, unlike the mystic, the metaphysician's attitude towards appearance is not negative. Further, the mystic's attitude towards the ultimate reality is emotional but that of the metaphysician is intellectual.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 11: What is the aim of metaphysics and religion?
(Answer in about 20 words)

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Q 12: How does metaphysics differ from religion?

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Q 13: Explain the metaphysician's attitude towards appearances.
(Answer in about 83 words)

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Q 14. State whether the following sentences are True or False

a) Both metaphysics and religion aim at interpreting the reality which lies behind appearances. (True/False)

b) Metaphysics does not differ from religion in its spirit and method. (True/False)

c) There is a common purpose between the metaphysician and the mystic. (True/False)

d) The metaphysician's attitude towards appearance is negative. (True/False)

Q. 15. Fill in the blanks:

a) Both metaphysics and religion are directly concerned with_____.

b) The difference between a metaphysician and a mystic lies in their_____.

c) The mystic attitude towards the ultimate reality is_____ but the metaphysican's attitude is_____.

1.9 METAPHYSICS AND LOGIC

Metaphysics investigates the nature of reality by rational reflection and synthesis. Its method is logical and rational. Thus, metaphysics is related with logic. Logic is generally defined as the science of reasoning or rational thought. It deals with the general principles of correct reasoning. Metaphysics and logic resemble each other on the universality of their scope and the analytical character of their methods. But there are important differences between metaphysics and logic.

1. Metaphysics deals with the general nature of reality but logic deals with the general principles of correct reasoning or inference. Metaphysics is the science of reality but logic is the science of reasoning.
2. Logic is concerned with both formal truth and material truth of reasoning. It examines if a conclusion follows from the given premises. Inductive logic examines whether the premises are materially true i.e. correspond with facts. But metaphysics deals exclusively with the characteristics of validly inferable reality. It investigates the ontological reality of the world, soul and God.

Hegel identified logic with metaphysics. According to Hegel, thought and reality are ultimately identical. He says, "whatever is rational is real and whatever is real is rational." The world is the external expression of the

Absolute Mind or Reality. The finite mind is also a finite reproduction of the Absolute Mind. The dialectical movement of thought in human mind corresponds to the dialectical movement of the Absolute Mind or the Reality. Thus, the framework of thought corresponds to the framework of Reality.

But the above view of Hegel is wrong. For human thought, though coherent and systematic, may not correspond with reality. Internal harmony or coherence is not the only test of truth. So, logic should be regarded as a distinct science from metaphysics. Logic is independent of metaphysics. However, metaphysics indirectly depends on logic because its methods must be logical. Metaphysics must depend on reflection and metaphysical reflection must be systematic and logical.

1.10 POSSIBLITY OF METAPHYSICS

Metaphysics makes a distinction between appearance and reality. All the objects of sensible experience are regarded as appearances or phenomena. They are things as they appear to us and cannot be regarded as reality. For things that appear to us may be very different from what they are in reality. For example, the earth appears to be flat, but it is actually round. Since reality may be something different from what it appears to be, we have no means of knowing the reality as it is in itself independent of sense experience. For whenever we try to know things as they really are, we are turning them into appearances. For instance, a straight stick to be known as straight must appear straight to us and hence it is an appearance. By reality we mean things in themselves which are independent of sense experience.

By metaphysics we mean knowledge of super-sensuous reality or things as they are themselves independent of our experience of them. If such knowledge of super sensuous reality is not possible, then metaphysics will become impossible. Empiricists like Hume have rejected the possibility of metaphysics. He says that all books written on the nature and character of super-sensuous “realities” like God, soul or immortality should be consigned to flames because we do not have sense experience about them.

Such books cannot but contain sophistry and illusion. Kant also rejected the possibility of metaphysics but he was not so thorough-going as Hume. He holds that metaphysical speculations about the super-sensuous reality is only natural to man. Our reason naturally forces us to speculate about things-in-themselves. But according to Kant, we have no knowledge of the super-sensuous things-in-themselves. Hence, though we have the psychological tendency to think about things-in-themselves, we have no knowledge about them. Therefore, metaphysics is impossible.

Herbert Spencer takes up the agnostic position of Kant when he holds that the super-sensuous Reality or the Absolute is unknown and unknowable. He holds that all objects of true human knowledge are relative. For example, when you know a tree you necessarily relate it to other trees you have seen and distinguish it from houses, rivers etc. Thus, a tree as known is related to other things. If there is Absolute which is not related to anything even to the knowing mind, then such and Absolute can never be known. Hence, things-in-themselves being unconditioned and absolute are beyond the scope of human knowledge.

In the twentieth century, Logical Positivists dubbed all metaphysical statements as

utterly meaningless and nonsensical. According to them, a statement is meaningful only if it can be verified by sense experience. Metaphysical statements such as 'God is good', 'The ultimate Reality is one', 'God is the cause of the world', 'The soul of man is immortal' etc. are not verifiable by sense experience, nor are they analytical statements like 'Snow is snow'. Metaphysical statements being neither empirical statements nor analytic statements are, therefore, meaningless and utterly nonsensical. The above view of the logical Positivists is not acceptable. It is no doubt true that metaphysical statements cannot be conclusively verified by sense experience but they can be weakly verified by facts of experience. Weak verification means that some observation is relevant to the statement's truth or falsity. If weak verification is accepted then metaphysics cannot be rejected as nonsensical. Moreover, the Logical Positivists unduly equate

experience with sense experience. But there are other types of experiences viz. moral religious, artistic etc. If we include all these experiences, then metaphysical statements will not appear to be nonsensical as the logical positivists have held.

In the history of philosophy we find many great philosophers who not only think that metaphysics is possible but have also done serious metaphysical speculations. Plato held that we can know reality with the help of reason and not by sense experience. Metaphysical speculations may also be of the nature of mystic insight but that is not the sufficient reason for rejecting metaphysics. Bradley very aptly says, "the critics of metaphysics are themselves brother-metaphysicians", for, in holding that reality is unknown and unknowable they only give us an alternative theory of reality. If we do not limit ourselves to sense experience alone but also include our moral and religious experiences we may have a glimpse of the transcendental thing-in-itself. Further, reality apart from its manifestations or appearances is a bare abstraction. It is reality that manifests itself in and through its appearances. Appearances are appearances of reality. Hence, there is no logical opposition between them. Thus, philosophy comprehends both phenomenology of the sciences and metaphysics within its scope. Metaphysics is an indispensable part of philosophy because philosophy seeks to understand phenomena not as such but as manifestations of some ultimate reality.



ACTIVITY: 1.2

- Give an example of metaphysical statement.

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- Do you agree with the Logical Positivists view that metaphysical statements are meaningless? Give reasons.

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 16: What is the similarity between metaphysics and logic? (Answer in about 63 words)

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Q 17: Distinguish between metaphysics and logic? (Answer in about 63 words)

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Q 18: Who said, "Whatever is rational is real and whatever is real is rational"

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Q 19: State whether the following sentences are True or False

a) Hume rejected the possibility of metaphysics. (True/False)

b) According to Kant we have knowledge of the things - in - themselves. (True/False)

c) Herbert Spencer holds that the Absolute is unknown and unknowable. (True/False)

d) Logical positivists do not deny the possibility of metaphysics. (True/False)

Q 20: Fill in the blanks:

a) According to Hegel, thought and reality are ultimately _____

b) The critics of metaphysics are themselves _____

c) According to Logical Positivists, metaphysical statements are____and____.

d) Herbert Spencer takes of the _____ position of Kant.



1.11 LET US SUM UP

- Metaphysics is a branch of philosophy which enquires into the nature of reality. It is the study of reality behind appearances.

- Metaphysics tries to determine the real nature of the world, life and God.
- There are three main parts of metaphysics viz. Ontology of Nature, Ontology of the Soul and Ontology of the Absolute.
- Metaphysics is synonymous with Ontology which is the science of pure being or reality as such.
- Metaphysics starts with a reflective distinction between appearance and reality. By 'appearances' we mean objects as they are given in our immediate experience or perception. By 'reality' we mean objects as they are in themselves independent of our experiences.
- Metaphysics deals with such questions as-Is there any reality behind the world of appearance? What is the nature of such a reality? Is the ultimate reality material or spiritual? etc.
- There is an intimate relation between metaphysics and philosophy. Metaphysics is an essential part of philosophy and philosophy as a whole includes metaphysics as its part.
- Epistemology is an indispensable preliminary to metaphysics.
- Although metaphysics is the science of reality, it is to be distinguished from natural and formal sciences.
- Both metaphysics and religion aim at interpreting reality. But metaphysics differs from religion in its spirit and method.
- There is a common purpose between a metaphysician and a mystic. But there is difference in their method.
- Logic is not to be identified with metaphysics as done by Hegel.
- Metaphysics is not impossible. Metaphysician statements are not meaningless as held by the logical positivists.



1.12 FURTHER READINGS

1) Taylor, A.E. (2004): *Elements of Metaphysics*. Surjeet Publications, Delhi

2) Whiteley. C .H. (1949): *An introduction to Metaphysics*. Methuen.& Co. Ltd., London.

3) Martin, Gottfried (1968): *General Metaphysics- Its problem and Method*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London.

4) Baruah, Girish (2008): *Metaphysics- Problems and Perspective*. Kalyani Publishers, Guwahati.

5) Sinha. J.N.: A Manual of Metaphysics



1.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No. 1 : Metaphysics is a branch of philosophy which enquires into the nature of reality. It is the study of reality behind appearances. Metaphysics tries to determine the real nature of the world, life and God. It discusses the nature of the world including matter and life, the nature and existence of God, the immortality of the soul and freedom of the human will.

Ans to Q No. 2 : There are three main parts of metaphysics viz. Ontology of Nature, Ontology of the Soul and Ontology of the Absolute.

Ans to Q No. 3 : The aim of metaphysics is to apprehend reality which is the basis of everything.

Ans to Q No. 4 :a) True b) True c) False d) False e) True

Ans to Q No. 5 : a) Onto and Logia. b) First Philosophy c) appearance and reality

Ans to Q No. 6 : Yes, metaphysics depends on epistemology

Ans to Q No.7: The Idealists hold that metaphysics is dependent on epistemology. Metaphysics enquires into the nature of ultimate reality. But before we try to know the ultimate reality, we must make sure whether human knowledge is competent to know the ultimate reality. This can be known only by an enquiry into the nature, conditions and limits of knowledge.

Ans to Q No. 8 : The three points of difference between metaphysics and natural sciences are - 1) Natural sciences deal with a particular department of the world but metaphysics deals with the world as a

whole. 2) Natural sciences deal with the phenomenal world which we perceive but metaphysics deals with the noumenal world or super sensible world. 3) Natural sciences presuppose certain basic concepts like space, time, causality, substance etc. which are assumed to be true. But metaphysics critically examines these fundamental concepts presupposed by the natural sciences.

Ans to Q No. 9 : a) False b) False c) False
d) True e) False

Ans to Q No. 10 : a) intuition. b) preliminary c) reality

Ans to Q No. 11 : The aim of metaphysics and religion is to interpret the ultimate reality which lies behind appearances.

Ans to Q No. 12 : Metaphysics differs from religion in its spirit and method.

Ans to Q No. 13: The attitude of the metaphysician towards appearance is not negative like that of the mystic. He not only ascertains the general character of the real as opposed to the merely apparent but also re-examines the realm of appearances to ascertain its relative truth. He arranges the various appearances in the order of varying approximation to truth. He shows not only what are the marks of reality but also how far each appearance succeeds in revealing the character of reality which is its ground.

Ans to Q No. 14 : a) True b) False c) True d) False

Ans to Q No. 15 : a) ultimate reality. b) methods
c) emotional and intellectual

Ans to Q No. 16 : The similarity between metaphysics and logic lies in the universality of their scope and the analytic character of their methods.

Ans to Q No. 17 : The differences between Metaphysics and logic are - 1) Metaphysics deals with the general nature of reality but logic deals with the general principles of correct reasoning or inference. Metaphysics is the science of reality but logic is the science of reasoning. 2. Logic is concerned with both formal truth and material truth of reasoning. But metaphysics deals exclusively with the characteristics of validly inferable reality. It investigates the ontological reality of world, soul and God.

Ans to Q No. 18 : Hegel

Ans to Q No. 19 : a) False b) False c) True d) False

Ans to Q No. 20 : a) Identical b) brother-metaphysicians

c) meaningless and nonsensical d) agnostic



1.14 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short Questions

Q 1: What is the etymological meaning of metaphysics?

Q 2: What do you mean by ontology?

Q 3: What is the aim of metaphysics?

Q 4: What is reality?

Q 5: What is appearance?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Briefly explain the nature of metaphysics.

Q 2: State Aristotle's definition of metaphysics.

Q 3: What are the three main parts of metaphysics? Explain briefly

Q 4: Is philosophy identical with metaphysics? Discuss

C) Write Short Notes (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Metaphysics

Q 2: Relation between metaphysics and epistemology

Q 3: Logical positivists' view on metaphysics

(D) Distinguish between (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Appearance and reality

Q 2: Metaphysics and epistemology

Q 3: Metaphysics and natural science

Q 4: Metaphysics and religion

Q 5: Metaphysics and logic

(E) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1. Discuss the nature of metaphysics

Q 2. Explain the relation of metaphysics with philosophy

Q 3. Is epistemology an indispensable preliminary to metaphysics? Discuss

Q 4. Distinguish metaphysics from natural and formal sciences

Q 5. Discuss the possibility of metaphysics

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