

**PHL 101**

**2023/24 CLASS NOTES**

**BY OLAYINKA U. OKUNOLA**  
**[COMRADE OLA]**

**INTRODUCTION TO PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY 1**

Course Outline Drafted by **Comrade Ola'**

**1. Definitions of Philosophy**

**2. Conceptions of Philosophy**

- Socratic Conception
- Philosophy as Analysis
- Philosophy as Unity of Theory & Practice
- Philosophy as Contemplation

**3. Why Study Philosophy?**

**4. Misconceptions of Philosophy**

**6. Epistemology**

- Nature of Knowledge
- Scope of Knowledge
- Extent of Knowledge
- Types of Knowledge ( APRIORI Analytic & APOSTERIORI Synthetic)
- Sources of Knowledge (Rationalism & Empiricism)
- Truth
- Theories of Truth

**7. Ethics**

- Definition of Ethics
- Branches of Ethics
- Major Ethical Concerns

**8. Logic**

- As the Science of Reasoning
- Two Types of Reasoning (Deductive & Inductive) **should be done fully in second semester's PHL 104**

## 9. **Metaphysics**

- *Some Metaphysical Problems*
- *Mind & Body Problem*
- *The Problem of the Existence of God*

## 10. **African Philosophy**

- *African Social & Political Philosophy*

Olayinka U. OKUNOLA

Comrade Ola'

14/11/2023

Philosophy is a course that is hard to define. Because of the fact that philosophy is a discipline that cut across other discipline.

The etymology of the word Philosophy has its root in Greek language. It's a combination of two Greek words, **Philo** which means love and **Sophia** which means wisdom. Thus, philosophy is loosely translated into love of wisdom. It's therefore safe to say philosophy can be generally understood as a critical examination of existence and everything that pertains to it. Now that we know how hard it is to define philosophy, in what ways can we characterise philosophy?

## FOUR CONCEPTIONS OF PHILOSOPHY

-SOCRATIC CONCEPTION

-PHILOSOPHY AS CONTEMPLATION

-PHILOSOPHY AS ANALYSIS

-PHILOSOPHY AS UNITY OF THEORY & PRACTICE

**SOCRATIC CONCEPTION:** The history of philosophy is incomplete or almost impossible without mentioning Socrates who considered the father of Greek philosophy. **Socrates** was a Greek philosophy from Athens and he is considered the father of Western Philosophy. His method of Philosophy is to always approach issues with the assumption of ignorance. Though he was considered the wisest man in his society, he would always assume ignorance when approached. **Socrates** used a method of dialogue called elentic method and this method is an argumentative dialogue between a teacher and a student. It involves a continual probing by asking questions from the students in order to explore the beliefs of that student and help him or her to form critical views. Therefore for him, the method of philosophy is to first assume ignorance and question everything you think you know. In this process of questioning, it's possible to get into a state of aporea which means a state of

confusion. He also positioned that philosophers ought to be moral examples in a society and should always stand on what's true or right even when it's at their own detriment.

**PHILOSOPHY AS CONTEMPLATION:** This method is credited to a great British philosopher called **Bertrand Russell**. He positioned that the best way to attain knowledge is to understand that the value of philosophy isn't in answers but in questions. Therefore, you may not find answers to your quest but your knowledge would be deepened in the process of examining what you believe. Philosophy as contemplation requires the willingness to abandon personal views, opinions and beliefs in the face of superior arguments. Philosophy as contemplations requires us to be citizens of the universe and not private individuals ie you will need to understand that your personal belief is not as important as the one of society. It also involves questioning everything but not in a dialogue form. It also emphasises the open endedness of issues.

**Olayinka Okunola**  
**Comrade Ola'**

**16/11/2023**

**Philosophy as Analysis:** This method of Philosophy is credited to **Ludwig Wittgenstein**. His method of Philosophy emphasises that the role of philosophy is to change the world positively and not just to acquire for its own sake. And for him, philosophy is the mother of all other disciplines and ought to occupy that space, therefore, Philosophy is to help other disciplines break difficult concepts into simpler ones and then do linguistic and conceptual analysis on these concepts. Philosophy thus ensures that words and concepts and language are properly used so as to prevent abuse.

**Philosophy as Unity of Theory & Practice:** This method of Philosophy dates back to a great German Philosopher called **Karl Marx**. According to him, it's not enough to interpret the world in different ways or it's not enough to analyse concepts, philosophers need to combine this theory with practice before it can meaningfully change the world. To him, to change the world, the present structure must be discarded. If necessary, through a violent revolution, this will give birth to a more viable political and economic unification of members of a society. He argues that the bane of the problems of society is class struggle i.e a situation where a few people in the society hold on to political and economic powers and use this to exploit the majority. The few who hold those political and economic powers are capitalists and the exploited majority are the workers. These two classes according to him, are in constant unity and struggle. They are in constant unity because they depend on each other. They are in constant struggle because they have opposing interests. The capitalists want to make more wealth at the expense of the workers and the workers want more wages that the capitalists are not willing to give. Therefore according to **Marx**, Philosophy ought to put an end to class struggle and change society for the better and this is how to move beyond analysis and combine theory with practice.

## Why Study Philosophy?

- Philosophy improves your problem solving skills
- It gives you the skills to differentiate good reasoning from bad ones.
- It involves your analytic skills such that develop better communication skills
- It improves your persuasive powers such that you develop the ability to convince an audience to accept your ideas or policies
- It won't only improve your verbal communication skill but also your writing skills
- It will teach you tolerance

*Olayinka Okunola*  
**Comrade Ola'**

**20/11/23**

*I apologize for the inconveniences caused by the recent change in time scheduling and the PA system issue today. Rest assured, our Philosophy students and their class representative are diligently working to procure a new PA system by the week's end.*

### **Note**

Philosophy is an intellectual pursuit concerned with understanding and explaining reality—an endeavor that involves everyone.

As an academic discipline, Philosophy addresses questions about the universe and everything within it in a structured and technical manner.

### **Misconceptions about Philosophy**

- Philosophical questions are considered unanswerable.
- It's perceived as a mere individual's viewpoint on a specific aspect of life.
- There's a belief that truth in philosophy is relative. While some aspects may relate to custom or culture, universal truths exist and are the essence of philosophical pursuit.
- There's a misconception that philosophy denies the existence of God. However, philosophy aims to fulfill the biblical principle of 1st Thessalonians 5:21, encouraging us to "prove all things, hold that which is good." Philosophy is an attempt to scrutinize and understand.

## **CORE BRANCHES OF PHILOSOPHY**

These branches address problems not covered by other disciplines:

- *Metaphysics*
- *Epistemology*
- *Ethics*
- *Logic*
- *History of Philosophy*

Controversies exist about the major branches, with some considering logic as a tool and history of Philosophy as a record. However, philosophy operates as a cohesive system where all branches work together. There's a perspective that the branches are for convenience, and in reality, there's no strict demarcation. Philosophy oversees various disciplines through branches like Philosophy of Law, Science, and Education to ensure rational and reasoned answers to fundamental questions.

**METAPHYSICS:** This branch concerns the nature and scope of existence, addressing questions like "What exists?" and "What is the nature of existence?" The term "metaphysics" originates from the Greek word '*meta ta phusika*,' meaning '**works after the works of nature**.' This name was given by **Andronicus** when categorizing **Aristotle**'s works, signifying the exploration beyond the natural world.

**Olayinka OKUNOLA**  
**COMRADE OLA**

**22/11/23**

**Prof. Fasiku**

## **EPISTEMOLOGY**

**Epistemology** is the philosophical inquiry into the nature and scope of knowledge. It's concerned with the sources, types, scope, and limitation of human knowledge. It deals with the clarifications of concepts, terms, words etc used in making knowledge's claims. It furthers attempt to validate or justify the knowledge claim. Epistemological theories are used to systematically explore and explain the nature and content of what we claim to know, how we claim to know, the kind of evidence for the kind of knowledge we claim to have.

On nature of knowledge, Epistemology tries to ascertain what is knowledge different from opinion, belief, faith.

## **Knowledge & Belief**

**Knowledge** is generally considered to be information that is true and justified, supported by evidence or experience. **Belief**, on the other hand, is accepting something as true, often without direct evidence or proof. While knowledge is based on facts and reasons, belief can be influenced by personal feelings, faith, or cultural upbringing. Knowledge is more objective and verifiable, whereas beliefs can vary among individuals and may not be universally accepted.

Epistemology is what made that distinction between knowledge and faith, knowledge and opinions etc.

## SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE IN EPISTEMOLOGY

Two schools of thought are:  
Empiricism & Rationalism

**Empiricism:** argues that knowledge is sourced from sense experience. We have two types of empiricism.

moderate: it argues that knowledge comes from experience but also argues that we can know through other means.

radical: it argues that knowledge can only be sourced from sense experience. No more no less

**Rationalism:** argues that knowledge is sourced from reasoning. We have two types of Rationalism.

moderate: it argues that knowledge comes from reasoning but also argues that we can know through other sources.

radical: it argues that knowledge can only be sourced from reasoning. No more no less.

## KINDS OF KNOWLEDGE

### ***A priori & A posteriori***

**A priori:** the kind of knowledge we derived from reason alone is a priori knowledge. For instance  $7 + 5 = 12$ . There are statements we used in describing A priori knowledge are called **ANALYTIC statements**.

**A posteriori:** the kind of knowledge we derived from experience alone is a posteriori. Statements we used in describing A posteriori knowledge are **SYNTHETIC statements**.

Synthetic is based on probability while analytic is based on certainty.

(The origin of the word Epistemology comes from two Greek words, **Episteme** which means knowledge and **Logos** which means study/science/theory)

## ETHICS

**Ethics** is a core branch of philosophy that is concerned with the codes or set of principles by which men live. It's also known as Moral Philosophy. It tries to look at the questions of moral rightness or moral wrongness.

### ***There are three branches of Ethics***

**Descriptive Ethics:** It's a branch of ethics that uses the descriptive method of science to study morality. It describes.

**Prescriptive Ethics:** It recommends which actions are morally accepted and which actions are morally rejected on the basis of normative theories.

**Meta Ethics:** This type of Ethics does not prescribe nor describe morality but uses philosophy ( metaphysics, logic, epistemology ) to engage in moral discourse .

**Olayinka OKUNOLA**  
**COMRADE OLA'**

28/11/23

### ***Definition of Metaphysics***

It's a branch of Philosophy concerned with the fundamental nature of reality. Simply put, it's the aspect of philosophy whose subject matter is the fundamental nature of reality. However, if we define metaphysics as the underlying nature of reality, how then can we distinguish it from other disciplines? May other disciplines also study the nature of one thing or the other.

The major difference between metaphysics and other disciplines is that metaphysics focuses on ontology which is the study of the nature of reality. For instance, while psychology studies the human mind and sociology study the behaviour of humans in their environment, metaphysics will study the underlying nature of humans and the underlying nature of the mind if at all it exists.

### **Some major schools of thought in Metaphysics:**

**Idealism:** it's a metaphysical position that argues that reality is primarily constituted by ideas. **Plato** is considered the father of idealism. He argues that there is a world of forms

different from this world that we know and beyond ordinary human comprehension. **Plato** called the world that we know as the world of appearance. He argued that everything in this world if appearance is an imitation of its perfect form in the world of forms. Idealism simply states that the underlying nature of reality is idea.

**Materialism:** It's a school of thought in metaphysics that argues that the underlying nature of reality is matter i.e nothing exists beyond what we can observe. For them, nothing like spirit or soul or the world of forms.

**Realism:** it's the position that things exist independently of how we conceive them or how they are talked about. For instance, realist argues universal exist.

**Nominalism:** It's the metaphysical doctrine that what realists refer to as universals are nothing and above mere names. For nominalists, only particular object exists and how we describe the attribute of this object. For them, what we call universal is how we use words.

**Monism:** It's the metaphysical position that ultimate reality is one. For instance, humans are not body and mind, they are either body alone or mind alone.

**Dualism:** It's the school of thought that argues that there are two ultimate reality and two of them interact.

## **MAJOR METAPHYSICAL PROBLEMS:**

### ***Existence of God***

This is a metaphysical problem that addresses the fundamental belief in God. In addressing this, questions such as: does God exist? How many gods exist? What is the nature of God?

Most of these arguments are credited to Saint **Thomas Aquinas**. He was an Italian priest and a philosopher. His arguments for the existence of God are called the five ways. And these five arguments are classified in to two groups. The first category are the cosmological arguments and the second are the teleological arguments.

### **The cosmological arguments are:**

- Argument from Motion
- The First Cause argument
- Argument from Contingency.

### **The teleological arguments are:**

- The argument from gradation of beings.
- Argument from design.

## **COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS:**

### ***Argument from Motion***



The argument from motion is that God necessarily exists as an unmoved mover. We can observe that there's motion in the universe, things move from potentiality to actuality. A kitten grows to a cat and a seed can grow into a full tree. Nothing in nature can move from potentiality to actuality by itself, there must be outside it, moving it from potentiality to actuality. In other words, things in nature are moved by some force outside them, hence, if object A move in nature, there is an object B moving it, if B moved, there is C moving it and so on. This train cannot go on ad infinitum, there must be a force outside nature responsible for this train of motion. Therefore, God exists as that force outside nature i.e God necessarily exists as the unmoved mover.

### ***The first Cause argument***

God necessarily exists as the first efficient cause. There is nothing that exist in nature without a cause, There is nothing that exists in nature that has the power to cause it, Each thing in nature is caused by something else that exist independent of it. The search for the cause of a thing in nature, We cannot search for the cause of things endlessly. To avoid infinite regress, we must find a first efficient thing outside nature that can cause other things but wasn't cater, Therefore, God necessarily exists as the first efficient cause.

### ***Argument from Contingency***

God necessarily exists as non contingent. The universe may or may not exist and that means it's contingent. It's possible to conceive of nature and things in it as not in existence. Things in nature can come into existence and go out of existence because they are not necessary. Simply put, things in nature are contingent, they can be here today and not here the next day. Things in nature that are contingent cannot account for the existence of the universe i.e nothing in nature is necessary enough to warrant the existence of the universe. This suggest that there is a non contingent or necessary being outside nature that determines the existence of contingent things in nature. Therefore, God necessarily exists as that non contingent being outside nature responsible for the contingent things in nature.

***Olayinka U. Okunola,***  
***Comrade Ola'***

05/12/23

## TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENTS

### ***Argument from Gradation of Being:***

This argument posits that God exists as the ultimate standard for perfection, with premises based on the gradation observed in nature.

#### Premises:

- Nature exhibits varying degrees of gradation.
- Comparison determines gradations; better or worse is relative.
- The existence of something perfect is implied by these gradations.
- Therefore, God is the maximum measure of perfection, the source of all gradations.

### ***The Argument from Design:***

This argument asserts that God is the Grand Designer of the universe, evident in the organized workings of nature.

#### Premises:

- Nature operates by design and follows organized patterns.
- Natural laws indicate design, but nature lacks inherent self-coordination.
- Design implies a designer outside of the designed.
- Thus, God exists as the knowledgeable force organizing natural laws and designs.

### ***Some arguments for the existence of God not by St. Thomas Aquinas:***

#### ***Moral Argument:***

**Kant's** perspective asserts that humans rely on morality for peaceful coexistence. As humans alone may struggle to establish moral codes, the existence of a force greater than humans is proposed – God as the creator of morality.

#### ***Argument from Justice:***

This argument contends that justice is a necessary element for humans, but they may not possess the inherent ability to establish a sense of justice. Therefore, God is posited as the creator of justice in nature.

#### ***Wager Bet Argument (The Pragmatic Argument):***

**Blaise Pascal** argues for belief in God as a rational decision. Living as if God exists, according to **Pascal**, is a wise choice. If God doesn't exist, there's nothing to lose, but if He does, belief could lead to heavenly rewards. Conversely, disbelief, if God exists, may result in significant loss.

*Olayinka OKUNOLA,  
Comrade Ola'*

12/12/23

***RUSSELL AGAINST THE ARGUMENTS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD IN HIS PAPER,  
"Why I am not a Christian/theist?"***

**Russell** argued that there is no logical reason for why the first cause argument, argument from contingency, and argument from motion stop their search for the first cause, necessary being, and unmoved mover as God. For him, **Aquinas** could have stopped at nature or continued into infinite regress like numbers. This shows that **Aquinas** was not arguing logically but trying to insist that God exists even when it's not logical to do so.

**Russell** further argued that there is no evidence of the existence of any being outside nature that's an unmoved mover or a first cause or a necessary being. Moreover, there is nothing in the argument that shows that such a being exists. For **Russell**, there is sufficient evidence that nature exists, but there is no sufficient evidence for the existence of God. **Russell** argued that many of the things we call designs and natural laws are natural adaptations and human conventions. According to him, things in nature adapt to the environment over time for survival; therefore, science explains that some designs and so-called natural laws are adaptation patterns, not evidence of the existence of any supreme being. He also argued that some designs are a product of chance and cannot be explained as permanent designs created by God. Nature evolves; therefore, some designs and natural laws can change depending on the new realities and environmental changes, for example, climate change. This obviously suggests that nature self-regulates; if there is indeed a God responsible for these designs, they should be immune to change. **Russell**, therefore, argues that the teleological arguments are not sufficient to prove that God indeed exists.

Furthermore, **Russell** argued that if indeed God is responsible for the activities and designs in nature, then the realities in nature contradict the attributes ascribed to God. If God is indeed omniscient, omnipotent, and omnibenevolent, then natural disasters should not exist. We cannot, on the other hand, claim that God is All-Knowing, All-Powerful, All-Loving, and then, on the other hand, argue that there are disasters that are natural. For instance, landslides, earthquakes, tsunamis, and so on. If God is indeed All-Loving, he would not want to see his children suffer. If he is All-Powerful, then he can put a stop to all the natural disasters. For **Russell**, this shows that there is no evidence that God indeed exists.

***RUSSELL ON THE MORAL AND JUSTICE ARGUMENTS FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE***

According to **Russell**, this argument cannot justify the existence of God. First, just as we have in the TELEOLOGICAL and COSMOLOGICAL arguments, there is no reason why this argument should stop at God in the search for Morality & Justice. Second, it will lead to a dilemma: are actions just or right on their own? Or are they right or just because God says so? If it's the case that they are right or just because God says so, then it follows that originally, there is no justice or morality and justice. And if actions are right or just on their own, it then follows that God does not create them and God is even subject to them. From this, we can deduce that God does not exist.

**Russell** further argued that there is evidence that humans developed justice and morality in their attempt to coexist peacefully and survive. And there is evidence that justice and morality evolve & vary according to the need of each society. Moreover, there is too much injustice and immorality in nature, which is contradictory to the nature of God. He concludes that the COSMOLOGICAL arguments, the TELEOLOGICAL arguments, and the argument of morality and justice are not enough to prove God's existence. For him, people only believe God exists because they have been indoctrinated to do so.

### ***OBJECTION TO THE WAGER ARGUMENT FOR GOD'S EXISTENCE.***

One major objection to the wager argument is that there are so many doctrines and religions that are radically different & contradictory, so which one are we supposed to bet on, hence, it follows that if one bets on a particular religion and truly God exists but that religion isn't the true religion, one will sadly suffer the same fate as someone who does not believe in God. Each religion struggles as much as possible to show that it's a good religion, so which one exactly are we to bet on? Simply put, the wager bet argument does not capture the complex nature of religion & nature of God.

### ***Some basic concepts on the question of existence of God***

There are concepts that characterize various schools and thought on the existence of God, and they are as follows:

- **theism** - argues that God exists, can be known, can be worshiped.
- **monotheism** - argues that only one God exists
- **polytheism** - argues that many gods exist
- **atheism** - argues that there is no God within and outside nature.
- **agnosticism** - there is no evidence to prove whether or not God exists; hence, it's better to put that we don't know if God exists or not.
- **deism** - argues that God exists, he created the world and withdrew from it. He has nothing to do with what's going on in the world.
- **pantheism** - posits that God exists as nature.
- **panentheism** - argues that everything is in God i.e., nature is in God.

### **THE MIND & BODY PROBLEM**

It is a problem of how to characterize the relationship between our mental & physical state.

This metaphysical doctrine is credited to **Rene Descartes** in Modern Philosophy. He argued that the body and the mind are two separate entities and they have a relationship. **Descartes** used methodological skepticism to argue that humans consist of the body and the mind. In an argument called the "Dubito argument," he used three hypotheses to argue for the existence of mind and body: the dream hypothesis, God hypothesis, and evil genius hypothesis.

### **DREAM HYPOTHESIS**

According to him, when we are asleep, we can go into a dream state, and the dream state can be as real to us as our waking moment. He argued that it's possible we are in a dream state, where we think that the body exists.

### **GOD HYPOTHESIS**

He argued that since God is All-Powerful, is it not possible that he can deceive us into thinking that we have bodies when actually there is nothing like bodies?

### **EVIL GENIUS HYPOTHESIS**

He argued that it's possible there is an evil genius deceiving us into believing that bodies exist when there is actually no body.

However, he further argued that we often can distinguish between our dream/sleeping moment & when we are awake. He also argued that even if there is an evil genius, God is powerful enough to prevent this evil genius from deceiving us; however, the essence of this hypothesis is to show the existence of the body can be doubted. But only one thing is constant throughout these hypotheses: thinking is going on. We must think to do all this doubting; therefore, **COGITO ERGO SUM**, which means, ***I think, therefore, I am.***

The implication of this argument is that while the existence of the body can be doubted, the existence of the mind cannot be doubted, as thinking is undeniable. Therefore, **Descartes** asserts that the mind exists as the thinking thing.

*Some characteristics of the mind according to Descartes are:*

- It's a thinking thing
- It's a conscious thing
- It's independent of the body
- It's not physical
- It's indestructible
- It's indivisible

*Characteristics of the body:*

- It's physical
- It's not a thinking thing
- It's not a conscious entity
- Its existence is dependent on the mind
- The body is destructible
- The body is divisible.

**Descartes** argued that the body necessarily exists as the abode for the mind, i.e., the body is required for the accommodation of the mind. If indeed the mind is non-physical and the body is physical, it follows that the mind has different properties. How then can a non-physical entity that cannot occupy space and time exist in a physical entity that can? This is the mind-body problem! If indeed human beings consist of both body and mind, how do we explain the relationship between these two entities?

**Olayinka U. OKUNOLA,**  
**Comrade Ola'**

13/12/23

## **SCHOOL OF THOUGHTS ON MIND - BODY PROBLEM**

**Dualism:** argues that the world is made up of two entities, the material and the non material. Dualists reacting to the mind-body problem argue that the mind exist and the body exist. For instance, **Rene Descartes** argued that the mind and the body exist, the mind however has different characteristics from that of the body but the body accommodate the mind. To explain their interaction, **Descartes** argues there is a part of the brain called the pineal gland, this part of the brain according to him facilitate a causal interaction between the mind and the body.

Another school of thought responding to the mind-body problem is:

**Monism:** it argues that the world is made up of only one substance, this substance can be physical or non physical. Those who argue that the world is primarily matter are called materialist, while those who argue that the world is primarily not physical are known as idealist monists.

### **DUALIST THEORIES**

**Interactionism:** it's a dualist position that the mind and body are separate and there is a causal relationship between both entities. Some of the questions that are asked are:

- how can a substance without form or shape interact with it direct opposite?
- Descartes eventually dropped the idea of the pineal gland is part of the body. The implication of this is that the interactionism is yet to solve the mind body problem.

**Occasionalism:** the mind and the body are connected to God. Such that there is actually no

causal interact between both, what happened is that God intervene such that it appears there is a causal interaction between both when actually what occurs is occasional intervention by God.

But the implication is that if God does not exist, occasionalism would be false.

**Parallelism:** it's a dualist position that argues that although the mind and body exist, both entities are parallel. This suggest that there is actually no causal relationship between the body and mind. Mental events occur on their own and physical event occur on their own which means they are independent of each other. A problem is that parallelism seems to be a redundant theory because it fails to explain why physical event and mental state are often corresponding and this theory is contrary to what we know or what we can observe about physical and mental state.

**Pre established harmony:** it's a dualist position that argues that the relationship between the mind and the body is pre arranged by God i.e God already designed humans such that some mental state will invoke some physical events and some physical events will invoke some mental states. The implication is that there is no fresh causal interaction between the mind and the body. This position relies on the existence of God that's yet to be proven and it compounds the mind body problem. Any objection to this position is that it negate the fact that some mental events do not always produce corresponding physical event.

**Epiphenomenalism:** it's a dualist position that argues that the mind and the body exist but mental are by product of physical event. And the interaction is one way. The problem is that it reduces dualism to monism, if the interaction is one way, what happen to the other?

### **MONIST THEORIES**

**Identity theory:** it is a monist theory that states that what we call the mind is nothing more than functions of the brain. The implication is that only bodies exist and what dualists like Descartes call the mind are just activities if the brain.

**Behaviorism:** it's a monist position that argues that dualists call the mind is a combination of behaviours exhibited by the body.

**Central State Materialism:** Central State Materialism argues that activities that are ascribed to the mind are inner state of the central narvour system, hence, there is no entity such as mind.

**Double Aspect Theory:** it's a monist position that states that what we call the body and the mind are just different attribute of the same substance.

**Olayinka U. OKUNOLA,**  
**Comrade Ola'**

19/12/23

DR. OYELAKIN ( *Philosophy Acting Head of Department* )

## EPISTEMOLOGY

Philosophers like *D W Hamlyn* would put Epistemology as the theory of knowledge. It has its etymology in two Greek words, Episteme which means knowledge and Logos which means science/theory/study of. Hence, it's etymologically, it's the study of knowledge. It has been defined to be that branch of philosophy that deals with the phenomena of knowledge. It deals with questions like: What is the source of knowledge? What is the nature of knowledge? The scope of knowledge? The justification? Simply put, epistemology tends to ask vital questions about what we claim to know.

Some of these vital questions is the question: what is knowledge? Can we know anything at all? Is knowledge not an illusion of the mind or sense? Can anyone know anything at all? Is it possible for human brain to acquire knowledge? Was man created to know? If at all we can know, then how can we know? How can we know that we know?

### ***What is then the definition of knowledge?***

Since during the time of *Plato*, knowledgeq been traditionally defined as **JTB** has( Justified True Belief ). For an established belief to be knowledge, it has to be true. However, a true belief is not yet knowledge. So, for a true belief to become knowledge, it has to be justified. These are three criteria for knowledge traditionally. These three are considered to be both necessary and sufficient for acquiring knowledge. It follows a game that knowledge is not equal to belief, it's also not equal to true belief but to acquire knowledge epistemologically, your belief must be true and must be justified.

*E.L. Gettier* came to challenge that JTB criteria for knowledge. It can be proved, for Gettier, that a particular epistemic agent can satisfy the three criteria and yet, no knowledge. He challenged the traditional definition of knowledge. For him, for there to be knowledge, there is a need for (i) a revaluation of the criteria for knowledge acquisition ( ii ) a need for the fourth criterion for knowledge.

*If we can know anything at all, from where will that knowledge come from?*

This is basically talking about the **source of knowledge**. Epistemologically, there are two main sources:

**Empiricism**: the epistemological school that argued that genuine knowledge is acquired



through experiences. Knowledge acquired from the senses are acquired through our five sensual organs. Knowledge acquired through the senses is empirical and factual. For the empiricists, experience serves as the source for knowledge. The position of this school has two types:

**Radical**: the radical empiricists claim that experience is the only source of knowledge. For them, no genuine knowledge can be acquired through any other source i.e whatever knowledge that doesn't come from experience cannot be regarded as genuine knowledge. It's also called wholesale or global empiricism.

**Moderate**: the moderate empiricists claim that experience is the ultimate source of genuine knowledge. For the moderate empiricists, even if it's possible to acquire knowledge or a belief to arise from any other source, would require experience for its final justification. It's also known as mitigated or local empiricism.

There are many philosophers that are empiricists. Examples are **John Locke** ( radical ), **Thomas Hobbes** ( radical ), **Francis B, David Hume** ( radical ) and **Bishop George Beckley**.

**Rationalism**: for this school, reason is the source of any genuine knowledge. For the rationalists, reason produces genuine knowledge. For the rationalists, there is no knowledge that exist in the world that was not first some ideas in some minds. Some philosophers that are rationalists are: **Rene Descartes** ( moderate ), **Baruch Spinoza**, **Godfrid Leibnitz**, **Plato**, **Immanuel Kant** and **Aristotle**. There are two types:

**Radical** : the radical empiricists claim that reason is the only source of knowledge. For them, no genuine knowledge can be acquired through any other source i.e whatever knowledge that doesn't come from reason cannot be regarded as genuine knowledge. An example is **Permenides of Elea**.

**Moderate** : the moderate rationalists claim that reason is the ultimate source of genuine knowledge. For the moderate rationalists, even if it's possible to acquire knowledge or a belief to arise from any other source, would require reason for its final justification.

**Olayinka U. OKUNOLA**  
**Comrade Ola'**

**09/01/24**

**SCOPE OF KNOWLEDGE**

### Kinds of knowledge:

- **Know how:** this is basically talking about practical knowledge. For instance, I know how to sew, I know how to dress, I know how to *knack* etc. Epistemology is not concerned with this type of knowledge. This is the foundation of natural science.

- **Revealed Knowledge:** When you meet sacred individuals like prophets, the kind of knowledge you gain from them is considered to be revealed knowledge. This is also not a concern of epistemology given the fact that revealed knowledge is not substantive in epistemology and it's not significant. No significant disagreement can arise from it.

- **Propositional knowledge:** It's basically the concern of epistemology. It's declarative. Declarative statement in philosophy is a statement whose truth value can be determined. It's the knowledge of 'I know that'. This type of knowledge either affirm or deny, for instance, I know that God exist ( affirm ) and I know God does not exist ( deny ). It's a type of knowledge that is expressed with significant statement. A statement is epistemologically significant if it is meaningful. A statement is meaningful if it's capable of being true or false. Epistemology is restricted to Propositional knowledge, hence, the scope of epistemology is Propositional knowledge.

### **Nature of Knowledge ( definition )**

When we talk about the nature of knowledge, we are raising the question of what are the conditions without which there is no knowledge. And to address such questions, epistemologists have identified three conditions earlier mentioned. For there to be knowledge, there must be a belief, for there to be knowledge, the belief has to be true, and finally, for there to be knowledge, the true belief has to be justified.

### **Justification of Knowledge**

When you make a claim, you make a knowledge claim. Every statement of true belief has to be justified if it's going to be considered as knowledge. When you say that *Comrade Ola is the part 1 Class Governor of Law*, that is expressing true belief and it's epistemic claim but when someone ask you how you know that, then you have to justify that your knowledge and this justification is what we are talking about and it's what makes knowledge; knowledge epistemologically or traditionally. Whenever you want to make a claim, think whether or not you can justify that your claim.

### **There are two types of justification.**

Justification may be **inferential** and **non inferential**. It's **inferential** when a statement of belief depends upon another statement of belief its acceptance. For instance, When you say *Comrade Ola is a Law student in OAU*, this is going to rely on another statement that *Comrade Ola is a student of OAU*. Statements like  $2+2=4$  is inferential. On the other hand, justification is **non inferential** when a statement of belief doesn't depend or rely upon another statement of belief for its justification. For instance, Descartes dictum: *I think,*

*therefore I am*. Descartes will argue that this statement justifies itself. It doesn't depend on another statement. It's either you deny it or affirm it. For him, when you deny it, you become irrational, hence, indubitable. Another example is when you say it's raining now. That's basic epistemic statement that doesn't require another statement for its justification. However, there are some epistemologists that will argue that there is no statement that is non inferential. There are some philosophers called the Infinitists,

## **Types of Knowledge**

### **Apriori**

### **Aposteriori**

The philosopher attributed with these two types is **Immanuel Kant**, a prominent German philosopher.

### **Apriori**

For him, Apriori knowledge is the type of knowledge that is acquired independent of experience. For Kant, the source of apriori knowledge is reason. Reason, for him, supplies knowledge apriori. Knowledge apriori for him possesses two criteria: (i) It's necessary ( this is because we cannot deny it without running into self contradiction ). Examples:

All bachelors are unmarried

All bodies extend

All circular objects are round

$2+3 = 5$

What is, is!

These examples express knowledge apriori. (ii) Its strict universality. That's this type of knowledge is universal. It means wherever you go, whatsoever language you say it, it remains the same thing like  $2+2= 4$ . Wherever you go in the world, it remains the same.

This kind of knowledge is expressed by **analytic statements** of proposition i.e you cannot have analytic knowledge, you cannot have apriori proposition but rather you will have analytic proposition and apriori knowledge. Apriori knowledge is the known that which is known. Apriori knowledge is the expressed that which is expressed. Analytic proposition is the proposition used to express apriori knowledge. According to Kant, analytic propositions engage with two principles, (i) it shows the principle of identity e.g Comrade Ola is Comrade Ola, All unmarried male are unmarried. (ii) A proposition is analytic if it demonstrates the principle of containment. This is when we are talking about the subject of the sentence and the predicate. Analytic proposition demonstrates the principle of containment when the meaning of the term in the predicate is contained on the meaning of the term in the subject. According to Immanuel Kant, analytic proposition is described as either illustrative or explicative meaning it breaks them down into smaller units. For instance  $1 + 1 = 2$ . You have just explicated it/ illustrated it.

### **A posteriori**

A posteriori knowledge as against a priori is a type of knowledge that has its source in experience. It's a knowledge that arises from experience. Its etymology means knowledge acquired after experience. For Kant, this type of knowledge also has two criteria: (i) it is contingent. By being contingent, it means that the denial of that knowledge won't lead to self-contradiction. It's contingent upon immediate fact. That it's not raining here right now doesn't mean it's not raining in another part of the world. When you say that: I know that it's not raining right now, it means that it's dependent on the fact that you've seen your physical environment. That's the immediate fact. (ii) it's relatively universal. Unlike a priori knowledge, it's not the same all over the world or everytime, it's dynamic, it's developmental. **Synthetic proposition** is used to express a posteriori knowledge. When they say something is synthetic, it means something that's not core or organic.

A proposition is synthetic when it's either augmentative (to support) ampliative. The only principle is that of contingent, new information is added to the subject of a statement. For instance, When you say *Comrade Ola is fair*, fairness lies outside of Comrade Ola.

From the inception of philosophical investigation, philosophers have been troubled with the question: **WHAT IS TRUTH?**

*Olayinka U. Okunola* ( **Comrade Ola** )

10/01/24

## TRUTH IN EPISTEMOLOGY

Truth is the adequation of things for **Aristotle**. To say that what is, that is true. To say that what is not, that is not true. But to say that what is not, that it is false. And to that that what is, that it's not is false. His view is objected by some philosophers that it does not include what a proposition signifies it only talks about the matter of existence. And to review his view, and this is how they do it: To say of what is soul, that's soul is true. And to say of what is not soul, that's not soul is true. His view is also fallacious because it's tautological, it's called fallacy of begging the question (known as *petitio principii*).

Till present, philosophers have not been able to achieve an objective definition of truth. Truth is a question in metaphysics and epistemology. Given the fact that philosophers have not been to achieve this goal i.e no univocal definition of truth, they have developed different theories of truth. Theories are basically hypothetical. We have many theories, however, we are going to consider three this semester.

They are:

- *The correspondence theory of truth*
- *The coherence theory of truth*
- *The pragmatic theory of truth*

**THE CORRESPONDENCE THEORY OF TRUTH :** For this theory, a statement is true if the proposition it propot to express correspond with what is happening in the world.

Examples:

Comrade Ola' is writing now.

It's raining now.

This is New Moot Court.

**THE COHERENCE THEORY OF TRUTH:** For this theory, a statement is true when the Proposition it propot to express is in agreement with an established body/system of belief. This theory argues that not all epistemic propositions can be subjected to the test of correspondence to determine their truth or falsity. For them, there are some epistemic propositions that cannot be subjected to correspondence.

Examples:

$1+2 = 3$

All cats are animals.

All bachelors are unmarried men.

According to this theory, to determine whether or not these statements are true, we have to ask the question 'to what established system of belief died it cohere?'

We have the:

Scientific system of belief

Linguistics system of belief

Mathematical system of belief

Logical system of belief

Social culture of belief.

For instance:

$2+2 = 4$  is true because it's in harmonous relationship with an established mathematical system of belief. It can't be true in isolation, it's true in connect to the truth in other mathematical propositions.

**THE PRAGMATIC THEORY OF TRUTH:** For this theory, the truth of a proposition is not determined by whether or not it corresponds with fact in the fact in the world, not by whether or not it coheres with an established system of belief but rather it's determined by the functions that it performs, by its utility.

For example, suppose someone believes that exercising regularly improves health.

According to the pragmatic theory, the truth of this belief is validated by the practical consequences: if this belief leads the person to exercise regularly, resulting in improved health, then it is considered true in a pragmatic sense.

Similarly, consider the belief that a bridge is safe to cross. Its truth, according to the pragmatic theory, is validated by whether people can safely use the bridge without any

accidents. If the bridge holds up and allows safe passage, then the belief in its safety is pragmatically true.

*Olayinka U. OKUNOLA*

*Comrade Ola'*

16/01/24

## ETHICS

Ethics/moral philosophy is a branch of philosophy whose subject matter is human conduct or behaviors i.e it deals with critical evaluation of human actions. Ethics talks about end of moral actions whether or not the end is good or bad. When we are evaluating human conducts, then we talk about right or wrong.

What end should a moral agent seek to attain? What ends are desirable or good?

For **Michael Boylan**, Ethics or moral philosophy is the science concerning the "right" or "wrong" of human conducts/actions. It's science because it can be studied rationally and systematically i.e it's not a body of dogmas. Also, ethics aims to reach exact conclusions. For him, the subject matter of Ethics is human actions/behaviors/conducts.

We are only interested in socially relevant human actions. Talking about actions that affect others in the society. And the people that are concerned are rational agents i.e people that are capable of engaging in rational deliberations. For person to be considered go be a moral agent, that person, first, as to be a rational agent. Anything that's not capable of rational deliberation is not within the scope of morality e.g animals, infants, insane people, plants and so on. That means only rational adults are going to be considered as moral agents.

The reason why ethics is limited to people that are rational and are adults is because they are the ones who are free to make meaningful choices. These moral agents are also called human persons.

For **Quine**, a prominent professor of Philosophy and American philosopher,, morality is irreducibly social in the sense that the conduct under consideration must impact another person other than the moral agents whether positively or negatively. Mere individual preferences and tastes do not actually count as far as ethics is concerned insofar it does not affect another person in the society. What you eat, what you wear, your personal hygiene

and so on are not concerns of Ethicists.

***There are two levels or layers of ethical standards or norms. And they are:***

- ***descriptive ethics ( particularistic )***: they are also called positive or conventional norms/ethics e.g personal moral standard ( code of conduct set by an individual for his or herself ). Ethics evolves with time, in Great Britain, we have the Elizabethan period i.e cultural norms that evolved during the time of queen **Elizabeth**. And all these are descriptive ( are describable), hence, they can be studied empirically. We can even engage in comparative ethical norms since they often varies from person to person, society to society and from period to period.

- ***universalistic ethics***: they are ethical principles and theories that are designed to be of universal application. They have two variants: the theory of value and the theory of right and wrong.

**Olayinka Okunola**  
**Comrade Ola'**

**17/01/24**  
**&**  
**23/01/24**

### ***Branches of Ethics***

***Meta Ethics***: meta ethics is the attempt to understand the nature, meaning and justification of moral judgements. Some meta Ethical questions include:

- can ethics or moral philosophy be studied scientifically?
- do ethical sentences have truth value?
- why must we choose to be moral?

***Normative Ethics***: It develops and prescribe theories and standards to evaluate moral conducts. Some of these theories include:

- ethical Utilitarianism*
- ethical Deontologism*
- virtue Ethics*

***Applied Ethics***: it deals with application of different principles and standards in our practical lives. Some of its branches include:

- professional Ethics > medical ethics, legal Ethics, teaching ethics etc
- bioethics

-environmental ethics.

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## WHY BE MORAL?

The question "**Why Be Moral?**" which is a Meta Ethical question was addressed by [John Hospers](#) in his paper "**Why Be Moral?**".

He provided 4 answers which are Self Interest, Divine Command, Common Interest and Because It's Right.

**Self Interest** - Which talks about the fact we should be morally upright if the consequence of the action will satisfy our own interests as moral agents. Self Interest is one of the four justifications he gave to show the fact that we should be morally upright. It means that whatsoever action you want to perform, you should look whether or not it's going to satisfy your interest. For instance the Bible says "Cast thy bread upon the water so that it shall return back to you". The question now arises, what if the bread isn't returned back, should you cast thy bread? Consequently, that's an objection against that answer. If self Interest is going to be adequate justification for why we should be moral then, there are some criteria that have to be met. (i) It's going to be necessary that being moral satisfies the interest of the moral agent. This answer does not adequately answer that question because being moral is not always satisfying the interest of moral agents. Being moral doesn't necessarily make you prosper. Being prosperous doesn't necessarily mean that one is moral. Hence, the second answer is considered.

**Divine Command** : this answer says that we should be moral because a Supreme Being has commanded it. When one says an action is right, according to this answer, God must have commanded it. God must be All-Merciful, All-Knowing and All-Powerful. If God fails to have one of these characteristics, then his commands shouldn't be obeyed. But if God is All-Merciful why then do we still have evils in the world? In fact, people that worship him suffer a lot and we say he's merciful, how? Another problem is that the existence of God is not a fact. It's still a metaphysical problem. Why then are we using his existence and command as justification of our morality?

Another problem is that, are actions right because they are commanded or are they commanded because they are right? This answer is not also enough and has problems.

**Common Interest/Good**: When we say an action is right, it means the action satisfied the common good or common interests. This shows that whatsoever action you perform, you should care about the interest of your society as a whole, not yours as self Interest has said. But when we say common interests or common good, what do we mean? How can we measure it? Another problem is that common good does not consider whether or not it's in the interest of the performer of the action. For instance, in a country like Nigeria, if everyone is required to pay #5,000 every month for the common good, what if it's not in my interest to pay it or I am not capable of paying it? These problems and other likely problems do not make this answer a final answer to the question, "Why Be Moral?".

**Because It's Right**: When we perform an action, the plausible justification we should give,



for Hospers, is that BECAUSE IT IS RIGHT. Why is this a plausible justification? Solely because we have to, just like the deontologists, look into the nature of the action whether or not it's right.

Olayinka OKUNOLA

Comrade Ola'

24/01/24

### **Normative Ethical Theories**

Thru are basically used to evaluate human conducts or moral actions.

**-Utilitarianism** : the utilitarians draw distinction between intrinsic value and instrumental. Intrinsic value means end and instrumental means means. For them, the only these that have intrinsic value for them are pleasure ( positive ) and pain ( negative ). It's consequentialist theory. It's forward looking i.e it judges moral rightness and wrongness based on consequences. It's based on **GREATEST HAPPINESS PRINCIPLE** which states that an action is morally right if gives the greatest amount of happiness/pleasure for the greatest amount of people in a moral universe otherwise wrong i.e if it gives the greatest amount of pain to the greatest amount of people affected by the action. For utilitarians, we can measure pleasure/pain by its intensity, duration, fecundity.

### **Objections**

- whose happiness should we pursue. Is it the moral agent or the person affected by the action. If it's moral agent, it's egoistic, if others are the concerned, it's altruistic.
- it's not even possible to calculate the end everytime we act.
- it's also a swine or 🐷 pig philosophy.
- the conflict between utility and justice.

### **ETHICAL DEONTOLOGY**

It means theory of duty.

Some major proponents of deontological ethical theorists are:

Alan Donagan, Charles Fried, Thomas Nagel and notably, Immanuel Kant.

DEONTOLOGY is commonly used in moral philosophy to refer to non Consequentialist moral Conceptions. The most distinctive feature of deontological moral Conceptions is because they define foundation principles of right and justice other than taking the most effective means to promote maximum good.

To deontological theorists, there are certain shorts of acts that are wrong in themselves and thus morally unacceptable means to the pursuit of any ends, even ends that are morally admirable or morally obligated. For example are of the view it's not the badness of the

consequences of a particular lie or of lying in general that makes it wrong to lie rather lies are wrong because of the sorts of things they are and they are thus wrong even when they obviously produce good consequences.

**Immanuel Kant's** moral philosophy is a primary example of deontological ethical theory or deontological moral conception.

### ***IMMANUEL KANT'S DEONTOLOGICAL ETHICS ( 1724 - 1804 )***

To **Immanuel Kant**, moral obligation does not come from God, human authorities and communities. It does not depend on the preferences of moral agents either. Moral obligation derived from reason. **Kant** is an important figure in the history of ethics because he emphasizes two widely accepted principles of morality.

These two principles are:

#### **1. The principle of universalizability :**

With regard to this principle, Immanuel Kant places a great emphasis on the role of reason in determining what is right or wrong morally. For him, to determine whether an action is right or wrong, you must know the duty behind the action. An action is considered right, if it's performed from the point of motive, otherwise wrong. We know our duties because we are moral and rational agents. It's known as categorical imperative

#### **2. Respect for persons :**

This principle says that persons should be treated with respect, as ends and not as means to another ends. Persons are makers of moral laws and therefore are rational and must be treated with respect. Moral laws are not only made by persons but also for persons and each person must be counted equally under the law.

Persons must never be used as mere tools or instruments to achieve a particular end. In our daily interactions as persons, we must recognise and respect the humanity in others. We must never violate the dignity in others as persons. It's practical.

**Okunola Olayinka**

**Comrade Ola'**

**30/01/24**

### **African Philosophy**

African philosophy is the trend of philosophy fostered by African cultural experience, tradition, history and world view. It is the thought emanating or resulting from various world

views beliefs and values of Africa. It is a philosophical reflection on, and analysis, of African conceptual systems and social realities. African philosophy is a reflection on the human nature, human experience and the worldview of Africans within and outside the African continent. To be an African philosopher only takes one to reflect on the continent and not necessarily to be an African.

African philosophy is the philosophical reflection of individual thinkers often going and thence in collecting political worldviews on the political ideas and practice of their society. African political thoughts are the original idea, value, theory, and the ideologies in the globe by various African thinkers to inform African political systems and institutions from the ancient period till date. African social and political philosophy is deeply interlaced or interconnected with the daily life of African people. African social and political philosophy is concerned with people's everyday life, everyday experience of alliances and collective actions. African political philosophy addresses the issue concerning the nature and justification of power. The following questions are often debated:

- who governs the polis(state)?
- by which principle does the governor achieve such a duty?
- according to what modalities and response to what purpose does the governor rule?

Research for a suitable paradigm of social and political organisation has been reduced to choices between capitalism and socialism in Africa.

Historically, African social and political philosophy could be traced back to the African and descendent of slavery and slave trade, colonization, African emancipation and globalization. Some of the African philosophers and their philosophy:

### **Kwame Nkrumah** **(1909-1972)**

**Nkrumah** was a radical nationalist and the proponents of pan-africanism. He believes that the true and complete independence of Africa can only be achieved as a united people with a common goal. The primary aim of his major political writings is how Africans can unite for the purpose of liberation. Some of his works include:

- towards colonial freedom (1962)
- Africa must unite (1963)
- consciencism (1964)
- autobiography (1965)

In the works above, he criticises the imperialists intention of perpetual domination of Africa and outlined basic strategies of African liberation. Nkrumah establishes that imperialism has the following inevitable results by which it eventually destroy or overtake itself:

- the emergence of the colonial intelligentsia
- the awakening of national consciousness among colonial people
- the emergence of a working class movement
- the growth of a national liberation movement

**Nkrumah's** doctrine of liberation forms a corpus with three outstanding emphasis: [1] the

theory of liberation [2] pan-africanism [3] consciencism.

- **theory of liberation:** Nkrumah based his theory of African liberation on the following theses [1] the monopoly and the control of capital by the imperialists against their dependent colonists inspires and accelerates revolt of the colonized intelligentsia and then the most stringent in control of capital against them, the more the revolts hastening towards liberation. [2] as capital is continuously pumped into the colonist, exploitation of the colonist heightens and capitalism rose into a world system with its financial enslavement and the cooperation of the world's majority [3] the economic domination of the colonists by the capitalist countries leads to unequal development of the capitalist countries, and originate struggles between the rich and the poor nations or countries.

With the three theses above, Nkrumah concludes that they will result in the followings:

- intensification of the crisis within the imperialists colonial powers in the colonist.
- intensification of the crisis in the colonists and in the growth of the liberation movement against local colonial government on the colonial front.
- that under imperialism, war cannot be averted and that a coalition between the proletariat in the capitalist countries and the colonial liberation movement against the world front of imperialism becomes inevitable.

To Nkrumah, to achieve effective freedom of the colonial masses, there is a need for the formation of liberation movement whose goals must be the following:

- the establishment of free and peoples own press to stir up groups political consciousness in the people.
- to educate the people to pursue their own freedom and destiny.
- to abhor external interference
- to prepare a good social, political and economic plan for legislation and execution.

However, the entire plan for the liberation movement according to Nkrumah must aim at three spheres [1] political freedom, which entails complete and absolute independence [2] democratic freedom, which entails freedom from political tyranny [3] social reconstruction, which entails freedom from poverty and economic exploitation.

**Pan-africanism:** it is a general term or theory of various movement in Africa that have as their common goal in unity of Africans and the elimination of colonialism and white supremacy from the African continent. The pan-african movement demands solidarity among people of African descent based on the believe that unity is vital for economic, social and political progress, and it aims to unify and uplift them. As an ideology, it asserts that the fates of all African people and countries are intertwined. To Nkrumah, the independence of some of the states proved nothing as long as other states were not independent. Liberation must be total and continental.

In 1958, pan-african Congress championed by Nkrumah in Accra, Ghana, aimed at the following:

- to exchange views on matters of common interests
- to explore ways and means of consolidating and safeguarding the independence of African countries.
- to decide on workable arrangements for every fellow Africans still subject to colonial rules.
- to examine the central world problem of how to secure peace.

The aim of Nkrumah's book "Africa must unite," is the promotion of the unity of the entire Africa. The unity of Africa is an inevitable instrument to the social, political and economic freedom, and the advancement of Africa.

***Philosophical consciencism:*** African history through the centuries has accumulated much of confused teachings and orientation from external influences. African past actually witnessed a conflicting and confused experience at the hands of the colonial imperialists against her traditional values and ideals, thus, producing equally confused and conflicting vision. African history has been erroneously presented as a story of western adventure. To undertake fully the venture of the unification and the liberation of Africa, a reforming, revolutionising, and the inspiring philosophical system is needed - A system to help the people perceive correctly the disparaging and disorienting vision implanted by the colonial mingling of the traditional(Africans) with the western and Islamic elements in the African society. We need a system of philosophy that makes transparent the conflict between the western capitalism and the African socialist egalitarianism. To Nkrumah, there is a need for a philosophy that must find its operative foundation in African root and condition.

African conditions should create African philosophy: a philosophy that will liberate man, and restore the egalitarianism of human society. This is the aim of Nkrumah philosophical consciencism. Nkrumah defines philosophical consciencism as, "the map in the intellectual terms of the disposition of forces which will enable African society to digest the western, the Islamic, and the Euro-Christian element in Africa, and develop them in such a way that they fit into the African personality...", "that philosophical standpoint which taken its start from the present content of the African conscience indicates the way in which progress is forged out of the conflict in that conscience. His basis is materialism.

As a system, philosophical consciencism equips the Africans to sift and blend appropriate values from the major elements of African history, to form oneself(for Africans). Nkrumah makes materialism the basis of his philosophical consciencism because, To Nkrumah, matter has power of self motion.

Philosophical consciencism seeks to establish political theory and social practice to promote basic ethical principles. It aims at the eradication of class stratification, exploitation and class subjection. It is meant to promote individual development according to egalitarian principles. It must eradicate colonialism, imperialism, disunity and the lack of development, even to fight Neo-colonialism. To be an effective ideology, challenging itself entirely to African social, political and economic problems, consciencism must be socialist in form and content. Such socialism must enlighten the people to achieve their own independence themselves and establish their sovereignty.

Sovereignty belongs to the people and must be acknowledged as such. Nkrumah's political thought forms coherent corpus. It first addresses itself to the problems about the independence of Africa, and then the global solution through a unified effort in pan-africanism. This effort must be supported by a pragmatic ideology, and this pragmatic ideology is philosophical consciencism.

**Olayinka U. OKUNOLA**

**31/01/24**

## **JULIUS KAMBARAGE NYERERE** **{ UJAMA SOCIALISM }**

**Nyerere** (**THE MWALIMU**) which means respected teacher of Tanzania was born in 1922. His political ideas, was so much influenced by **Kenyatta**, **Nkrumah**, **Mahatma Gandhi** and **John Kennedy**. He shared and developed their beliefs in the principles of equality, human dignity and the unity of all mankind. His major political writings and speeches are collected into different works. Example, **UJAMA** ( essays on Socialism ) published in 1968 **UHURU NA UJAMA** ( freedom and socialism ) published in 1969. His political teaching is **UJAMA socialism**. **UJAMA socialism** comprehend the major political thoughts of **NYERERE** .

The word **UJAMA** is a Swahili word which means familyhood and Nyerere uses it to translate African Socialism since the root of African Socialism is the idea of familyhood. Familyhood in Africa is extended beyond the basic family unit. To **Nyerere**, the foundation and the objective of African Socialism is the extended family. Familyhood therefore goes beyond the basic family nucleus, beyond the tribe, the community, and beyond the nation. It must include the entire humanity. It form the traditional lives of African people, where the strength of brotherhood is strong, where the society is so organized that it cares about every individuals. Where no one is allowed to starve because of lack of personal wealth. Other features peculiar to African tradition society that enrich **UJAMA socialism** are: (i) in African society, everyone was a walker. (ii) everyone in the society enjoy the security and hospitality provided by the society because each one contributed his quota in economic production avoiding parasitism or exploitation. (iii) the communal ownership of land was maintain, the individual has only the right to use land, it was the foreigner who introduced the idea of land as marketable commodity.

**Ujama socialism** according to Nyerere is an attitude of the be mind and not the rigid adherence to standard political pattern. **Ujama** is that attitude of the mind where Africans care for each other's welfare. This distinguishes him from the non socialists who have the capitalistic attitude where others are dominated and exploited through wealth. The **ujama socialist** must use wealth for the service of his fellow men and the service if mankind. What distinguishes a socialist society from a capitalist society is not the method of production but the way wealth is distributed. That's why a millionaire. That's why a millionaire cannot come from a true socialist society. The contrary is true of the capitalist mode of distribution. Capitalism widen the gap between the poor and the rich. Capitalism create a situation where one man however hardworking can acquire as great a reward or wealth as a

thousand of his fellows can acquire between them.

Capitalist mode of distribution creates exploitative attitude. It encourages the tendency to acquire wealth for power and prestige. Socialism is essentially distributive. Its concern is to see that those who sow should reap fair of what they have sowed. Ujama socialism is opposed to capitalism or capitalist attitude. Ujama is a way of a people who believe in and practice the true principle of socialism. It's opposed to European Socialism because European Socialism is the glorification of capitalism. While European Socialism is the product of class wars and struggles, ujama socialism is a way of life of a people and do not need any class conflict to originate from its root. Ujama is opposed to all forms of discrimination whether racial or tribal. It insists. It involves the entire humanity. Since the extended family has considered ujama embraces the whole mankind. Ujama built on a classless society aiming at eliminating the use of wealth to dominate and humiliate others.

**Nyerere** proposed *GRADUALISM* as the best practical approach for the development and promotion of ujama. Class wars or conflicts with violence is not seen in Ujama. Ujama Socialism is a pragmatic system and therefore has to aim at pragmatic answers to the need of the people based on the valuable principles of their tradition.

### **MAN & SOCIAL EQUALITY**

To **Nyerere**, man is the true basis of any true socialism. Nothing is most central to a socialist society than an acceptance of the fact that man is justification for the existence of society. Ujama is the belief in the fundamental equality and the brotherhood of all men. And this gives it rationality. To Nyerere, every member of society must be an equal participant in the government of a society because everyone is equal. The principle of equality as a determinant principle of every democracy.

### **THEORY OF EXPLOITATION**

Ujama socialism in order to assure its functioning in according to its basic rule which is equality must eliminate all oppressive factors that hinder the reign of equality. Among the first major things to fight is exploitation. Ujama must establish system to tackle exploitation. According to him, exploitation covers the following understanding: (i) making a living from the works of others (ii) making an amount of money that is out of proportion with respect to the rest of the society. (iii) a rich person making a profit from a poor person. (iv) taking more than what one needs (v) inordinate greed for power and prestige. (vi) displaying a capitalist attitude in the mind (vii) having control over the poor for one's own profit.

**Olayinka Okunola**  
**Comrade Ola'**

Written & compiled by **Comrade Ola'** to help everyone doing the course in first semester of '23/24 session and the coming generations.

### ***DID YOU KNOW?***

- ***Comrade Ola' is a part 1 Law student as of the time this is written and compiled.***
- ***He is the class governor of the SUI GENERIS class in faculty of Law.***
- ***He was previously a student of department of Philosophy where he was also a class representative of his class for a session.***
- ***He is a tutor. He teaches PHL 101 & PHL 105 effortlessly.***
- ***He is someone who does not only care about his success but others as well.***
- ***You can currently reach out to him through 09135821718.***

***Comrade Ola' cares!***