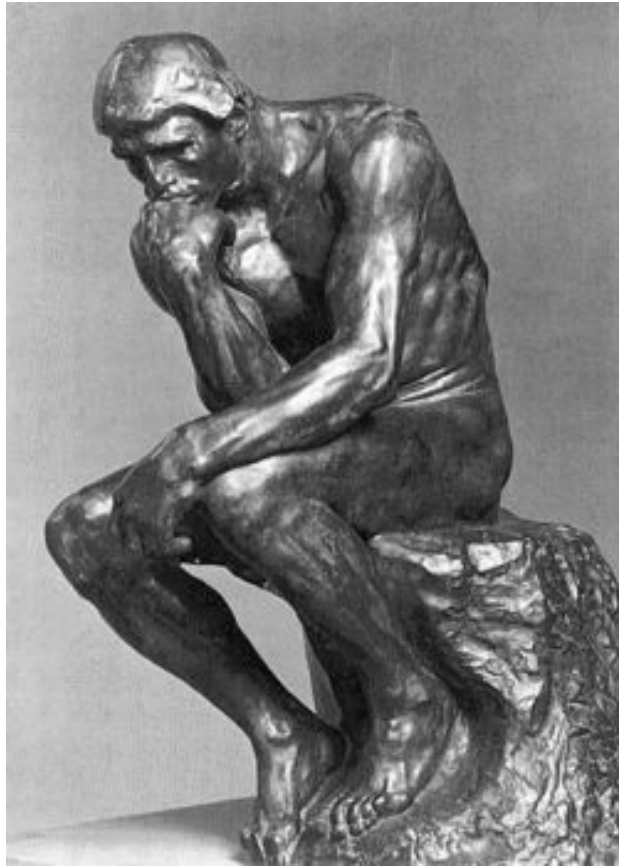# Lecture 1
Introductoin philosophy

Plan:

1. Definition of philosophy
2. Background of philosophy
3. Subject of history of philosophy

What is Philosophy ?

The Thinker by Auguste Rodin

What are your thoughts or ideas?

What is philosophy?

- **Philosophy** is a system of worldview ideas, which reveal human attitude to the world and serve as guidelines for human actions.

There is another definition:

- **Philosophy** is a science of general derivative laws and human attitude to the world.

- The term philosophy comes from the Greek words "**phileo**" – love and "**sophia**" – wisdom, and means "**love of wisdom**".

Basic philosophical questions:

- What is world?

- Where does it come from?

- Who are we?

- Why do we exist?

- Where do we go?

- What is life?

- What is death?

- What is happiness?

How should we treat the environment?

Basic Human Questions

Is there a god?

Is war good or evil?

Is science more important than faith?

Do humans have rights?

What is happiness?

Is social harmony better than freedom?

Can we communicate with spirits?

What is justice?

- Physical sciences (such as Physics, Chemistry, etc.) are unable to give answers to such "eternal" questions since they cannot be answered from the scientific point of view. That is why philosophy studies them.

- It is considered that philosophy, to be more precise philosophic mind, appeared in three different world civilizations almost simultaneously in 7-6 centuries BCE (Before the Christian Era). These are **Ancient China**, **India** and **Greece**.

The Three Philosophical Traditions

Greece
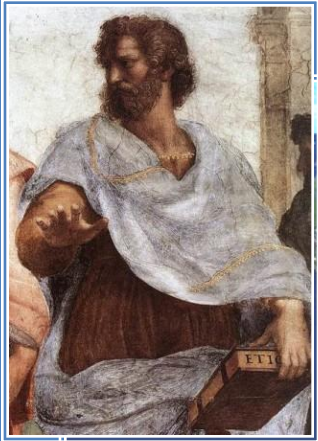
China

India

The Four Major Epochs of Western Philosophy

❑ **The Ancient Philosophy** (6th century B.C. – 3rd century A.D.)
  - **The Early Ancient Philosophy** (6th – 5th centuries B.C.)
  - **The High Classical Philosophy** (late 5th – 4th centuries A.D.)
  - **The Hellenistic Philosophy** (late 4th – 1st centuries B.C.)
  - **The Late Ancient Philosophy** (1st – 3rd centuries A.D.)

❑ **The Medieval Philosophy** (4th – 14th centuries)
  - **The Patristic Philosophy** (4th – 8th centuries)
  - **The Scholastic Philosophy** (11th – 14th centuries)

❑ **The Modern Philosophy** (15th century – 1830s)
  - **The Renaissance Philosophy (**15th – 16th centuries**)**
  - **The Early Modern Philosophy** (17th century)
  - **The Enlightenment Philosophy** (1700s – 1770s)
  - **The Classical German Philosophy** (1780s – 1830s)

❑ **The Contemporary Philosophy** (since 1840s)

The Structure of Philosophy

✔ **Ontology** is the study of Being

✔ **Gnosiology** (Epistemology) is the theory of knowledge and cognition

✔ **Logic** is the theory of the forms of thought, rules and norms of the true thinking

✔ **Ethics** is the theory of morality

✔ **Aesthetics** is the theory of art and man's artistic activity

✔ **Philosophic anthropology** is the study of the human nature, human freedom and responsibility

✔ **Social philosophy** is the studies of laws, norms, order of social life

✔ **Metaphysics** is a branch of philosophy that deals with the first principles

✔ **History of Philosophy** is a systematized account of philosophical views by chronological, logical, essential and other principles

2. (Background of philosophy) **How and why did philosophy come into existence?**

- Philosophy came into existence at places where combination of <u>spiritual, social and economic factors</u> was the most successful for its development.

The spiritual factors involve:

- 1) Advanced religious and mythological thinking

- 2) Elements of science which include information about heaven phenomena, alternation of seasons, plant growth, animal behavior and customs of people, mathematic calculations, etc.

- 3) Existence of trivial thinking (wisdom of life).

The social and economic factors involve:

- 1) With the beginning of the Iron Age personal relationships among people were replaced by material ones (trading). Human consciousness was divided **from the objective understanding of reality to abstract thinking**.

- **2) Division of labor into physical and mental**. At first only priests were considered to be people of knowledge. However, a new wide stratum of rich people strove to confirm themselves in the society and make knowledge open for everyone. Philosophy gave an opportunity for that.

- **3) Transparent political system**. Many Greek polises had electoral power and publicity in social issues. That made logic and language develop. Discussion and argumentation became common rules. Philosophy allowed people to prove their thoughts in disputes.

- The best combination of the factors mentioned was shown **in Ancient Greece**. It was the place where philosophy acquired classical features.

- **In the East** the development of philosophy was detained due to a rather slow shift from the Bronze to Iron Age. Among other reasons one could also mention such as weak pre-scientific knowledge and severe religious traditions. That is why in **China** philosophy stood close to trivial mental thinking, while in **India** philosophy was close to religion.

- Philosophy changed society. First of all, situational thinking was replaced by discursive. Second, human actions became more elaborate and intelligent. Third, people got more freedom for making decisions. Fourth, human conduct became more meaningful. Fifth, culture, science and society got an impact for development.

3. Subject of history of philosophy

- For many years philosophers created a lot of images of man and the world. Philosophic culture can help to understand better the development of human civilization and modern issues.

- So, **the subject of history of philosophy is**, first of all, the system of developing fundamental ideas of human place in the world. Second, the subject also involves organizational forms, which unite these ideas (philosophic studies, schools, trends and movements).

- **A system of philosophy is** a system of normalized views and ideas of human relationship with the nature and society. Usually, a studies of philosophy was represented by a certain philosopher (for example, Democritus' philosophic studies, and Bruno's studies of philosophy).
- **Philosophic schools** come into existence when pupils of philosophers continue developing ideas of a certain studies of philosophy (for example, Plato school, Cartesian school, Marx school).

- **A philosophic trend** involves a number of philosophic schools that have general principles but different ways of development (for example, neopositivism, existentialism).
- **A philosophic movement** is the biggest formation that embraces a few philosophic trends and exists for many centuries. Now we shall discuss principle philosophic movements that appeared in the history. The principle philosophic movements run as follows: <u>materialism, idealism, sensualism, rationalism, and irrationalism</u>.

Materialism holds that the only thing that can truly be said to exist is **matter**. Materialism denies existence of supernaturals.

- Types of Materialism include:

1) **Vulgar materialism** holds matter to be the only existing reality. Consciousness has no autonomy. K. Vogt, a German scientist and philosopher, held that thought is "secreted" by the brain, as bile by the liver. The main drawback of vulgar materialism is inability to learn the nature of ideal reality.

- **2) Naturalistic materialism** bases itself upon achievements of natural sciences, explains features and laws of matter, and elaborates the problem of causality. The main drawback: existence of man and society is explained by natural factors.

- **3) Dialectical materialism** (K. Marx, F. Engels) Objects and phenomena are understood through external and inner inter-relations. Historicity of an object is taken into account (an object's ability to develop with time).

Idealism

- Idealism holds ideal reality as a basis of existence. Idealism is divided into objective and subjective.
- **1) Objective idealism** holds that the world exists independently of man and the nature.
- **2) Subjective idealism** holds that the external world is reflection of human consciousness.

Sensualism and rationalism study the ways of perception of reality:

- **Sensualists** admit <u>sense perception</u> to be the principle way of perception (through feelings).

- **Rationalism** considers that <u>human mind</u> can learn the environment through abstract thinking (B. Spinoza).

- Sensualism and rationalism played an important role in the development of philosophy and science. Later generalization of either sensitive or intellectual human abilities gave birth to such philosophic trend as **scientism** (Lat. Scientia – knowledge, science), in which natural science is considered to be a true sample for human actions.

- **Irrationalism** holds that reason gives many opportunities to learn the world but is only a part of our mental universe. There also exist irrational ways of learning the environment, which include will, feelings, subconscious mind, and intuition.

Thank you for attention!☺️