

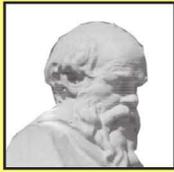
# PHILOSOPHY

## A Short Introduction

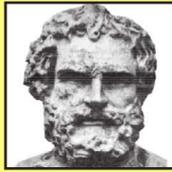
" The philosophers have interpreted the world in various ways. The question, however, is to change it."--Marx.



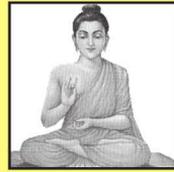
Kapila



Socrates



Thales



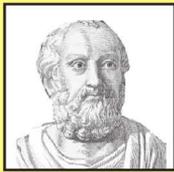
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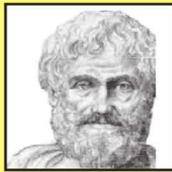
Heraclitus



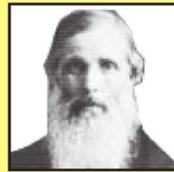
Democritus



Plato



Aristotle



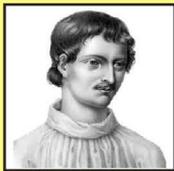
Epicurus



Lucretius



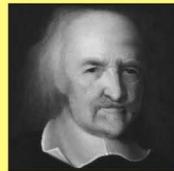
Sankaracharya



Bruno



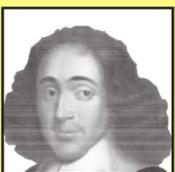
Bacon



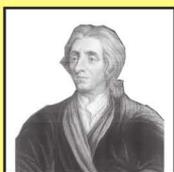
Hobbes



Descartes



Spinoza



Locke



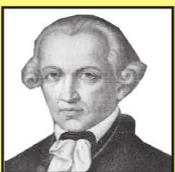
Bailey



Berkeley



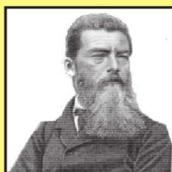
Hume



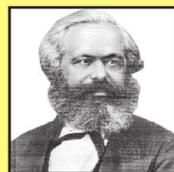
Kant



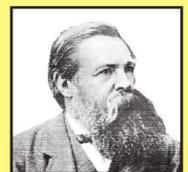
Hegel



Feuerbach



Marx



Engels

**RANGANAYAKAMMA**

**PHILOSOPHY**

A Short Introduction  
By Ranganayakamma

**First Print:** June, 2019

**Pages:** 320

**Price:** Rs. 100

**Page Makeup:**

T. Rakesh Varma

**Printing:**

Charita Impressions,  
1-19-1126/B,  
Azamabad Industrial Estate,  
Hyderabad-500020.  
[Phone: 040-27678411]

**For Copies:**

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# 1. Some books are not comprehensible!

**When** we read a book, if the contents of the book are not comprehensible, there could be at least four reasons for such incomprehensiveness. It does not mean that all the four reasons coexist in a given context. There may be only one reason or two reasons. The following are the four reasons.

**1. The writer's attempt to tell something that is 'not factual':** Let us assume that the writer is attempting to tell (write) about 'God.' The 'God' is something that does not exist in 'Nature'. Something not 'factual'. It is merely a belief or imagination. It is something that cannot be logically explained. However much strongly a devotee may believe in god and however much effectively he may communicate, he cannot explain the concept of god with proofs. However much properly a person attempts to explain, it is not possible for him to make another person grasp such things which do not exist in

Nature and which are unreal. If the other person also is a devotee, only a believer, then, there is a concurrence between the first devotee who is conveying (writing) and the second devotee who is receiving (reading or listening). As such books contain the miracles and beliefs that the devotees seek, the devotees will not face the question that "the book is not comprehensible." Only those people who try to understand something logically will face the problem of incomprehensiveness with the books of devotion.

Not only God, it also would not be possible to make it comprehensible, by writing or speaking, regarding any other issue non-existing in Nature. The listeners or readers must believe in it; that is the only alternative. However, 'to believe' is not to understand. Therefore, 'the inherent defect' of the content constitutes one reason that makes the writing incomprehensible.

## 2. Philosophy is a boring subject!

**The** question of unintelligibility does not arise with regard to books of fiction, such as the stories and novels, irrespective of how they are written. Even if a story is not understood, there is no great harm done. The problem is with the theoretical essays. Even there, there is no problem with the essays related to the natural science, if the language is simple. The real problem is with the books of Philosophy! When we find the word 'Philosophy' on the face of the book, we feel that 'this book is meant for the scholars, not for us.' The very word 'Philosophy' at the outset will scare us immensely. Can't these people find a simpler word for this discipline?

'That is his Philosophy' if we recall these words that we use while referring to someone's Nature, perhaps there is no need to be frightened so much regarding 'Philosophy.' Even if not frightened, the word 'Philosophy' doesn't relish good to us in the least (at least to me).

This word sounds like some 'religious term'. In spite of not liking the term, if one manages to enter the book, the contents should be comprehensible, so that one should feel that "this is what Philosophy is!' One does not feel so. Moreover, one will think, 'Alas, why to bother.'

Even without reading any books of Philosophy, but hearing the proverbs in the routine life, we may consider that philosophies, in reality, are our own views.

The loose talk that the *Pullayyas* and *Ellayyas* (= proper names used to refer to uninformed, illiterate village folks in Telugu situation. Like Tom, Dick and Harry in English) indulge in while sitting on the verandas of the houses and puffing off the cigars, all such chatter could be qualified as philosophical tenets. When *Ellayya* says to *Pullyya*, "*Brother-in-law!* We cannot take a bath in the same river twice, the water keeps flowing forward,

## 4. Creationism and Idealism

‘The sun, the moon, and the constellations of stars in the sky, and the flora and fauna, how did all of them come about? Who made them all? How did the human beings come about? Can the human beings understand the universe?’ – The philosophical writings tell us that these are the questions that constitute the primary queries in Philosophy. This is a discipline that originated from the inquisitive-ness to understand Nature and the society.

A variety of doctrines emerged in search of answers to these questions. If all the doctrines propose the same idea, then, there won't be so many doctrines. There will be only one doctrine. But, since the people seeking answers to the questions would exhibit their respective scholarship, many a doctrine emerged. Before attempting to understand these doctrines, we must first enumerate the terms and concepts around which the

doctrines revolve. Nature, universe, society, matter, thing, human being, brains, spirit, soul, thought, consciousness, image – terms and concepts such as these keep coming and going in these doctrines. Of these concepts, first, we must discuss a little about ‘the matter’ and ‘the thing.’

Everything existing in Nature is a natural substance (matter). It is the matter not made by the human beings. A tree in the forest is a natural matter. The wind blowing is a natural matter. The water in the river is natural matter. All of the earth, the entirety of Nature, is a natural thing. The matter has another name called ‘Substance’.

In Philosophy, while speaking about natural substances, they use the word ‘things’. According to the Marxian economics, ‘things’ are those which the human beings make. Whatever is found in Nature, and not related to human labor in any manner is not a ‘thing’. It is a

## 6. The human beings after the earth, Or The earth after the human beings?

**Since** there are some shortcomings in the Materialism of the past, we need to examine at least a dozen issues in order to learn about Materialism devoid of shortcomings. Some of these issues are indeed necessary and must be learnt. The remaining issues are the subject matter of time-pass arguments of the *Pullayyas*, *Ellayyas*, *Rangammas*, and *Mangammas*. However, the authors who write on Philosophy consider all the discourses as great.

A long time ago, a question arose: Did the universe come into existence first or the human thought (consciousness)? Over the thousands of years, there have been arguments and counter-arguments on this issue as if it is a big doubt. The continuation of the question whether matter is first or the

human consciousness is similar to the question whether the earth was first or the human beings wandering on the earth were first! For the human thought to exist, the human beings must exist first. For the human beings to exist, there should be earth under their feet first. If the earth did not form first, where will the human beings form? Yet, the intellectuals have a big doubt whether or not the earth was the first! We may assume that the wisdom of the people of the primitive times was so low when the knowledge had not yet begun. But, over the thousands of years, even to this day, there has been doubt whether the matter was first or the consciousness was the first! There have been the doctrines of Idealism, Materialism, above all the dialectics to clarify the doubts!

## 8. Can we understand the universe?

The philosophical inquiry began with the quest to understand the universe. The Philosophers have pondered over about the human society based on the scientific knowledge known to them, their personal experiences in the daily life, their worldly knowledge, and as well as imagination. The theories of Idealism and Materialism have originated from the quest to know the universe and the society.

These theories did not begin yesterday or the day before. They began a few thousand years ago, even before Christ, and are continuing to this day.

Idealism remained today in the same form as it existed a few thousand years ago. The creator of the universe, the universal spirit, the absolute spirit, the complete spirit, the absolute thought – these are some terms the Idealist philosophies use.

Materialism, on the other hand, grew to newer heights

today since the days of its birth and continues to acquire newer elements of knowledge. Today, the Materialist thinking has dropped the creator completely.

‘The matter or the human consciousness, which is first?’ – This is the main question in Idealism and Materialism.

The other names for the consciousness are - the thought, the soul and the mind.

The other names for the matter are – Nature and the existence! ‘Existence’ means ‘something present or in existence!’

The following are some questions that the Philosophy must answer:

Which is primary (first), the universe or the consciousness?

Is the consciousness due to the existence or the existence due to the consciousness?

Which is primary, Nature or the spirit (soul)?

Does the universe really exist externally, or does it exist only in the human thought?

## 19. Why Did Marx and Engels like Hegel's Laws So Much?

**Before** Hegel's laws came into being, Materialism, like Idealism, had many shortcomings in it and lacked proper understanding. Even though Hegel's laws were not formulated from a Materialist perspective, when seen separately, they contain correct understanding to some extent together with some mistakes as well.

Hegel did not grasp all the things he said with his own intellect and without any connection to the then existing philosophies. There are aspects that have improved earlier philosophies and there are some that were told based on his own comprehension.

**Essence of Hegel's laws is like this:** Nothing will remain as it is. Everything keeps changing. Those changes occur due to contradictions inherent in that thing. Those changes always move towards progress."

If society is viewed from this perspective, wouldn't people living in that society like this law or not? - To find an answer to this question, first we should know

how 'human relations' exist in society. The society that is in existence is a society consisting of enemy classes. This society consists of a class that performs labour and a class that exploits the labor. In such a society, if any Philosopher says - that 'everything changes, even society changes; that change is not a minor change, It will always move towards progress'— Who would like such words? And who would not like them? The class that exploits would not like it if this society changes. That is why that class does not like Philosophers who talk about "progress."

But, those who know the wickedness of exploitation of labor in this society, would like words such as 'Development will certainly happen, everything will certainly change, these laws of development will be applicable everywhere.' They will develop a feeling of love towards people who say such words. I believe, this is the reason why Marx and Engels liked Hegel's laws so much.

Even though Hegel said his

## 30. Correct Materialism

The earliest Materialism forgot why it started off in the beginning and kept staring at the creator. It gradually passed through many stages and abandoned the creator slowly after self-criticism.

Materialism, however, doesn't mean just considering that 'there exists no God.' That will not be enough. That simple outlook cannot become a Materialist perspective. In addition to that, one should be aware of some more issues related to Nature. We are readily aware of some issues that must be known. And, the issues that are not yet understood must be explored further. We have to discuss these issues. These issues are in the form of axioms, questions, and doubts that make an appearance in the philosophical writings.

**The Axiom of Nicholap, a religious believer:**

"Outside of this visible world, there exists an invisible world. Only the religious faith, not the scientific discipline, can find this invisible world".

Alright, Nicholap! You found the invisible world, didn't you?

Tell us about it. 'Only ignorance, not wisdom, can find the invisible world,' you affirm. Until now, the science disciplines, not the religion, revealed the phenomena of Nature, didn't they? Tell us at least one single instance when the religion, not science, unraveled the knowledge of Nature!

\* **While debating with a philosopher, Emperor Napoleon asked the philosopher, 'Why do you not talk about the creator?'**

'The creator does not concern me,' replied the Philosopher. How elegantly the Philosopher revealed that the creator is irrelevant in acquiring knowledge!

\* **'How much space does the universe occupy?'**

Let us imagine that the universe assumes the shape of an egg. The entire universe is within the egg. From anywhere to anywhere within the egg, there will be no beginning or an end. The 'egg world' is marvelous. Isn't it all empty outside the egg world? How far and up to what extent does this emptiness extend? How to measure this extension? Can we measure the extension?

## 34. Stalin on Dialectics

**Stalin** sets out defining dialectical Materialism as follows:

“Dialectics comes from the Greek *dialego*, to discourse, to debate. In ancient times dialectics was the art of arriving at the truth by disclosing the contradictions in the argument of an opponent and overcoming these contradictions. There were Philosophers in ancient times who believed that the disclosure of contradictions in thought and the clash of opposite opinions was the best method of arriving at the truth.” (From [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org))

Not only in the ancient times, but at any point of time, this is the way in which people discuss and debate. Pointing out the shortcomings in the argument of the opponent and rectifying the mistakes in one’s own argument.—Only if these two things happen it becomes a debate.

**Stalin:** “This dialectical method of thought, later extended to the phenomena of Nature, developed into the dialectical method of apprehending Nature, which

regards the phenomena of Nature as being in constant movement and undergoing constant change, and the development of Nature as the result of the development of the contradictions in Nature, as the result of the interaction of opposed forces in Nature.” (from [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org))

So far, Stalin speaks of the old Idealist dialectics. When the people indulging in a debate state that ‘a seed germinates into a plant and an egg hatches into a chick,’ they use the natural phenomena to illustrate their points of view. One cannot wage an argument without taking the support of the natural phenomena. Nevertheless, the old timers did not realize that ‘Nature is the primordial basis of the thought.’ Subsequently, Stalin illustrates ‘the four principal features of the Marx’s dialectical method.’ Here I present those features briefly:

**1.** Phenomena in Nature exist not in isolation but connected with each other.

**2.** Nature is not static and unchanging. It is in a state of continuous movement and

## 43. Marxist Theory of Knowledge (Marxist Epistemology)

**Knowledge** is a part or branch of Philosophy. Nevertheless, knowledge is not inferior to Philosophy. What all we know through Philosophy, it is knowledge.

It is the theory of knowledge or Philosophy which discusses questions such as 'How do people acquire knowledge; what are the means of acquiring knowledge; are there limits to knowledge?'

To answer the question, 'how do people acquire knowledge?', we must not take into consideration adults of 25 or 60 years of age, but an infant just born, or an infant older by a few days, weeks or months. When the infant opens its eyes and starts to look in all directions, and begins to recognize the mother who feeds and cares for it, that stage will be the stage of the beginning of knowledge. When the infant grows to the stage of crawling, and observes the plants

growing in the backyard, the birds perched on the trees, the flowers, the sky casting over the tree tops, the clouds and the stars glowing in the sky, and begins to recognize a tree as a tree, a bird as a bird and a flower as a flower – that would be the second stage of knowledge. As the infant continues to grow in age, the stages of understanding Nature will increase accordingly.

Additionally, many subsequent stages of understanding are the means of conferring knowledge on the person one after the other in a succession - such as the household, the people residing in the house, the people outside of the house, the tasks all the people in and outside the house perform, the behavior of the people, the relations within the household, the relations outside of the house, and growing further, understanding the matters studying from the school books,

**End of Preview.**

**Rest of the book can be read @  
<http://kinige.com/book/Philosophy>**

**\* \* \***