

COURSE GUIDE

PHI 102: ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

COURSE WRITER:

DR. EBEH, JOHN IGBOGO
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY,
KOGI STATE UNIVERSITY,
ANYIGBA, KOGI STATE.

COURSE EDITOR:

PROF. J.O OGUEJIOFOR
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY
AWKA, ANAMBRA STATE

NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA (NOUN)

2019

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Course Aim
3. Course Objectives
4. What you will learn in this course
5. Course materials
6. Study Units
7. Set Textbooks
8. Assessment
9. Tutor-Marked Assignment
10. Summary

PHI 102: ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

Introduction

PHI 102: Ancient Philosophy is a one semester, three credit unit course. It is made up of 26 units which present the early philosophical thought in Africa (Egypt and Ethiopia), Asia (China, India, Persia) and Western Philosophy (Ionian, Eleatic schools, the Sophists, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle).

The course is a compulsory pre-requisites course for philosophy students. The course guide gives a brief description of the course content, expected knowledge, the course material, and the way to use them. Tutor-Marked Assignments is embedded in the course material.

Course Aim

The major aim of this course is to enable the student have knowledge of the various strands in Ancient period aspect of the historical development of philosophy. This will be achieved by the following broad objectives:

- i. The meaning, etymology and development of philosophy
- ii. Historical development of philosophy in Africa, Asia and Western philosophy
- iii. Introducing you to the basic issues in the development of philosophy in the regions above
- iv. Introducing you to the basic differences in philosophical thought in the various regions above

In addition to the broad objectives above, each unit also has specific objectives. The unit objectives are always at the beginning of the unit. You should read them before you start working through the unit. You may want to refer to them during your study of the unit to check on your progress. You should always look at unit objectives after completing a unit. In this process, you would be sure of having done what is expected of you. The unit objectives are to:

- i. Present an overview of philosophy.
- ii. Present the etymology of the discipline known as philosophy
- iii. Discuss how philosophy started in Egypt in ancient times
- iv. Know how philosophy in started in the Indus valley (India)
- v. Explain the thought and contributions of Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes to the development of Ionian philosophy
- vi. Make general remarks about the contributions of the Miletian thinkers to the development of Greek philosophy

- vii. Understand the contributions of Pythagoras, Xenophanes, Heraclitus and Parmenides to the development of philosophy in Italy
- viii. Know the teachings of Anaxagoras and Democritus to the development of philosophy
- ix. Understand the thinking and teachings of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle to development of western philosophy

What you will Learn in this Course

The overall aim of PHI 102: Ancient Philosophy is to introduce you to the meaning, etymology and development of philosophy as a discipline. It takes you through the development of philosophy in Africa majorly in Egypt; in Asia with particular reference to India and in the ancient Greece. It hopes to expose you to objective thinking about the development of philosophy and the various attempts made by deferent philosophers to address the challenging problems at their various times. Thus, your understanding of ancient philosophy will equip you with knowledge of the ancient scholars in philosophy and their contributions to the development of philosophy yesterday, today and in the future.

Working through the Course

To complete this course, you are required to read the study units, read recommended books and read other materials. Each unit contains self assessment exercises, and at some points in the course you will be required to submit assignments for assessment. Below you will find listed all the components of the course and what you need to do.

Course Materials

Major component of the course are:

- i. Course Guide
- ii. Study Units
- iii. Textbooks
- iv. Assignment File

In addition, you must obtain the materials. Obtain your copy. You may contact your tutor if you have problems in obtaining the text materials.

Study Units

There are Six (6) modules and twenty five (25) study units in the course. They are:

Module 1: Philosophy: Meaning, Etymology and Development

Unit 1: Meaning, etymology and evolution of philosophy

Unit 2: General issues on the development of Philosophy

Module 2: Philosophy in Past Civilization

Unit 1: Philosophy in Ancient Babylon

Unit 2: Philosophy in Egypt

Unit 3: Philosophy in India – Hindhu Philosophy

Unit 4: Philosophy in Greco-Roman Era

Module 3: Philosophy in the West (Greece and the neighboring city-states) I

Unit 1: Miletian thinkers – Thales,

Unit 2: Anaximander

Unit 3: Anaximenes

Module 4: Philosophy in the West II (Philosophy in Italy)

Unit 1: Pythagoras

Unit 2: Xenophanes

Unit 3: Heraclitus

Unit 4: Parmenides

Unit 5: Empedocles

Unit 6: Leucippus and Democritus

Unit 7: Anaxagoras

Unit 8: Zeno

Unit 9: The Sophists

Module 5: Philosophy in the West (Greece and her Neighbours) III

Unit 1: Socrates

Unit 2: Plato

Unit 3: Aristotle

SET TEXTBOOKS

The following books are recommended:

- i. Arieti, J. (2004). *Philosophy in the Ancient world: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

- ii. Christian, J. (1998). *Philosophy: An Introduction to the art of wondering*. Chicago: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Russell, B. (1996). *History of Philosophy*. London: Bertrand Russell Foundation.
- iii. Kolak, D. (1998). *From the Presocratics to the Present*. California: Mayfield Publishing Company.
- iv. Mitchell, H.B. (2008). *Roots of Wisdom*. Australia: Thomson and Wadsworth.
- v. Sinha, J.N. (2009). *Introduction to Philosophy*. New Delhi: New Central Book Agency.
- vi. Soccio, D. J. (1998). *Archetypes of Wisdom: an Introduction to Philosophy*. London: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- vii. Stumpf, S.E. (1994). *Philosophy: History and Problems*. N.Y. McGraw-Hill.

Assignment File

The details of assignments that you are expected to submit to your tutor for marking is embedded in each unit. Your course tutor will be communicated to you the ones that you are expected to do. These assignments will count towards your final mark in this course. Necessary information about the assignments is contained in this Course Guide.

Presentation File

The presentation schedule included in your course materials gives you the important dates for the completion of tutor-marked assignments and the dates to attend tutorials. Remember, you are required to submit all your assignments by the due dates. You should guard against falling behind your work.

Assessment

There are two segments on assessment. They are: Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA) and a written examination.

You are expected to submit your assignments to your tutor as at when due for 30% of your total course mark. While a final three hour examination accounts for 70% of your total course work.

Tutor-Marked Assignments

There are 26 tutor-marked assignments in this course that you are expected to submit to your tutor. The best four (i.e. the highest four among them) will be

counted. The total marks for the best four assignments will be 30% of your total course mark.

The assignment questions for the course are contained in each unit. You should be able to complete your assignments from the information and materials contained in your textbooks, reading and study units. However, you are advised to use other references to broaden your viewpoint and provide a deeper understanding of the subject.

When you have completed each assignment, send it along with the tutor-marked assignment (TMA) to your tutor. Make sure that each assignment reaches your tutor on or before the deadline given by the tutor. If you cannot complete your work on time, contact your tutor before the assignment is due to discuss the possibility of an extension.

Final Examination and Grading

The final examination of PHI 102 (Ancient Philosophy) will be three hour duration valued at 70% of the total grade. The examination will reflect the type of questions for self testing, practice questions and tutor marked assignments and will cover the entire course.

You are advised to revise the entire course after studying the last unit before you sit for the examination. You will find it useful to review your tutor marked assignments and the comments of your tutor on them before the final examination.

Course Marking Scheme

The table below shows how the actual course is broken down.

Assessment	Marks
Assignments: 1 – 20	Twenty five assignments, best four of the assignments count as 30% of the course marks.
Final examination	70% of overall course marks
Total	100% of course work

Course Overview

The table below brings the units together along with the number of weeks you should take to complete them, and the assignments that go with them.

S/N	Title of Work	Week's activity	Assessment (end of unit)
	Course Guide	1	
1	Meaning, definition and etymology of philosophy	1	Assignment 1
2	General issues on the development of Philosophy	2	Assignment 2
3	Philosophy in Ancient Babylon	3	Assignment 3
4	Philosophy in Egypt	4	Assignment 4
5	Philosophy in India	5	Assignment 5
6	Philosophy in Greeco-Roman society	6	Assignment 6
7	Miletian thinkers – Thales,	7	Assignment 7
8	Miletian thinkers – Anaximander	8	Assignment 8
9	Miletian thinkers –Anaximenes	9	Assignment 9
10	Philosophy in Italy – Pythagoras	10	Assignment 10
11	Philosophy in Italy – Xenophanes	11	Assignment 11
12	Heraclitus	12	Assignment 12
13	Parmenides	13	Assignment 13
14	Empedocles	14	Assignment 14
15	Anaxagoras	15	Assignment 15
16	Leucippus and Democritus	16	Assignment 16
17	Zeno	17	Assignment 17
18	The Sophists	18	Assignment 18

19	Socrates	19	Assignment 19
20	Plato	20	Assignment 20
21	Aristotle	21	Assignment 21

How to get most from this Course

Study units replace the Lecturer in distance learning. This enables the student to read, study and work through the study materials with ease. This study is structured in such a way that learning is made easier for the student who studies and cross check what he/she studies through assignments and suggested textbooks.

Tutor and Tutorials

There are eight hours of tutorials provided in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, time and location of these tutorials along with the names and necessary information about your tutor and the tutorial group.

Your tutor will read, mark and comment on your assignments and will be of assistance to you where necessary. All necessary information about your tutor will be made available to you.

Summary

History of Philosophy I (Ancient Philosophy) exposes the students to the rudiments of thinking and attempts made by the earliest philosophers to address the problems that existed at their time and places.

MODULE I

INTRODUCTION

This module is made of two study units. The first unit addresses the question: “What is Philosophy?” The second unit addresses the issue of the development of philosophy. In the first unit, you will learn the meaning of Philosophy and its etymology.

UNIT I: MEANING AND ETYMOLOGY OF PHILOSOPHY

CONTENTS:

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective of the study
- 3.0 Main Content
 - a. Meaning of Philosophy
 - b. Etymology of Philosophy
 - c. Evolution of Philosophy
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit presents the meaning, etymology and evolution of philosophy. It begins with an overview of the term philosophy, definitions and their analyses and proceeds to the etymology of the term and culminates in the evolution of the discipline called philosophy.

2.0 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this unit are to enable the student to do the following:

- a. To define and analyze the term philosophy
- b. To be able to know the etymology of philosophy
- c. To know the evolution of philosophy.

3.0 Main content

3.1 What is Philosophy?

Philosophy means different things to different persons. It is like the proverbial story of four blind men who touched different parts of an elephant. One touched the trunk, another touched the body, another touched the tail and the last person touched the foot. Each one of them had his or her experience of the part that he or she touched as a result each had different perception and description of the elephant. This is how philosophy appears to different persons. Egbeke Aja (1996:10) describes philosophy as “a Chameleon that means all things to all men and nothing to some.” Be that as it may, philosophers have defined philosophy from the perspective of their thought systems, culture and tradition.

Joseph Omeregbe (1985:1) appears to capture the basic tenets of philosophy when presents philosophy as “essentially a reflective activity.” Accordingly, to philosophize is to reflect on human experience in search of answers to some fundamental questions. As man reflects on himself or the world around him he is filled with wonders. This ‘wonder’ is perceived as the foundation and the cornerstone of philosophy. Both Plato and Aristotle tell us that this ‘wonder’ is the beginning of philosophy. Omeregbe (1985:1) further opines that human experience is the source of philosophy. The experience could be personal (subjective) or experience of the world around him (objective). Hence, philosophy could start from subjectivity or objectivity.

The subjective dimension of philosophy could start from the human person. Man is a rich source of philosophy beginning with the marvel on the complexity of the human person, the brevity of human life, the vicissitude of life, man’s superiority over the rest of nature, his power and weakness, his joys, sorrows, success and failure, his finitude, his experience of suffering, misery, disease, old age, death, etc, have led men and women to deep reflection and philosophizing all over the world. Imagine the kind of being man is that is so strong and powerful and yet so weak, feeble and die.

The objective dimension of philosophy could begin with the immensity of the universe, amazing variety of things, idea of time, the ceaseless changes in the universe amidst permanence, the basic unity amidst diversity, the seasons of the year, the heavenly bodies and their orderly circular movements, the starry sky, the sun, moon, stars, etc, these and many more can be the source and touch stones of philosophy.

Philosophy reflects on these experiences and many more in search of answers to questions that these experiences generate for people. The more human beings experiences the things in himself or in the other, the more curious he becomes and the more his natural desire to know is awakened. In spite of all these, human knowledge is so limited that he knows little about himself. He does not know why he exists and he has no answers to his own basic questions. The tendency to reflect on such fundamental philosophic questions is part of human nature. It is rooted in the natural instinct of curiosity.

Human nature are the same all over the world and the tendency to philosophize is part of human nature. It follows therefore that philosophizing is not peculiar to a group of people. In other word, other civilizations have their own philosophers. They reflect on the basic philosophic questions about human life or about the universe.

Self Assessment Exercise

1. What is philosophy?

3.2 Etymology of Philosophy

Philosophy is thought to have emanated from two Greek concepts: *Philo* and *Sophia*. With *Philo* meaning love and *Sophia* meaning wisdom rendering the concept *Philo-sophia* as love of wisdom. The Greeks have four words for love. They are: *Philo*, *Agape*, *Storge* and *eros* but with different meanings and directions of thinking. *Philo* means love in form of attachment, desire, and the like while *agape* has to do with love in relation to the general interest in humanity irrespective of the person, race, colour, nationality. It is that feeling of love that is given to any human being by the mere fact of being human. *Storge* has to do with the love for material things like food, clothes, fashion, and the like while *eros* is the love in relations to intimacy. The other segment of the concept philosophy, *Sophia* has to do with wisdom, reason, knowledge.

B.S. Nnamdi (2008:4) appears to have captured the etymology of philosophy when he stated that the ancient Greek word *Philia* and *Sophia* meaning literally love of wisdom was linked to Pythagoras who shared the belief that only the gods could be wise and the closest man could go is to love wisdom. As a result, man could only be a lover of wisdom.

Self Assessment Exercise

Discuss the etymology of Philosophy.

3.3 Evolution of Philosophy

You would have learnt from our definitions of philosophy that it is a reflective activity. That to philosophize is to reflect on human experience in search of answers to some fundamental questions. We also stated that as a man takes a reflective look at himself or the world around him, he is filled with wonders.

It is generally held by scholars in philosophy that philosophy begins with wonders. Both Plato and Aristotle tell us that this wonder is the beginning of philosophy. It is through wonders that humans originally began to philosophize. That is, the wonders that men and women experience with their personal or social issues experiences. Thus, the first step in philosophical activity is this wonder that accompanies human beings' experiential contact with himself or the world around him. This wonder gives rise to some fundamental questions and this is the second step in philosophical activity. The third step begins with reflection on these fundamental questions in search of answers. At this stage, man is philosophizing, if he puts down his reflections in writing, it becomes a philosophical essay (Omogbe 1985: 1).

Self Assessment Exercise

What is the foundation of philosophy and what are the processes of philosophizing?

4.0 Conclusion

This study unit addressed the question of philosophy, its etymology and evolution.

5.0 Summary

This study unit introduced the student to the art of reasoning that is popularly known as philosophy. In the process, it defined philosophy as a reflective activity. That it reflects on human experiences which could be personal or social in nature.

It goes further to explain that the wonder that one experiences in the course of reflecting is the foundation and touch stone of philosophy.

The student will also learn that the etymology of the term philosophy is *Philo* and *Sophia* which means love of wisdom. Further examination shows that a philosopher is a lover of wisdom. We also studied the process of philosophizing which begins with wonder, questions emanating from the experiences and reflection on those questions in search for answers.

6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment

- I. Taking the etymology of philosophy into cognizance, discuss the meaning of philosophy.

7.0 References & Further Reading

Aja, E. (1996). *What is Philosophy? An African Inquiry*. Enugu: Dozie Family Circle Publications.

Nnamdi, B.S. (2008). "The concept of Philosophy." In B.S. Nnamdi (Ed.) *Basic Issues in Logic and Philosophy*. Port Harcourt: Divine Technologies, Pp. 1 – 18.

Omoregbe, J.I. (1985). "African Philosophy: Yesterday and Today." In P.O. Bodunrin (Ed.) *Philosophy in Africa: Trends and Perspectives*. Ife: University of Ife Press Ltd, Pp. 1 – 14.

Sinha, J.N. (2009). *Introduction to Philosophy*. New Delhi: New Central Book Agency.

UNIT 2

GENERAL ISSUES ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

CONTENTS:

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objective of the study
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Development of Philosophy
- 4.0 Summary
- 5.0 Conclusion
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit presents the development of philosophy in ancient times in the African, Asian and European regions. It examines the development and systemization of philosophical discourse in the world.

2.0 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

- a. To discuss the overview of the development of philosophy in the ancient times in Africa, Asia and Europe.
- b. To identify mode of philosophizing that was prevalent in the various regions of the world in ancient times
- c. To examine the philosophical nature of the thought in the various regions of the world in ancient times.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Overview of the development of philosophy in ancient times

According to Joseph Omeregbe (2001:6) there is no part of the world where men never reflect on such basic question about human person or about the physical universe. In essence, there is no part of the world where people do not philosophize. The tendency to reflect on such fundamental philosophic questions is part of human nature; it is rooted in human natural instinct of curiosity – the instinct to know. Omeregbe (2001:7) further holds that human nature and experiences are the same all over the world, and the tendency to philosophize is part of human nature. It is against this backdrop that Karl Jasper (1974:10) holds that “man cannot avoid philosophizing.” It essentially means that men all over the world philosophize, and all peoples have their own philosophers.

Ability to reason logically and coherently is an integral part of man’s rationality. The power of logical thinking is identical with the power of rationality (Omeregbe 2001:7). It is therefore false to say that people cannot think logically or coherently unless they employ the forms of Aristotelean or Russellian logic. The place of training that a particular philosopher has determines this mode of thinking that such a person employs. It is totally unacceptable to think that a group of people do not have a philosophy because of their mode of reflection and discussion on issues that confronts them.

One of the major challenges facing the discourse on the early development of philosophy is their mode of transmission and preservation. Some of the teachings and discourse of the early philosophers were transmitted and preserved in written form while others ended up in oral form leading to the loss of the bulk of the teachings, discourse and the philosophers themselves. A culture that has the art of writing is fortunate in that their philosophers have their teachings and discourse preserved in form of writing.

4.0 Summary

This unit addresses one of the major problems of the ancient philosophical discourse. Particularly, the problem of philosophical nature of the discourse of African and Asian thinking, teachings and discourse. It is generally thought that people from Africa and Asia cannot philosophize and could not have had philosophers because they have not documented materials. In the process, we discussed the universal nature of the modalities of philosophy.

5.0 Conclusion

The tenets of philosophical discourse and activities are the same all over the world. These discourses could be written or oral but whatever form that they may be, the rudiments of thinking and reflecting are the same all over the world.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

“Philosophizing is a universal enterprise” Discuss.

7.0 References and Further Reading

Makunba, M.(2005). *Introduction to Philosophy*. Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa.

Omoregbe, J.I. (2001). *Knowing Philosophy: A General Introduction*. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers Limited.

Sinha, J.N. (2009). *Introduction to Philosophy*. New Delhi: New Central Book Agency.

MODULE 2

PHILOSOPHY IN PAST CIVILIZATIONS

Introduction

This module is centred on Philosophy in the past civilizations. It teaches that the various contemporary civilizations all over the world are transformation and development on the notable and diverse civilizations that once existed along evolutionary activities in human history that has covered millions of years. A good number of world historians have acknowledged six outstanding civilization before western civilization in the following order: Mesopotamian civilization which influenced Iraq, Iran, Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon. Indus valley civilization that dominated the north western regions of south Asia, north east of Afghanistan, Pakistan and northwest of India. Ancient Egyptian civilization along the bank and tributaries of River Nile in Africa, Chinese civilization with strong influence in the largest part of Asia, the ancient Greek civilization that swayed the ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian territories and the Roman civilization that covered the whole of Europe, part of Africa and the Middle East. These ancient civilizations in human history served as the cultural background and origin of philosophies, inventions ideas, lifestyles, religious, architecture, governance, sports, medicine, agriculture, economy and morality that have shaped the world into a global village. This module is made up of four study units. It gives you the grace to know Philosophy in Africa and Asia. Unit I examines Philosophy in Ancient Babylonian empire, Unit II studies philosophy in Ancient Egypt. Unit III studies philosophy in the Indus Valley civilization. Unit IV examines philosophy in China. Unit V studies philosophy in Ancient Greek and Roman civilization.

Unit 1: Philosophy in Ancient Babylon

Unit II: Philosophy in Ancient Egypt
Unit III: Philosophy in India
Unit IV: Philosophy in China
Unit V: Philosophy in Ancient Greece and Rome

UNIT 1

PHILOSOPHY IN ANCIENT BABYLON

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction
2.0 Objectives
3.0 Main Content
4.0 Conclusion
5.0 Summary
6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit studies the development of philosophy in the ancient Babylonian and Sumerian society. It studies the contributions of the ancient Mesopotamian society which was the centre of Babylonian empire. It studies how religion, philosophy, literature and ethical values developed in the ancient cities of Cyprus, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon and the like.

2.0 Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- i. To know the development of philosophy in the ancient Mesopotamian society.

- ii. To assess the contributions of the Babylonians to the development of philosophy.

3.0 Main Content

The nature of philosophy in ancient Babylonian world is traceable to great Mesopotamian wisdom that contained their socio-political, economic, cultural, religious and ethical values and relationship to their existence in the world as noticeable in many Babylonian literature sourced from Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Cyprus, and southern part of Turkey (Aso, 2019: 53).

History has it that the Babylonian empire which covers aforementioned countries had its capital city in Babylon, less than 100 kilometers from Bagdad, present day Iraq. It was a powerful kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar that outlived Assyrian empire after it declined around 610 BC. Nonetheless, the worldviews and philosophical values of this great people became very strong and developed beyond religious beliefs, mythologies and folklores. Around the 8th Century BC, Babylonian astronomers started raising questions and evaluating the real nature of the universe by which they make use of intuition or internal logic to make predictions about special inherent system that exist in each component of the planets.

Babylonian civilization predated the Greek civilization with evidence of Babylonian dialogue of pessimism which are evident in platonic dialectical analysis and the Heraclitan principle of contrast. More so, there are some outstanding concepts in Babylonian philosophy that are present in various philosophical schools in different parts of the universe. For example, the thought that the human intellect is pre-eminent among other organs; that totalitarianism is encouraged; that the state is the primary determinant of everything in human life and that everything in creation is a product of organic evolution.

The growth and development of astronomy, mathematics and astrology are traceable to Babylonian philosophy with reference to abstract reasoning that involves the relationships between the gods and the goddesses and the physical world. Diodorus, the Greek historian acknowledged that fact of Babylonian philosophers that demonstrated systematic knowledge of logic and language analysis. There are evidences of three Babylonian methods of gaining access to knowledge such as the logical analysis of language, the art of divination to create opportunity for the gods and man to relate well and the rule of law for harmonious existence in the universe with the gods (Aso, 2019: 54).

Babylonian traditions and literature highlighted their epic poetry, folklores and mythologies as being based on their rational and empirical reasoning based on their

existential realities of daily experiences. These thoughts are expressed in the works of Mulla Sadra, Yahya Ibn Adi, Muhammed Abduh, Al-Ghazali, Averroes, Avicenna and the hosts of others.

Babylonian empire fell into the hands of Alexander the Great in 331BC when he conquered the known world of his time. After the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC, his palace teacher, Aristotle articulated all the ancient Egyptian mysteries and texts looted from Egyptian temples and Babylonian thought into a unified Greek philosophy (Aso, 2019: 55).

4.0 Conclusion

The Babylonian empire had a lot of thinkers that made their valuable contributions to the growth and development of philosophy in that region. Their search for knowledge which was carried out through language analysis and divination process have produced a lot of resources for philosophical discourse and development.

5.0: Summary

Philosophical development in Mesopotamian, Sumerian and Babylonian empire were carried out through language analysis and divination and has influenced the development of Islamic philosophy.

6.0: Tutor Marked Assignment

Discuss the contribution of the Babylonians to the development of philosophy.

7.0: References and Text for Further Reading

Aso, W.O. 2019. *Rudiments of Philosophy for Undergraduates*. Lagos: Fropiel International Ltd.

UNIT 2

PHILOSOPHY IN ANCIENT EGYPT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Ancient Egyptian Civilization
 - 3.2 Ancient Egyptian Cosmology
 - 3.3 MAAT: Moral teachings of Ptah-Hotep
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0: Introduction

This unit studies the development of philosophy in Ancient Egypt. In the process, it examines the ancient Egyptian civilization, Egyptian cosmology, Egyptian mystery cult, pyramids and their moral system.

2.0: Objectives

The objectives are:

- a. To discuss the development of philosophy in the ancient Egyptian Civilization.
- b. To study the ancient Egyptian cosmology

- c. To analyze the Egyptian moral system (Ma'at).

3.0: Main Content

3.1. Ancient Egyptian Civilization

Egyptian civilization far exceeded all other groups who settled elsewhere. According to Bob Brier (1999:6) the earliest Egyptian habitation was Circa 700,000 BC. These people perhaps migrated from the south along Nile Valley. The first human inhabitants used language, gathered food, used hand axe and perhaps controlled fire. Bier (1999:7) further opines that between 30,000 – 10,000 BC, the Nile Valley was declining, people lived in swamps. Their settlements had clay hearths on which they cooked, grindstones for grinding. The development of bow and arrow made hunting easier. Between 10,000 – 5,000 BC, farming and cooking were used in both Northern and southern Egypt with the use of clay pots. Settlements grew along the Nile and the first sign of kingship appeared in both north and south Egypt. This was the beginning of Egyptian civilization. The population of the people was about 2,000 peoples. The dead were buried with possessions, in sand pit. Carved palettes, some adorned with decorative arts came up along the line.

According to Bier (1999:4) “Egypt is the most advanced civilization in history. Its accomplishments include monumental architecture (the pyramids), medical science, monotheism, and mummification.” Egypt remains one of the most mysterious civilizations in history. Brier further holds that Egyptian arts maintain great continuity for 3,000 years, subscribing to eternal values rather than creativity and innovation. And these civilizations are revealed through arts and literature. Tomb painting tells us about their belief in afterlife. More so, tombs were provisioned with an amazing variety of everyday objects. He also held that temple walls were decorated with histories such as records of battles; lists of kings, book of the dead reveal the Egyptians’ thought on the next life.

3.2 Egyptian Cosmology

Allen (1988:1) posits that the traditional Egyptian concept of the universe is best captured by the relief and inscriptions on the ceiling of Seti I’s cenotaph. The relief depicts the sky as a goddess NUT extended as a canopy over the earth and separated from it by the atmosphere in a form of a god *SHU*. Along the body of the sky are depicted stars and the moon in their various stages of its daily journeys.

Allen (1988:4) holds that Egyptian cosmology holds the world of human experience as bound by land below and sky above, separated from one another by

the atmosphere. Within these limits, the circle of daily life takes place, defined by the rising and setting of the sun. What lives outside them is beyond the realm of human knowledge. Thought to be unknown by the gods or spirits but not beyond the limits of speculation. Egyptian philosophers attempted to understand what lies outside the universe through series of contrast with the known world. Where the world is finite what lies beyond it is limitless. The known world is lit with sun, the universe outside it is uniformly and perpetually dark.

The Egyptians conceive of the universe as a limitless ocean of dark and motionless water. The sky is conceived of as a kind of interface between the surface of the waters and the dry atmosphere. The sun sails on this waters just as people sail on the Nile. The sun's disappearance inside the sky and appearance in the morning suggests the Egyptians circle of death and rebirth.

3.3 MAAT and Ethics of Leadership

The ancient Egyptians reasoned that it was possible to have an environment where truth, justice, righteousness, balance, and order dominated provided there exists a pharaoh willing and able to apply *maat* in every sphere, from the most abstract to the most concrete (Sesanti 2018: 7). It was held that the king's most important duty was to maintain *Maat* throughout the land. The emergence of a just king was not left to chance but conscious efforts were made to mould such. There were certain instructions that were given to those who were to ascend to the throne about how to apply rule characterized by justice. One of such documents was the instruction of Merikare, "the legacy of a departed king which embodies treatise on kingship" (Lichtheim 1975: 97). In this treatise, Merikare's father urges his son to "not neglect my speech, which lays down all the laws of kingship, which instructs you, that you may rule the land, and may you reach me with non to accuse you! (Lichtheim 1975: 107). The father told the son that as a king, he was expected to do justice, to care for the weeper, not to oppress the widow, not to expel a man from his father's property, not to punish wrongfully and not to kill, (Lichtheim 1975: 100).

Sesanti (2018:7) further presented the instruction of Merikare's father that cautioned his son against being biased in favour of the well to do in the society against the commoners in the land. He instructed his son to give out works on the basis of skills. He further asked his son that in a world where the powerful surround themselves with the weak, self ingratiating and sycophants, he should keep critical and independent minds that would be able to show him his wrongs when occasion necessitated.

The instructions of Ptah-Hotep (2650 – 2135 BC) is one of the most ancient teachings of the Egyptian kings on the ethics of leadership. Ptah-Hotep urges those in positions of authority to do perfect things that posterity will remember. They are expected to listen calmly to petitioners so that they will feel being attended to in moments of needs. He issued a strong warning against greed, arguing that it was a grievous sickness without cure.

4.0 Conclusion

Philosophy being a reflection on human life and experiences started developing in Egypt with the civilization of the people which is a product of people's thinking, acting and experiences must have kick started in Egypt. The Egyptian civilization which brought about kingship, organization of the society and their burial system are product of the thinking system of the people. Be that as it may, the thinking of the people is built around their religious systems.

5.0 Summary

Humanity is thought to have originated in sub-Saharan Africa several thousands of years ago but some migrated through the Nile Valley to Egypt where they developed, civilized, grew and organized themselves into a society, had kingship, developed a system of burial that has won global respect and admiration up till the present era and had a moral system that guided the king and the entire society. These are product of great thinking that is philosophical in nature.

6.0 Tutor- Marked Assignment

Discuss the contribution of Egyptian cosmology to the development of Egyptian philosophy.

7.0 References and Further Reading

Aso, W.O. 2019. *Rudiments of Philosophy for Undergraduates*. Lagos: Fropiel International Ltd.

Allen, J.P. 1988. *Genesis in Egypt: The Philosophy of Ancient Egyptian Creation Account*. Connecticut: Yale university press.

Bier, B. 1999. *The History of Ancient Egypt*. Virginia: The Teaching company.

Hallen, B. 2002. *A Short History of African Philosophy*. Indianapolis: University Press.

James, G.G.M. 2009. Stolen Legacy: Greek Philosophy is Stolen Egyptian Philosophy. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*. 2009.

Lichtheim, M. (1975). *Ancient Egyptian literature: The Old and Middle Kingdoms*. Berkeley, USA: University of California Press.

Sesanti, S. 2018. “Teaching Ancient Egyptian Philosophy (Ethics) and History: Fulfilling a Quest for a Decolonised and Afrocentric Education.” *Educational Research for Social Change*. Vol. 7, (Special Issue, June 2018: Pp. 1 – 15.)

Uzdavinys, A. 2018. *Philosophy as a Rite of Rebirth: from Ancient Egypt to the Neo-Platonus*. Wiltshire: The Prometheus Trust.

UNIT 3

PHILOSOPHY IN INDIA

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit examines the development of philosophy in ancient Indian society. this society comprises of several nations, traditions and philosophies such as Hinduism and Buddhism in India, Taosim and Confucianism in China, and a host of others spread across the region. In view of the space and time constraints, it becomes pertinent to concentrate on the Indus thought system.

2.0 Objectives

The objectives of this unit are:

- i. To study the development of philosophy in the Indus society.

- ii. To know the basic tenets of Hinduism
- iii. To assess the impact of Hinduism on the development of the Indian society.

3.0 Main Content

What is considered and known as Eastern or Oriental or Asian philosophy is the articulations of basic characteristics of diverse philosophies in Asia by western scholarship because there is no integrated philosophical tradition that is traceable to one source in Asian continent. As a matter of fact, ancient eastern philosophies are articulated from Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Indian philosophies as evident in their worldviews, religious, moral, socio-political and cultural values. For example, Hinduism is the synthesis of Indian cultures and traditions; Jainism is anchored on the principle of non-violence (*Ahimsa*) towards all living creatures.

The story of Indian philosophy is long and exciting. Their philosophical thought presents a richness, subtlety and variety which constitute an awesome testimony to the human spirit. Practically, every insight and shade of speculation is found in Indian thought. This richness and complexity makes it difficult to summarize.

Indian philosophy is practical in nature. Their speculations are anchored on their desire to improve on their lives. Confronted with physical, mental and spiritual suffering, Indian philosophers sought to understand the reasons and causes of these suffering. They attempted to improve on their knowledge of human nature and the universe because they wanted to uproot the causes of their suffering.

Indian philosophers respond to both practical and speculative motivations. Practically, there was the acquaintance with ordinary forms of suffering such as disease, hunger, loneliness and the knowledge that death will overtake the sufferer. Speculatively, there was the innate human curiosity to understand and to order experience. Practical considerations motivated the search for ways to overcome the various forms suffering. Speculative consideration led to the construction of explanatory accounts of the nature of reality and of human existence. But these considerations were not carried out separately. The primacy of practical considerations involved in Indian philosophies gives them substance while the necessity of the speculative philosophy determines their structure (Kohler, 1985: 9).

The practical nature of Indian philosophy is manifested in a variety of ways. The very word which is translated as philosophy *Dashana* literally means vision. It is what is seen when ultimate reality is investigated. The Indian seers investigate the condition of suffering and examine the nature of human life and the world to find

out the causes of suffering and the means of its cessation. What they found constituted their *Dashana*. It is possible to be mistaken in the vision as a result a philosopher's vision must be justified through logical analysis in which the inconsistencies are unraveled. The second method of verifying the veracity of a vision is through practical method. Indian philosophers have always insisted that practical method is the ultimate process of justifying a vision (Kohler, 1985: 9).

Indian philosophy is also concerned with finding ways to liberate the self from bondage to fragmented and limited modes of existence that is a bondage that causes suffering. According to Upanishad, the great power *Brahman* that energizes the cosmos and the spiritual energy of the self *Atman* are ultimately the same. This vision of the identity of self with ultimate reality provides the foundation for the methods of liberation which constitute the central core of Indian philosophy. It is a vision which sees the various distinct things and processes of the world as manifestations of a deeper reality that is undivided and unconditioned. Part of the Indian thought is the principle of *Karma* in which everyone gets the results of his or her actions. Simply put, what goes around comes around.

4.0 Conclusion

Indian philosophy is primarily concerned with the development of the individual and the society which is expressed in and through vision which must cohere with reality. It is primarily concerned with understanding of the reality of suffering and modalities of liberating people from it.

5.0 Summary

Indian philosophy focuses on the development of the individual and the society. The society which is embodied in the universal soul (*Brahman*) is extended through the individual soul (*Atman*) which is linked to other people's *Atman* and explained as everyone emanating from the *Brahman* and is in the process of returning to the *Brahman*. It is in this process that everyone is thought as being linked to everyone else. As a result, all humanity share the same *Brahman* and all their *Atman* are linked to one another.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

Discuss the relations between *Atman* and *Brahman* in Hindu thought.

7.0: References and text for Further Reading.

Aso, W.O. 2019. *Rudiments of Philosophy for Undergraduates*. Lagos: Fropiel International Ltd.

Kohler, J.M. 1985. *Oriental Philosophies*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons Ltd.

Omogbe, J.O. 2001. *Knowing philosophy*. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers Limited.

UNIT 4

PHILOSOPHY IN ANCIENT GREECO-ROMAN WORLD

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0: Introduction

This unit studies development of philosophy in Greece and Roman Empire. This study covers the Greco-Roman tradition in Europe, Judaism and Christianity in Israel. It also refers to the various nations of Europe and European ancestral populated countries of America, Canada and Australia.

2.0: Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- i. To study the development of philosophy in Greece and the entire European discourse.
- ii. To examine the various strands in the development of philosophy in western world.
- iii. To analyze the contributions of the west to the development of philosophy today.

3.0: Main Content

Philosophy in the western world is generally agreed to have started in the ancient Greek city of Ionia around 580 BC by a group of natural thinkers like Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Empidocles, Parmenides, Heraclitus and Pythagoras on the nature of things around them as evidenced in their reflections on water, earth, air, sun, moon and stars.

Philosophy as used by the ancient Greeks after Socrates means the ardent pursuit of knowledge for the sake of wisdom and understanding so as to limit the frontiers of ignorance. Hence, the nature of philosophy before Socrates is known as Pre-Socratic philosophy because it is limited in scope in contrast to the period after Socrates that introduced dialogue and questioning in defining and determining the natural characteristics that differentiates one thing from the other. In essence, philosophy fundamentally means the love of wisdom and passion for wisdom in all areas of speculative and practical knowledge.

As philosophy grows in Greece after the Pre-Socratics, four main branches were identified: Metaphysics and ontology that study the ultimate reality of being, epistemology that concerns with the foundation, validity and limits of knowledge. Ethics that investigates the nature of what is morally good and bad, Rhetoric and Logic that studies the articulation of effective communication. And Aesthetics that examines the nature of value and beauty in literary and fine arts. This remarkable difference is observed in the philosophical works of Socrates, Anaxagoras, Protagoras, Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, Zeno and Epicurus. As a matter of fact, many philosophers in the contemporary time hold that Greek philosophy is the basis of western culture; and also that western philosophical thought have no original root than platonic tradition. Hence, the nature of philosophy in the western world means appreciation of fundamental principles, tested values and attitudes towards human life, the society and natural characteristics of things in the universe.

The growth and development of western philosophy entered another era popularly known as Greeco-Roman and Hellenistic worlds when diverse schools of thought

merged together to form Hellenistic philosophy. Hence, there were notable philosophers from Egypt (Platonus) Persia (Zethros), Syria (Porphyry, Proclus), Rome (Cicero, Zethros, Marcus Aurelius, Lucretus and Seneca), Greece (Epicurus, Zeno), that contributed to the growth and development of Hellenistic philosophy in the western world (Composta, 1998: 309). The influence of Hellenistic philosophy in the western world declined as Christianity, and later Islam widely spread across Greco-Roman world. Thus, the end of Hellenistic philosophy marked the beginning of medieval philosophy that was rooted in Abrahamic tradition of Jewish, Christian and Islamic philosophies demonstrated in the works of Augustine of Hippo, Moses Maimonides, Al-Ghazali, Avicenna, Averroes, Don Scotus, William of Okham, Anselm of Canterbury, Bonaventure, Peter Abelard and Thomas Aquinas (Moudin, 1991: 201). The philosophical concerns of the philosophers of medieval period include: i. Logical articulation and analysis of concepts and an argument to attain the truth. ii. Differences and appreciation of the philosophical thought of ancient philosophers like Plato and Aristotle. iii. Argument for the existence of God. iv. The problem of evil. v. The differences and relationships between faith and reason (Moudin, 1991: 201). All the concerns of philosophers of medieval period eventually ended up in rationalism and empiricism with scholasticism to justify the relationships between the two in modern western philosophy.

Medieval philosophy gradually transformed into modern philosophy beginning from the 17th century until the 20th century. The beginning of modern philosophy witnessed passionate opposition between rationalists and empiricists philosophers' claims on essential realities abound in human experience. The pioneers of modern western philosophy is actually Rene Descartes with his dictum, '*cogito ergo sum*' I think, therefore I am. The rationalist philosophers maintained that knowledge is *apriori* and must be rooted in some innate ideas while the empiricist philosophers persistently claimed that every knowledge necessarily begins from sense organs. Hence, the nature of philosophy in the modern period consists of all that can be known and the means of knowing them. In 18th century, Immanuel Kant attempt to bring harmony between the rationalist and empiricist principles of acquiring knowledge but could not put an end to it on the basis that the dispute between the schools of philosophy could not be bridged. As a matter of fact, the school of empiricism justify the end of systematic philosophy that support the fixed principle and immutable structure of human nature, values and practices of religion, politics, economy, culture and morality. This was the beginning of atheism and pessimism in the western world. Modern philosophers include Erasmus, Machiavelli, Francis bacon, Rene Descartes, Wilhelm Leibniz, Thomas Hobbes, Benedict Spinoza, John Locke, John Dewey, G. Berkeley, Karl Marx and others (Russell, 1996: 526).

The scopes of their philosophical endeavours mainly consists of : i. categories and properties of being in existence. ii. Perception, appearance and reality. iii. Cause and effects. iv. Necessity and change. v. matter and form. vi. space and time. vii. Relationships between mind and body. viii. life, death and identity. ix. Morality. x. *appriori* and scientific knowledge. xi. Freedom and determinism. The quest for knowledge and wisdom in the western world allowed philosophy to diversify into philosophy of nature, philosophy of mathematics, sociopolitical philosophy, moral philosophy and philosophy of science. 19th century marked the decline of modern western philosophy as the concerns of philosophers are more about how to generate knowledge and improve the life of man and preserve human dignity from any form of violation as evident in existentialism.

In contemporary time, the art of philosophizing has been professionalized as evidenced in many universities located in different parts of Europe and replicated in other parts of the world because of the day of talented but unprofessional philosophers is no longer popular. In this context, professionalism is a process of philosophizing within the defined and determined norms acceptable to members of a philosophical forum or school of philosophy. Judging from this perspective, most outstanding researches are no longer evident in books but in forms of articles for professional scholars in various fields of philosophy to read, evaluate and react. This is the standard art of philosophizing attained in the western world before the end of 19th century and 20th century.

4.0 Conclusion

Greco-Roman world made tremendous contribution to the development of philosophy globally.

5.0: Summary

The development of philosophy has been discussed in and through four different era – Ancient, Medieval Modern and Contemporary. These era address issues within their periods.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

Discuss the basic issues addressed by the Ancient philosophers.

7.0 References and Text for Further Reading

Aso, W.O. 2019. *Rudiments of Philosophy for Undergraduates*. Lagos: Fropiel International Ltd.

Mouldin, 1991.

Omeregbe, J.O. 2001. *Knowing philosophy*. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers Limited.

Russell, B. 1996. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell's Foundation.

MODULE 3

PHILOSOPHY IN ANCIENT GREECE

Introduction

This module is made up of three study units. It gives you the opportunity to know the Miletian thinkers and their contribution to the development of Philosophy in Ancient Greece. The trio of Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes were popularly referred to as Miletian thinkers because their activities were centred at Ionia, a city in Miletus. They are popularly branded as Pre-Socratics because the works of Socrates has been used as the dividing line between the era. It is thought that Socrates brought rational investigation into philosophy unlike the previous era when philosophy is thought to have dealt with what the world and the celestial bodies were made of. Unit I examines Thales' contribution to the development of Philosophy in Ancient Greece. Unit 2 focuses on Anaximander's discourse and contribution to the development of philosophy. Unit three is centered on the thinking and teachings of Anaximenes.

Unit 1: Thales

Unit 2: Anaximander

Unit 3: Anaximenes

UNIT 1 THALES

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit examines the life, thought, teachings and the contributions of Thales to the development of philosophy in Ancient Greece. Western philosophy grew out of religion and mythology though that does not rule out the fact that people were not asking questions about reality, man and the cosmos but that the answers to these questions were sought through religion and mythology. Thales, one of the earliest Greek thinkers sought for answers to these questions through rational explanation. It the discourse of Thales regarding such questions that shall be discussed in this unit.

2.0 Objectives

The objectives of this unit are as follows:

- To know the life and person of Thales.
- To discuss the teachings of Thales
- To identify Thales' contributions to the development of western philosophy.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Thales' teachings and discourse

According to Joseph Omoregbe (2003:3) Thales was the first known Greek philosopher in the western world. He hailed from Miletus, a Greek city which was a great port and commercial centre in Ionia. He was the first known Greek philosopher who offered a rational explanation for the nature of the cosmos. He lived around 600 BC.

The most famous anecdote about Thales is told by Aristotle. Accordingly, Thales was reproached for his poverty which indicated that philosophy will be of no benefit to man. But, the story goes that from his knowledge of astronomy,

he perceived while it was still winter, the coming of a great harvest of olives in the coming season, and having procured a small amount of money, he made a deposit for the use of all the olive presses of Miletus and Chios, which he rented for a low price. When the harvest came and there was a sudden and simultaneous demand for the use of the presses he let these at whatever price he wished and made a fortune. He pointed out through this, that philosophers can easily become wealthy if they wish but such is not their main pursuit (Arieti, 2005:44). Thales is presented as a man who showed the lesson of Hesiod that study nature, apply its lessons and wealth will follow. More so, Thales is presented as a man of philosophy who is not interested in the application of knowledge for personal gain but knowledge for its own sake.

Arieti (2005: 44) opines that love for knowledge for its own sake marked the man (Thales) from Miletus. Accordingly, the radical change in Milesian thought is its freedom from mythology through search for explanations reflective of universal law of nature. Furthermore, Arieti (2005: 45) thinks that this freedom from religious explanation is a manifestation of an attempt to understand for the sole sake of understanding. It was thought that the gods of Poseidon was responsible for earthquakes and people appealed for escape from the menace. Thales thought that earthquake is a product of agitation of the water on which the earth floats. In view of the above, He felt that there is no god to appeal to for safety. Thales thought that the knowledge of the cause of earthquakes would exist for its own sake, simply for the satisfaction of knowing the cause.

Thales's response to the question of the original substance, that primary stuff that was the foundation of all being is as follows. He stated that the material principle of all things is water. Thales may have had in mind the changeable condition of water (liquid, solid and gas). Arieti (2005: 45) thinks that water may be a metaphor for the various forms of matter. That Thales may have meant the claim as a metaphor for the significance of water for life. Thales is thought to have come to the conclusion from observing that all food is moist and that heat itself is generated from the moist and is kept alive by it.

Thales also discusses soul (psyche). He sees soul as something in motion. Thales held that all things are full of gods. He seems to suggest that the soul is the source of movement. We see a motionless corpse and conclude that its soul has departed. Thales believed that the soul is a god because it is self moving, it causes things to move and that movement is the essence of being alive. Thus, rivers, trees, wind and celestial bodies are gods and are alive because they move

and seem to have the faculty of self-motion. Independent self-motion is thought to have a divine cause.

The day Thales first questions about the makeup of the world and proposed new solutions was one of the truly revolutionary moments in the history of the world. He also predicted the eclipse of the sun by mathematical means but the prediction was correct only to the nearest year.

3.2 Thales' contribution to Ancient Greece thought

The contributions of Thales to the development of ancient Greece thought are manifold. To begin with, his prediction about olive and all his efforts towards making money shows that philosophers have the potentialities of being rich but he was quick to teach that philosophy is sought for its own sake and not for personal gains. He advocated selfless services to the society through teachings that will liberate the people from the shackles of slavery brought about by religion and mythologies.

Thales' thought that the primary substance from which all other beings emanated was water was a ground breaking thought at the time. He discovered that every being have its main content to be constituted by water and exists in and through it. Rarely will you identify a being that do exist without water. He identified the three forms of water – solid, liquid and gas. Nothing exists without water. At death, the being dissolves and is absorbed by the soil as liquid (water).

Thales' thought and discourse on the soul is another ground breaking one. He sees soul as movement. He sees the soul as the source of movement and compares it with the corpse as distinct from the person himself. He sees the soul as a god because it causes things to move for movement is the essence of being alive.

4.0 Conclusion

Thales' teaching and contributions to the development of ancient philosophy particularly his thought on water being the primary substance that brought all beings into being coupled with his discovery that nothing exists without water remains remarkable His predictions about the earthquake and the olive tree will continue to be appreciated. His teachings on the soul and its being gods because it was thought that the soul determines one's movement was another major thought of Thales.

5.0 Summary

Thales made some remarkable teaching and contributions to the development of ancient philosophy through many ways beginning with his thought on water being the primary substance that brought all beings into reality. It brought the seaport to Miletus and made Miletus the centre of commerce, agriculture and learning. He discovered that nothing exists without water but could not explain how water could generate fire even though water generates heat. His prediction about the earthquake taught the Milesians that it was not the gods that are responsible for earthquakes. His teachings on the soul and its being gods because of the soul determining one's movement was another major thought of Thales which contributed to the discourse of Thomas Aquinas on the existence of God.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

How did Thales explain that water was the original substance and how did justify his belief?

7.0 References and Further Reading

Arieti, J. A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield publishers.

Omogbe, J.O. 2003. *A Simplified History of Western Philosophy* vol. 1. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers Ltd.Allen.

Russell, B. (2004). *History of Western Philosophy*. London: Routledge Classics.

Stumpf, S.E. (1994). *Philosophy: History and Problems*. New York: McGraw-Hills.

UNIT 2 ANAXIMANDER (610 – 546 BC)

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit examines the life, thought, teachings and the contributions of Anaximander to the development of philosophy in Ancient Greece. Thales held that water was the original substance that brought other beings into existence but Anaximander, a pupil of Thales felt that his master had tried in several ways but could not explain how water could generate fire. In view of that he felt that he will improve on the thought and teachings of his master.

2.0 Objectives

The objectives of this unit are as follows:

- i. To know the life and person of Anaximander.
- ii. To discuss the teachings of Anaximander
- iii. To identify Anaximander's contributions to the development of western philosophy.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Anaximander's teachings and discourse

According to Omoregbe (2003:4) Anaximander was the second known Greek philosopher in the western world. He hailed from Miletus just like Thales and was a student of Thales. He held that there must be an original substance from which all things are made. But he did not think that it must be water as Thales did. He held that the primary substance cannot be of any of the things we know because all elements that we know are in conflict with one another. If any of them is the original substance, it will conquer and submerge all others. The primary element must therefore be a neutral element, different from all the elements that we know, it must also be infinite, eternal and indeterminate.

The conflict between the different elements was interpreted by Anaximander as an example of injustice in nature since by this conflict one element invade the domain of another element. But, he maintained that there is cosmic law of justice which establishes order and makes everything to go back into what came. It is in this light that he said that the principle of the world is boundless (*apeiron*), an undefined entity that can become anything and everything. He noted the various things such as rock, trees, houses, rivers, stars, etc, they have their names and natures that separate them from everything else, and wonders that if each one of them has a fixed nature how could things come into being or pass out of being or change into anything else. He concluded that the underlying matter does not itself have the boundaries of a fixed nature; instead all matter is rich in and full of potentialities. Thus, rock can be turned into a house, water can dry up and become air, bread when eaten digested and become flesh, etc. Anaximander's boundless is an improvement on the core problem of change regarding how a new set of properties becomes something else (Arieti, 2005:47).

This mechanism of change comes from a war between opposite forces, of which the four principal pairs are the hot and the cold, the wet and the dry. He looked at the cycle of the year and felt that the summer and the winter are opposed to

each other. He felt that a living flesh is warm while a dead one is cold (Arieti, 2005:48).

Anaximander thought that the earth was cylindrical and not flat and we live on the surface of it. He inferred from his observation that the sun and other heavenly bodies revolve round the earth. He inferred from his mathematical ratio that an intelligible set of ordered rules governs the universe.

3.2 Anaximander's contribution to Ancient Greece thought

One of the major contributions of Anaximander to the development of ancient Greece thought is the concept of boundless, *apeiron*, an undefined entity that can become anything and everything. He explained the variation in things through this concept of boundless. It is through the concept of boundless that he explained the possibility of each being not to have a fixed nature.

Anaximander's thought that the earth was cylindrical in nature is another milestone in his discourse. He further held that human beings exist on the surface of the earth which has been given the desired respect in modern scientific discourse.

Anaximander's thought and discourse that the sun, stars and other heavenly bodies revolve round in a daily circular orbit around the earth is a reputable development. This thought has led to further development of the rotation and revolution of the cosmos.

4.0 Conclusion

Anaximander's teachings and contributions to the development of ancient philosophy particularly his thought on boundless (*apeiron*) being the primary substance that brought all beings into being coupled with his discovery that nothing exists with a definitive nature remains remarkable.

5.0 Summary

Anaximander made some remarkable teaching and contributions to the development of ancient philosophy through many ways beginning with his thought on boundless through which he explained that nothing has a fixed nature has continued to influence several discourse on the beginning of philosophical discourse.

His thought on the cylindrical nature of the earth has been of great importance to the discourse on the nature of the universe. His view on the sun and other heavenly

bodies revolving round the earth has also remained one of the best in geographical discoveries in contemporary times.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

How did Anaximander explain his concept of *apeiron* as the original substance and how did he justify his belief?

7.0 References and Further Reading

Arieti, J. A. 2005. *Philosophy in the AncientWorld*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield publishers.

Omogbe, J.O. 2003. *A Simplified History of Western Philosophy*. Vol. 1. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers Ltd.Allen.

Russell, B. (2004). *History of Western Philosophy*. London: Routledge Classics.

Stumpf, S.E. (1994). *Philosophy: History and Problems*. New York: McGraw-Hills.

UNIT 3: ANAXIMENES (585 – 528 BC)

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0References and Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit examines the life, thought, teachings and the contributions of Anaximenes to the development of philosophy in ancient Greece. He was the third Greek philosopher and hailed from Ionia, Miletus. The time of his death is put at around 528/526 BC (Omogbe, 2003:5). Composta (1990:21) holds that

Anaximenes was a disciple of Anaximander. That he rejected the thesis of “*apeiron*” as distinct from phenomena. And he attributes the characteristics of infinity or boundlessness to empirical phenomena – the air. He was not comfortable with Anaximander’s thought of boundless, an undefined entity that could become anything or everything. Anaximenes has no explicit criticism for his predecessors nor does any of such criticisms exist.

2.0: Objectives

The objectives of this unit are as follows:

- To know the life and person of Anaximenes
- To discuss the teachings of Anaximenes
- To identify Anaximenes’s contributions to the development of western philosophy.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Anaximenes’ teachings and discourse

Anaximenes (Arieti, 2005: 49) held that Thales’ thought that water was the original substance that brought other beings into existence was a metaphor for matter because water could take on the shape of any container and could exist in gaseous, liquid, and solid states but could not explain how water could generate fire which appears as a polar opposite with water. In view of that he felt that he will improve on the thought and teachings of his master by thinking that the original substance was air. He thought that where water presented the apparently insoluble difficulty of transforming into or out of fire, air presented the advantage of invisibly taking on different forms in a way that could be actually perceived. We can feel air that is hot, moist, cold or dry. We can feel the wind blowing on our skin and then surmise that the same wind is invisibly whirling the dry leaves. He thought that air has a good claim to be the source of living things as water, for air is the breath of life.

Anaximenes (Composta, 1990: 21) sees air just like Anaximander’s thought on boundless (*apeiron*) as having the feature of invisibility, but unlike the unbounded, there is actual evidence that it exists. He sees air as a perceptible part of nature while at the same time it enjoys a place in the explanatory intellectual and invisible realm that is somehow beyond nature. Anaximenes offered many other views such as the transformation of air into different substances like condensation and rarefaction. When air is condensed, it is cold; when it is relaxed it is hot.

According to Composta (1990:21) Anaximenes held that there was a transposition of the unlimited from a distinct arch to air and that made him to think that such a

vital phenomena plays important role. He thought that the soul, which is a breath, sustains the body and gives it life. Vital air condenses and rarefies in such a way that all forms of becoming requires no other principle. He went further to transfer this biological model of the concept of the universe and astronomical phenomena to explain that through condensation, hot air is transformed into rain, cloud, fog. He further holds that lightening from heavens is merely inflamed air.

3.2 Anaximenes's contribution to Ancient Greece thought

One of the major contributions of Anaximenes to the development of ancient Greece thought is that air was the original substance through which all other beings emanated. He saw his thought as a better explanation for Anaximander's concept of boundless, *apeiron*, an undefined entity that can become anything and everything. Anaximenes explained that the soul is air and it gives it life.

Anaximenes's thought that air could turn into any being through condensation and rarefaction is one of his major contributions to the development of western philosophy. It is through this process that air could turn into solid, liquid and gas.

4.0 Conclusion

Anaximenes' teachings and contributions to the development of ancient philosophy particularly his thought that air was the primary substance that brought all things into being through condensation and rarefaction remains remarkable.

5.0 Summary

Anaximenes made some remarkable teaching and contributions to the development of ancient philosophy through many ways beginning with his thought on air being the primary substance improved on Anaximander's thought. His explanation that air could produce any substance through condensation and rarefaction remains remarkable.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

How did Anaximenes justify his thought that air is the primary substance?

7.0 References and Further Reading

Arieti, J. A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield publishers.

Composta, D. 1990. History of Ancient Philosophy. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omogbe, J.O. 2003. A Simplified History of Western Philosophy vol. 1. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers Ltd. Allen.

Russell, B. (2004) History of Western Philosophy. London: Routledge Classics.

Stumpf, S.E. (1994) Philosophy: History and Problems. New York: McGraw-Hills.

MODULE 4: PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY

Introduction

This module examines the discourse of philosophy in Italy where in the discourse of Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans, Heraclitus and Parmenides are examined. This module is made up of three study units. It gives you the opportunity to know the movement of philosophy in Italy and the early 5th century philosophical discourse. Unit one discusses the thought and contributions of Pythagoras while unit two examines the contributions of Xenophanes, Unit three examines the thought of Heraclitus, unit four examines the discourse of Parmenides. Unit five Empedocles. While unit six, seven, eight and nine analyze the teachings of Leucippus and Democritus, Anaxagoras, Zeno and the Sophists respectively.

UNIT I: PYTHAGORAS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0: Introduction

This unit examines the thinking and teachings of Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans in Italy. Pythagoras has been described as one of the intellectually sound men and most important men that has ever lived (Russell 1996: 38). He was a native of Samos, moved to Croton in southern Italy. According to James Arieti (2005: 56) “the purpose of travel is to go to Italy.” Accordingly, a man who has not been in Italy, is always conscious of an inferiority, from him not having seen what it is expected a man should see. The grand object of travelling is to see the shores of the Mediterranean. In the mid-sixth century, two important thinkers, Pythagoras and Xenophanes, achieved this goal. Pythagoras left his native island of Samos, in the eastern Aegean, and Xenophanes left Colophon, not far from Samos, on the coast of Ionia (modern day Turkey). Given the ties a man had to his polis what could have induced anyone to leave his part of the world and go far away?

The unit examines Pythagoras’ contributions to the development of philosophy in the ancient time. It is discussed as follows: life, person and times of Pythagoras, His mathematical discourse and contribution to the development of philosophy.

2.0: Objectives

The objectives of this study include:

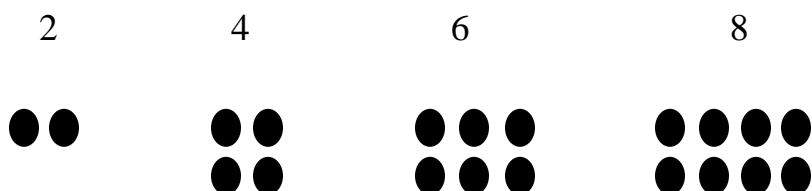
- i. To examine the thinking and teachings of Pythagoras
- ii. To analyze his discourse on numbers
- iii. To assess his contribution to the development of western philosophy.

3.0 Main Content

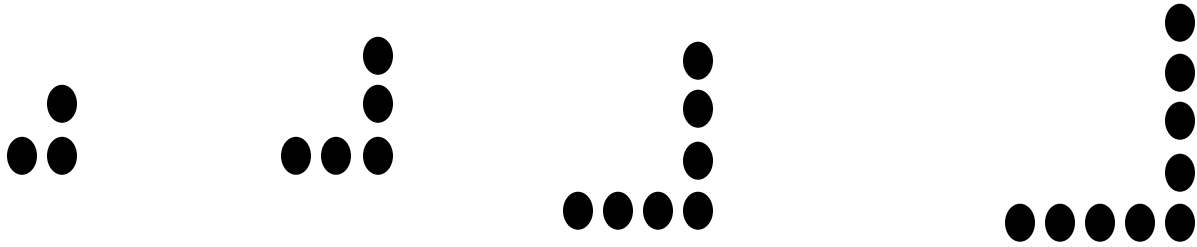
According to tradition, Pythagoras moved to Croton in southern Italy; where he founded a secret brotherhood. He was a dynamic, inspirational leader, renowned, also mocked, for his learning. Since the secrets of the brotherhood were very well kept, very little is known for sure about it. What is known is that the brotherhood believed in the transmigration of souls, a process whereby souls did not die but returned in the bodies of animals or human beings, It was perhaps for this reason that Pythagoreans kept special dietary laws, abstaining from kidney beans (which, perhaps reminding them of embryos, were believed to contain the souls of the dead) and meat (which might turn out to have housed the souls of one’s ancestors or friends). They cultivated the art of memory, requiring members to perform exercises such as recalling the previous day’s activities and conversations with the greatest possible exactitude. Whether Pythagoras himself or someone else is responsible for the discoveries attributed to him is, for the most part, impossible to determine. Pythagoras was given all the credit. His followers treated him as something of a deity, not pronouncing his name but referring to him as “he himself” or as “the man.” Among the legends associated with the Pythagorean brotherhood is the story of a certain Hippasus, who was allegedly put to death for having divulged the secret that the square root of 2 is irrational (that is, not able to be expressed as a ratio of integers). Although the story is probably false, it shows the reputation the Pythagoreans enjoyed for their secrecy and for their wish that the world actually be without what might be regarded as mathematical ugliness.

Like the Milesian thinkers whom we have considered, the Pythagoreans were looking for an underlying principle beyond what could be seen with the senses. They thought they had found this principle in mathematical order, the basis of which was number, for number gave everything proportion, shape, and quantity (Arieti, 2005: 57). Numbers in ancient times were presented as points forming geometric figures, and these figures were of great importance to the Pythagoreans, who derived fascinating arithmetical facts from them and also attributed to them imaginative moral and physical qualities (Stumpf, 1994:9).

Even numbers made symmetrical figures. In Greek, the Word for “even numbers” (*artion*) means *joined* and has a positive connotation of order and clarity. The number *four*, being doubly symmetrical, was for the Pythagoreans a perfect number and was identified with justice and law. They depicted the first four even numbers as follows:



Odd numbers (*perittois*, the word for excessive) were presented as points on a *gnomon* (from the likeness of the angel to that on a Babylonian sundial):



Triangular numbers were those that could be drawn in a triangular shape (Arieti, 2005: 57).

Of these, Pythagoreans were especially fond of 10, for ten is the sum of the first four numbers ($1 + 2 + 3 + 4 = 10$) and yields a triangle with sides of four units like a pyramid.

The Pythagoreans were so convinced that numbers and mathematical beauty ruled the universe that they constructed their model of the universe not on what they observed but on what they thought it should be. Since they wanted the number 10 to pervade the universe but the number of observed bodies added up to only 9 (earth, sun, moon, five planets, and the sphere of stars), the Pythagoreans added a mysterious invisible “counter earth” to round out an even ten. Expressing a similar desire to conform physical material to their notions of number, the Pythagoreans, who originally were aware of only four of the five regular polyhedra—the tetrahedron, cube, octahedron, and icosahedrons—and believed that these corresponded to the four elements - fire, earth, air, and water. When they learned of a fifth regular polyhedron—the dodecahedron—they added a mysterious fifth invisible element, *aether*, to the four.

One of the truly amazing discoveries made by the Pythagoreans was that musical harmony is based on mathematical proportions. Since all accomplishments were credited to Pythagoras, the story of the discovery gives him the leading role. One day the story goes, he happened to hear the pleasing sounds produced by the clanging of a blacksmith’s hammers. The hammers turned out to have weights in 12, 9, 8, and 6 units, and from these numbers he derived the octave ($12:6 = 2:1$), the fifth ($12:8 = 3:2$), the fourth ($12:9 = 4:3$), and the whole tone ($9:8$). He discovered as well that when the string of a lyre is halved in length while maintaining the same tension, the note played is increased by an octave. The significance of this discovery, which perhaps formed the basis of the whole Pythagorean confidence that the universe is based on number, is the uncovering of

what had been hidden-this fact that hidden mathematical ratios are the basis of perceptible harmony (Arieti, 2005: 58).

4.0 Conclusion

The Pythagoreans combined number and spirituality to develop an enduring philosophical discourse that has continued to thrill scholars up to the present era. Their discovery of the popular theorem has remained reputable in human history.

5.0 Summary

The Pythagoreans combined number and spirituality to develop an enduring philosophical discourse that has continued to thrill scholars. As a religious group, they thought that the soul migrates at death from one individual to another, even to animal. It is on this basis that they refused to eat meat. They also use numbers thinking that everything in the universe is based on numbers. Numbers were drawn in the form of points and are arranged in terms of odd and even numbers. While the odd numbers are arranged in triangular form, the even numbers are arranged in rectangular forms. The number ten is thought to be a complete number; as a result it is arranged in form of a pyramid. These numbers are also thought to be the foundations for music.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

Discuss the contributions of the Pythagoreans to the development of western philosophy.

References and Further Reading

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omogbe, J.O. 2002. *A Simplified History of western Philosophy Vol. I*. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems (fifth Edition)*. New York: McGraw Hills.

UNIT 2 XENOPHANES

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

8.0 References and Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit examines the life, person and thought of Xenophanes and the contributions that he made to the development of western philosophy.

2.0 Objectives

The objectives for this study are:

- i. To study the life, person and thought of Xenophanes
- ii. To examine his teachings and contributions to the development of philosophy.
- iii. To analyze the relevance of his teachings in the contemporary society.

3.0 Main Content

Xenophanes was born around 570 BC in Colophon, in 546 he left his land, which was occupied by the Persians through the Median (Composta, 1998; 47). He lived as an exile from about the age twenty five, when he left his native city of Colophon in Asia Minor. He was an independent thinker and a cheerful critic of his culture's values. For example, he pointed out the rewards that come to someone who wins a victory in the Olympic Games-free board; at public expense or a rich treasure and protested that no athletic skill was as good as his wit. The victorious athlete does "not fatten the store houses of the city." (Arieti, 2005: 60). Xenophanes could have addressed his lament at today, for this particular habit has not changed: we reward our athletes-at least with earthly gold-far more than we do to our scholars.

Xenophanes offered biting criticisms of the traditional conception of the gods. He wrote, "Homer and Hesiod attributed to the gods whatever 'is shameful and blameworthy in the eyes of men stealing, adultery, and deceiving one another'" (Arieti, 2005: 60). With considerable audacity, Xenophanes declared that the standard of the gods' character must not be tradition or even faith but moral purity. His statement goes beyond an attack on mere anthropomorphism (rendering the gods in human form). Xenophanes berated gods to behave in a way that we would frown at in human beings and that is incompatible with the essence of divinity and that therefore the poets are wrong in attributing such behavior to the gods. In other words, he asserted that we can make true claims about the divine based on standards discoverable by reason. The gods do not commit adultery, steal, or deceive because these actions are intrinsically wrong. He suggested, moreover, that the gods live according to a standard beyond their will. Adultery is not wrong because the gods declare it to be wrong; it is wrong, and the gods do not engage in it because it violates an objective standard. Thus the gods too are subject to law. They are, in a sense, less free than the king of Persia, whose will itself is the law. As Anaximenes had rendered the gods subject to the inexorable physical law that

everything is air, so Xenophanes put universal moral law above any private divine prerogative (Composta, 1998: 47 - 48).

4.0: Conclusion

Xenophanes made a very vital contribution to philosophical discourse when he posited that the society needed to place more values on their thinking tanks than their celebrities.

5.0: Summary

Xenophanes made a very vital contribution to philosophical discourse when he criticized the art of placing more values on the athletes than the scholars who develop the basic foundation of the society. He also created the awareness that anthropomorphic conception of the gods were highly misleading.

6.0: Tutor Marked Assignment

Briefly highlight the basic thought of Xenophanes.

7.0 References

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omogbe, J.O. 2002. *A Simplified History of Western Philosophy* Vol. I. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems* (fifth Edition). New York: McGraw Hills.

UNIT 3: HERACLITUS

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit examines the life, person and thought of Heraclitus and the contributions that he made to the development of western philosophy.

2.0 Objectives

The objectives for this study are:

- i. To study the life, person and thought of Heraclitus
- ii. To examine his teachings and contributions to the development of philosophy.
- iii. To analyze the relevance of his teachings in the contemporary society.

3. 0 Main Content

Heraclitus (500 BCE), born to a noble family, had the right to an aristocratic title by the laws of heredity (Arieti, 2005: 69). He was entitled to an Aristocratic position but gave up his title to his brother. According to traditional accounts, Heraclitus dedicated his treatise, which survives in fragments of no more than a few lines each, to the Temple of Artemis, evidence perhaps that the treatise was intended neither for posterity nor even for a human audience. Heraclitus believed that humans are incapable of understanding his rational explanations. He says about people:

Of the Logos [Greek for rational account], which is as I describe it, men always prove to be uncomprehending, both before they have heard it and when once they have heard it. For although all things happen according to this Logos, men are like people of no experience, even when they experience such words and deeds as I explain, when I distinguish each thing according to its constitution and declare how it is; but the rest of men fail to notice what they do after they wake up just as they forget what they did when asleep (Arieti, 2005: 69).

Arieti (2005: 69) further holds that Heraclitus did not spare his wise predecessors for lack of confidence in his fellow humans. Heraclitus held that learning many things does not teach intelligence; if so it would have taught Hesiod and Pythagoras, and again Xenophanes and Heraclitus. According to Arieti (2005: 69), the claim that most people are incapable or unwilling to understand the truths of philosophy is common in the history of thought. From Heraclitus through Plato, through the Stoics, through the theologians of the Middle Ages and on, philosophers have distinguished the “few” who can understand from the “many” who cannot. Perhaps this distinction of the few and the many in other philosophers

is a “coping mechanism” to help philosophers accept the fact that their work is not attractive to many people, In Heraclitus’s case, and the unattractiveness seems entirely justified by an opaqueness that won him the nickname of the “dark” or the “obscure.” But where obscurity in some thinkers may be a cultivated affectation in Heraclitus the obscurity is intimately connected with his thought, for his fundamental conceptions are that nature hides the truth and that underlying all reality is a clash of opposites (Composta, 1998: 35).

According to Heraclitus, the world consists of an oscillation between opposites that are in continuous flux. He wrote, “Living and dead are the same, and awake and asleep, and young and old, for the ones, turned over become the others, and the others again, turning over, become the one”. And also, “The cold is heated, the hot cooled, the wet dried, and the arid drenched (Stumpf, 1994: 15).” For Heraclitus nothing exists except the constant transformation of one thing into another. He declared, “You enter the same river, but other waters flow unto you.” Heraclitus elaborated his doctrine of opposites with the metaphor of a harmony, according to which different tensions on a string will produce a beautiful sound. Consider this pair of fragments.

Things taken together are whole and not whole, something which is being brought together and brought apart, which is in tune and out of tune; out of all things there comes a unity, and out of a unity all things. They do not apprehend how being at variance agrees with itself literally, how being brought apart it is brought together with itself there is a back stretched connection as in the bow and the lyre (Arieti, 2005: 70).

The principle of harmony that things opposed to each other work together in a creative way is one of Heraclitus’s central metaphors for the world. Just as in music high notes and low notes flats and sharps, long notes and short notes all collaborate to form a concordant whole, so too, the various opposite forces and conditions of the world harmonize in forming a whole. This truth is apparent in our lives, where hunger and thirst, pain and pleasure, sleep and waking-all opposites-are necessary components of life and health. For Heraclitus, there is not an underlying substance of which things are a form, no shapeless matter or *apeiron*, as Anaximander suggested. The world is made of opposites that continuously change into one another.

According to Omoregbe (2002: 12), Heraclitus did not actually use the word opposites. His metaphor for this operation of the universe is war. Whereas for other people war is the god *Ares* (*Mars* in Latin), destroyer of all that is beautiful and destroyer of cities and ravager of fields. For Heraclitus, war is what generates the

creative pairing of opposites: “War is all-father and all king, and he appoints some to be gods and others to be men; he made some to be slaves and others to be free.” As Arieti (2005: 71) put it war thus he comes, in a way. The underlying reality is a war, everlasting and all pervasive, between the opposites of the universe. God, for Heraclitus, is what keeps the eternal war raging, God, who is himself a unity of opposites: “God is day and night, winter and summer, war and peace, fullness-hunger. He changes his appearances, just as oil, when blended with perfumes, is named after the smell of each perfume. For Heraclitus, the tension created by the oppositions is the world. While men see some things as just, others as unjust, for God all is just: God sees the big picture and sees that the opposites are necessary for each other. It is, after all, sickness that makes health good, hunger that makes satiation good.

Fire is associated with Heraclitus, and some think that he makes it the basic material principle of the world. But in Heraclitus “fire” is a metaphor for the principle of opposition of all things. Fire is destructive, of course, for it burns everything up. On the other hand, warmth, which comes from fire, is found in living and growing beings. Fire seems a perfect metaphor for change since it constantly changes its shape. Indeed, in a brilliant metaphor that shows a modern economist’s understanding of the nature of money as a medium of exchange-that is, a currency into which everything can be converted for the purpose of trade- he writes, “Everything is exchange for fire, and fire for everything, as gold is for merchandise and merchandise for gold (Arieti, 2015:71; Omoregbe, 2002:12).” Fire is responsible for souls, for souls vaporize from what is moist, and the wisest and best souls are dry. Moreover, souls participate in the process of cosmic change. Writing about souls, perhaps constituted of fire, Heraclitus says that “it is death to become water; from water it is death to become earth; from earth water comes into being; and from water, soul comes into being.” Soul thus seems to be greater than physical things, for “one could not discover the limits of the soul, even if one traveled by every path in order to do so; such is the depth of its meaning (Arieti, 2015:71; Omoregbe, 2002:12; Stumpf, 1994: 16).”

4.0: Conclusion

Heraclitus believed that humans are incapable of understanding his rational explanations. He did not spare his wise predecessors for lack of confidence in his fellow humans. He also held that learning many things does not teach intelligence and checked it against the backdrop of the teachings of Hesiod and Pythagoras, and again Xenophanes and Hectataeus. His position that nature hides the truth and that underlying all reality is a clash of opposites seems to capture the central issue in his thought. Heraclitus holds that the world consists of an oscillation between

opposites that are in continuous flux and that the living and dead are the same, and awake and asleep, and young and old, for the ones, turned over become the others, and the others again, turning over, become the one. These and many more have distinguished Heraclitus' thought from other philosophers.

5.0: Summary

Heraclitus held that fire is the basic material principle of the world. Heraclitus sees "fire" as a metaphor for the principle of opposition of all things. Fire is destructive, of course, for it burns everything up. On the other hand, warmth, which comes from fire, is found in living and growing beings. Fire seems a perfect metaphor for change since it constantly changes its shape. More so, nature hides the truth and that underlies all reality is a very important position to ponder upon.

6.0: Tutor Marked Assignment

Briefly assess the basic teachings of Heraclitus.

7.0: References and Text for Further Reading

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omogbe, J.O. 2002. *A Simplified History of western Philosophy* Vol. I. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems* (fifth Edition). New York: McGraw Hills.

UNIT 4: PARMENIDES OF ELEA (515 BC)

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This topic discusses the thought of Parmenides of Elea. He is popularly respected as a contemporary of Heraclitus. His teachings were completely opposite those of Heraclitus. He teaches that everything is static contrary to the thinking and teaching of his predecessor, Heraclitus who held that everything is inconstant flux.

2.0: Objectives

The objectives are:

- i. To examine the thinking and teachings of Parmenides
- ii. To analyze the thought of Parmenides that nothing changes in compararism with that of Heraclitus
- iii. To present the contributions of Parmenides to the development of Western Philosophy.

3.0 Main Content

Parmenides was from the city of Elea, in Southern Italy which was at that time a Greek colony. He was born towards the end of the sixth century B.C. He claimed to have been led to the gates of the sun, guarded by justice; and there he received a revelation of the truth from a goddess (Omoregbe, 2002: 13). In view of the above, the philosophy of Parmenides is given a mythical setting. It is taken for granted that Western philosophy grew out of mythology and religion. Its separation from mythology and religion was a very slow and long process. Mythology and religion accompanied Western philosophy all through the Greek period, while religion dominated it in the medieval period.

According to Arieti (2005: 73) Parmenides is said to have come from a noble family and to have been wealthy. Unfortunately, like so much of ancient biography, details of his life may be more in accord with what the biographer thought *ought* to have been true than with any actual facts. In general, there may have been an assumption that anyone who could devote his life to philosophy had to be rich, for in Greek the word *study* is the word for *leisure* (from *schole*, from which derives our word school).

The philosophy of Parmenides is expressed in his poem, entitled ‘On Nature,’ On Nature,’ which consists of two parts, namely, ‘Way of Truth,’ and ‘Way of

Opinion.’ The way of truth is the way of reason, and the way of opinion is the way of the senses. It is through reason that man can attain truth; reason alone leads to truth whereas the senses can only give us opinion but cannot lead us to truth. This radical distinction between reason and the senses together with a mistrust of the senses and reliance on reason played a very important role later in the philosophy of Plato. Parmenides was the first philosopher to emphasize this difference (Omeregbe, 2002:13).

The main doctrine of Parmenides is that change is simply an illusion of the senses, that being is one and unchanging. There is no becoming, nothing comes into being and nothing goes out of being, being simply is and does not change. There is no change in reality, whatever is, is and cannot become anything else. His argument for saying that nothing comes into being is that if anything comes into being, then it must come either from being or from non-being. If it comes from being, then it is already being and so does not really come into being. But if it comes from non-being, then it is nothing, for only nothing can come from nothing or non-being. In either case there is no becoming, nothing comes into being. Whatever is, is and does not become anything else. Being is one, eternal unchanging and infinite. Parmenides thus denied the reality of change and the plurality of being, and ascribed belief in these as due to the illusion of the senses. In reality being is one and does not change. Change in this context includes motion, so that by denying the reality of change, Parmenides also denies the reality of motion.

4.0 Conclusion

The thought of Parmenides that nothing changes remains a great achievement. All beings are the same insofar as they are beings. In essence, what is, is and what is not, is not. What is can only produce what is and what is not cannot produce anything. In essence, there is nothing really new.

5.0 Summary

The thought of Parmenides that nothing changes was a milestone and still remains a great achievement. Parmenides held that there is something called being and that whatever has being, is. A being is the same insofar as it is being. In essence, what is, is and what is not, is not. What is can only produce what is and what is not cannot come into being. In view of the above, there is nothing new and we should not expect anything new but things that already exist. As a result, nothing changes. Everything is what they are.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

Briefly assess the thought of Parmenides.

7.0: References and Suggestions for Further Reading

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omogbe, J.O. 2002. *A Simplified History of Western Philosophy* Vol. I. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems* (fifth Edition). New York: McGraw Hills.

UNIT 5: EMPEDOCLES

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main Content

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0: Introduction

This unit studies the life, person and thought of Empedocles. It goes further to examine his discourse and contribution to the development of western philosophy.

2.0: Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

- i. To study the life, person and thought of Empedocles.
- ii. To analyze the teachings of Empedocles.
- iii. To examine his contribution to the development of western philosophy.

3.0: Main Content

Empedocles lived around 440 B.C. was from Akragas, city on the South Coast of Sicily. He was not only a philosopher but also a religious man who even claimed to be a god. According to legend, he tried to prove that he was a god by leaping into a volcanic crater, and that was the end of his life. But he forgot one of his slippers while coming and that made people to know what happened. He was also a scientist who discovered that air was a separate substance. He tried to reconcile the theories of Heraclitus that everything changes, with that of Parmenides that there is no change, that nothing comes into being and nothing goes out of being. Empedocles maintained that there were four eternal elements, namely, earth, air fire and water. All things according to him are composed of these four elements. The elements are eternal and indestructible. They always remain what they are, none becomes the others; fire does not become earth, etc. This means that there is no change, nothing changes for they are eternal, indestructible and unchanging. Everything in the world is a combination of these four elements. When the four elements unite, something comes into existence, and when they disintegrate something ceases to exist. The unification and separation of these four elements explain the coming into existence and the passing away of all things. We can therefore say, on the one hand that there is no change, that nothing new comes into being and nothing really goes out of being as they unite and separate. On the other hand, their notification and separation in as much as they make things come into existence and go out of existence respectively, can be seen as change. This is what we mean by change (Omoregbe, 2003: 18).

What is responsible for the unification and separation of the four elements? According to Empedocles, there are two forces operating in nature, namely, the principle of unification and the principle of division. The former is love, and the latter hatred. Each of these two principles takes its turn in operation; love unites the four elements and thereby brings things into existence, then hatred takes turn, and separate them thereby making things cease. They are the principle of harmony and disorder, unification and division, each taking its turn to operate in the universe.

Empedocles was an evolutionist who proposed an evolutionary theory similar to that for which Dawin became famous several centuries later. According to Empedocles, all things came into existence by the chance combination of the four elements. The organs, the limbs, the shape of things as we now see them were not designed on purpose to be as they are now, nor were they like this at the beginning. For things had to struggle for existence, the less fitted for survival perished only those whose organs, limbs and shapes were most fitted survived.

4.0: Conclusion

Empedocles held that the four principal elements postulated by his predecessors as result, there is no new substance per se. And concluded that every substance is a combination of every other one.

5.0: Summary

According to Empedocles, there are two forces operating in nature, namely, the principle of unification and the principle of division. The former is love, and the latter hatred. Each of these two principles takes its turn in operation; love unites the four elements and thereby brings things into existence, then hatred takes turn, and separate them thereby making things cease to be. They are the principle of harmony and disorder, unification and division, each taking its turn to operate in the universe.

6.0: Tutor Marked Assignment

Briefly assess the contribution of Empedocles to the development of western philosophy.

7.0: References and Texts for Further Reading

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omogbe, J.O. 2003. *A Simplified History of western Philosophy* Vol. I. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems* (fifth Edition). New York: McGraw Hills.

UNIT 6: THE ATOMISTS- LEUCIPPUS OF MILETUS (450-420) AND DEMOCRITUS OF ABDERA (460-370 BC)

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0: Introduction

This unit examines the thought of Leucippus and Democritus on their thought of Atom as the foundation of the nature of things that bear striking resemblance.

2.0: Objectives

The objectives are:

- i. To study the teachings of Leucippus and Democritus on Atom.
- ii. To analyzes the teaching of Leucippus and Democritus.
- iii. To examine the implications of their discourse to the contemporary society.

3.0 Main Content

Leucippus and Democritus formulated a theory about the nature of things that bear striking resemblance to some 20th century views. The duo posited the doctrine of atomism as a response to the Eleatic arguments that what is real is both single and motionless, insofar as motion is impossible without empty space. Suffice it to say that the Eleatic standpoint is synonymous with Zeno's paradoxes. And for the Atomists, plurality cannot be possible without the availability of empty space to separate the different unities. In this regard, it is argued that allowing the empty space, the atomists could be able to avoid the Eleatic conclusion; however, the individual atoms will still retain the Parmenides idea of the unchanging reality.

The duo posits that the nature of things consists of an infinite number of particles or units called *atoms*. To these particles were ascribed the characteristics of indestructibility and serenity. This is to say that the atoms can neither be created nor destroyed as they exist in space homogeneously unchangingly solid but differ from each other in shape and size. The smallness in size of these atoms made them to be invisible to the human eyes, only detectable with the aid of scientific apparatus.

Nature, therefore, consists of two things only, namely, space (vacuum) and atoms. The atoms are perpetually moving in space and their motion leads them to form the objects of existence. For the duo, atoms originally were single individual units, but with time there was chance collision which led them to begin to form cluster or vortex. The whole of existence including the celestial bodies and other things, therefore, came into being as a result of the combinations of various kinds of atoms. More interesting is the Atomist view that the arrangement and

conglomeration of the masses of atoms not only produced this world and its contents, but produces infinite number of worlds and bodies of existence.

The soul, according to the atomists, is most probably made of particularly fine atoms which are composite as well as perishable like the body. Hence perception to the atomists comes as a result of thin films of atoms being shed away from the surfaces of objects thereby getting the opportunity to interact with the atoms of the soul.

The atomists had proposed a magnificent mechanistic conception of nature or the universe which accorded no place for purpose (design) or a creator (Uduigwomem 2011:194). Plato and Aristotle objected to this vision of the atomists but wholeheartedly embraced by Epicurus and rediscovered in the 17th century which gave science a formidable working model for many centuries. The 20th century achievements in quantum and relativity theories gave rise to a new conception of matter. Quantum and relativity theories denied the attribute of indestructibility to the atoms.

The glory of originating the idea that there are indivisible atoms of matter has traditionally been given to both Leucippus (fl. 42.5 B.C.E.) and Democritus (born c. 460-457 B.C.E.). Although the original insight might well belong to Leucippus, our ancient sources do not clearly distinguish what was properly Leucippus and what belongs to Democritus. Because Democritus is generally recognized to have developed the insight into a complete theory with implications for physics, ethics, biology, epistemology, and politics, here the name Democritus will refer to the entangled Leucippus-Democritus composite.

Democritus offered yet a different solution to Parmenides' denial of plurality and motion. One of the logical consequences of Parmenides' idea that nonbeing cannot exist is that there cannot be any empty space. Empty space or emptiness, of course, would be nothing, and, as Parmenides observed, nothing cannot be. Democritus proposed that in addition to matter there exists what he called void, sometimes alternatively translated as vacuum or empty space. The void allows for plurality by separating the bits of matter and allows for motion by giving matter space in which to move. In declaring the void one of the fundamental principles of nature, any possible Parmenidean objections are simply ignored.

In Democritus's universe the bits of matter separated by void are called atoms, tiny, indivisible units, themselves unchanging and eternal miniature Parmenidean spheres, as it were. The Greek word atom means un-split. Atoms, constantly in motion through the void, make up all the different visible objects by their different combinations, just as different structures may be made out of different

combinations of identical Lego blocks. Also like Lego blocks, the atoms differ in shape and size. Everything is constructed out of these atoms-mountains, rivers, bodies, souls, even gods. Visual and auditory images are made of atoms too. Finally, according to Democritus, atoms are infinite in number.

Democritus introduced atoms to avoid the repugnant notion of infinite divisibility. He introduced the notion of the void to elude Parmenides' equally repugnant argument against motion. Whereas Parmenides argued that, because nonbeing cannot be, motion is impossible, Democritus argued the reverse: because motion is observed all the time and is therefore possible, there must be a sort of nonbeing void that makes motion possible.

Democritus also had to account for how atoms actually combine into things rather than collect in a pile at the bottom of the universe. His proposition was that the constant motion of atoms enables them to fulfill their function. Both their absolute motion in the universe and their motion relative to one another account for the coming into being and going out of being of everything. Nothing is created or destroyed; atoms are simply rearranged. Furthermore, the rearrangement is, ultimately, random. This universe, with its particular arrangements of atoms, did not have to come to be as it is; all its atomic configurations originate by chance. For all we know, there may be many other worlds.

4.0 Conclusion

Democritus and Leucippus' discovery that atoms actually combine to form things rather than collect in a pile at the bottom of the universe. And that atom was in constant motion and enables them to fulfill their function are cogent contributions.

5.0 Summary

Leucippus and Democritus also had to account for how atoms actually combine into becoming something rather than collect in a pile at the bottom of the universe. His proposition was that the constant motion of atoms enables them to fulfill their function. Both their absolute motion in the universe and their motion relative to one another account for the coming into being and going out of being of everything. Nothing is created or destroyed; atoms are simply rearranged and is ultimately, random.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

Briefly outline the teaching of Leucippus and Democritus on atom.

7.0 References and suggestions for Further Reading

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omoregbe, J.O. 2002. *A Simplified History of Western Philosophy* Vol. I. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems* (fifth Edition). New York: McGraw Hills.

Uduigwomen, F.O. 2011. “An Overview of the transition from Early Greek Science to Modern Science.” In Uduigwomen (Ed.) *Philosophy and the Rise of Modern Science*; Akwa Ibom: El-Johns Publishers.

UNIT 7: ANAXAGORAS OF CLAZOMENAE (500 – 428 BC)

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0: Introduction

This unit examines the thought of Anaxagoras' thought on primary substance and his thought on how the mind, an immaterial entity organizes and determines other beings.

2.0: Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- i. To examine the thought of Anaxagoras on primary substance.
- ii. To analyze his thinking and analysis on mind.
- iii. To evaluate his contribution to the development of Western Philosophy.

3.0: Main Content

Anaxagoras was the first philosopher to settle at Athens which later became the centre of Greek philosophy. He came from Clazomenae in Asia Minor, and was born around 500 B.C. Like Empedocles, Anaxagoras also tried to reconcile the theories of Heraclitus and Parmenides. He went further than Empedocles who postulated four elements as the constitutive elements of all things – earth, air, fire and water. According to Anaxagoras, each of these elements themselves is a combination of several different particles. There are infinite particles the combination of which results in things coming into existence. Everything is a combination of the particles all things. In other words, there are particles of all things in everything. Everything contains the particles of every other thing. In everything there is a portion of everything, for everything is a combination of the particle of all things. However, one particular kind of particle always predominates in it. For example, in gold there are particles of all things, but the particle of gold predominates, in it, hence it is called gold. In a paper, there are particles of all other thing, but the particle of paper predominates, hence it is called paper. When paper is burnt and it becomes ashes what happens is that the particle of ashes now predominates whereas the particle of paper formerly dominate. It is because of the particle of ashes in paper that paper can become ashes if there were no particle otherwise how could paper become ashes if there were no particles of ashes in the particle as part of the constitutive elements? Similarly when an animal dies and the body becomes dust, what happens is that whereas the particles of flesh

formerly predominated, now the particle of dust predominates. This means that the particles of dust is one of the constitutive elements of flesh, otherwise flesh could not become dust.

If one thing becomes another thing it is because the particles of the other was already there as part of its composition. This means that there is really nothing new; nothing new comes into being, and nothing really goes out of being or ceases to exist. So we can say on the one hand that there is no change (as Parmenides declared), and on the other hand that sometimes some particles that formerly predominated in things cease to predominate. This is what we call change, but it does not involve anything new coming into existence, nor does it involve anything ceasing to exist completely.

While Empedocles postulated two principles, love and hate, as the forces operating in the universe, Anaxagoras postulated only one, namely *Nous* (a Greek word meaning Mind, Intelligence, Consciousness or Spirit). It is Mind which rules the world and is the cause of everything in it. It is Mind which arranges the particles and brings order into the universe. In the beginning, it was Mind which brought order into the original chaos in the universe and brought things into existence (Omoregbe, 2003: 21).

Mind has power over all things that have life, both greater and smaller. And all things that were to be, and all thing that were now that will be and this revolution in which now that will and the sun and the moon and the air and the others which are separate off. And the revolution itself caused the separating off and the dense is separated off from the rare, and the warm from the cold, the bright are many portions in many things. But nothing is altogether or separated off from anything else except mind (Omoregbe, 2003: 21).

Anaxagoras is obviously talking of a divine, spiritual being who, he says is infinite and self-ruled, and is mixed with nothing, but is alone, itself by itself. Mind is the only reality, he says, that is not part of anything else, but is completely separated off from every other thing. Mind has all knowledge about everything and it has the greatest power and is present everywhere, though it is not part of anything.

Mind as described by Anaxagoras is obviously an infinite, spiritual and divine being which we would call God. He has power over the whole revolution, so that it

began to revolve at the start. Although Anaxagoras sometimes used material terms to describe it (for example he says that it is ‘the finest of all things, and the purest’) it does not follow that he meant to say that Mind is a material being, as some have concluded (Omoregbe, 2003: 21). We can only say that he was not very careful in the choice of the terms used to describe Mind, and therefore sometimes used material terms or terms that imply matter to describe it. But from his whole description of it, it is clear that he was describing or talking of a spiritual, immaterial, divine being, as distinct from material beings. Anaxagoras was the first Western philosopher to rise above the level of matter to the level of the immaterial, and spiritual in his conception of being. He was the first to make the distinction between mind and matter, between material reality and spiritual reality.

4.0: Conclusion

Anaxagoras made serious attempt at reconciling the four principal elements postulated by his predecessors as the primary substance and concluded that every substance is a combination of every other one just that one substance predominates at a time only that the mind organizes them.

5.0: Summary

Anaxagoras attempted a reconciliation of the four principal elements postulated by his predecessors – water, air, fire and earth, as the primary substance and concluded that every substance is a combination of every other one just that one substance predominates at a time. Anaxagoras further opined that each of these elements themselves is a combination of several different particles. There are infinite particles the combination of which results in things coming into existence. Everything is a combination of the particles of all things. In other words, there are particles of all things in everything. Everything contains the particles of every other thing.

6.0: Tutor Marked Assignment

Briefly assess the contribution of Anaxagoras to the development of western philosophy.

7.0: References and Texts for Further Reading

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omogbe, J.O. 2003. *A Simplified History of western Philosophy* Vol. I. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems* (fifth Edition). New York: McGraw Hills.

UNIT 8: ZENO OF ELEA (early 5th c. BC)

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0: Introduction

This unit examines the life, person and teachings of Zeno and his contribution to the development of western philosophy.

2.0: Objectives

The objectives of this unit are:

- i. To examine the life, person and teachings of Zeno.
- ii. To analyze his contributions to the development of western philosophy.
- iii. To critique his thought.

3.0: Main Content

Zeno was a disciple of Parmenides. He was also came from the city of Elea. He was born around 490 B.C. Parmenides had become an object of ridicule particularly among the Pythagorean philosophers. They ridiculed him for denying such plain facts of daily experience as change, motion and the plurality of things. Zeno then decides to come to the aid of his master; he produced several ingenious arguments, directed against the Pythagoreans in defense of Parmenides. These clever arguments were meant to show that the teachings of the Pythagorean themselves, when closely analyzed lead to absurdities. The arguments, calculated to reduce the position of the opponents to absurdity (*reductio ad absurdum*), were all based on the hypotheses of the Pythagorean doctrines (Omoregbe, 2002: 15).

The most famous of these arguments is that concerning an imaginary race between a tortoise and Achilles (the fastest runner in Greece.) Let us imagine, says Zeno that a tortoise and Achilles are going to run a race. Since the tortoise is very slow, it is allowed to start first and when it has covered a certain distance Achilles then starts. The funny thing is that Achilles can never meet nor overtake the tortoise, no

matter how fast he runs. By the time Achilles reaches the point at which the tortoise was when he (Achilles) started, the tortoise has reached another point; and Achilles reaches this new point, the tortoise has also moved to another point, and so on. This means that there will always be a distance between the tortoise and Achilles. And if, as the Pythagoreans say, any distance no matter how short, is made up of infinite points, it follows that Achilles can never catch up with the tortoise because any distance that is made up of an infinite number of points must itself be infinite. How can Achilles traverse an infinite number of points, which in effect means infinite distance? To do so would require infinite time. Achilles thus, on the Pythagorean hypothesis that any distance is made up of infinite points, can never gain on tortoise. A similar arguments based on the same hypothesis of the Pythagoreans also leads to a similar conclusion, namely, that nobody can move from one side of a stadium to another; nobody can traverse a stadium or indeed any distance whatsoever since to do so would imply traversing an infinite number of points. Any distance that is made up of infinite points must be infinite, and to traverse it would require infinite time. This means that it is impossible to move from one place to another. In short, motion is impossible (Composta, 1998: 60).

Another argument of Zeno leads to the conclusion that a flying arrow is in fact motionless. This is based on the Pythagorean theory that everything occupies a space equal to itself. But, says Zeno, anything that occupies a space equal to itself must be at rest in the space which it occupies. Now, a flying arrow occupies a space equal to itself at every instant of its flight. This means that it is at rest throughout its flight. In other words, a flying arrow is motionless at every instance of flight. Zeno also argued against the Pythagorean theory of the plurality of things. According to the Pythagoreans, everything in the universe is made up of units. Now, these units, says Zeno, are either with size or without size. If they are with size, they can always be divided up, which means that they are infinitely divisible. And since they are infinitely divisible they must be made up of infinite units. In other words, everything in the universe is made up of an infinite number of units. But whatever is made up of an infinite number of units must be infinitely great. It follow therefore that everything in the universe is infinitely great, and that the universe itself is infinitely great. Therefore if everything in the is made up of units which are with size and are infinitely divisible, the conclusion follows that everything in the universe is infinitely great. Now, let us take the second

alternative and say that these units are without size. In that case, say Zeno, they must be infinitely small. And if everything in the universe is made up of infinitely small units, it follows that everything in the universe is infinitely small. If the universe is made up of infinitely small things, it follows that the universe itself is infinitely small (Composta, 1998: 61; Russell, 1996: 56).

Again, Parmenides said that reality is one and indivisible, but the Pythagoreans ridiculed him and maintained that reality is not one but many. But at the same time, reality is, according to them, made up of infinitely divisible units, then it must be infinite and if infinite, it must be innumerable for what is infinite is innumerable. What is infinite cannot be numerable, and what is numerable cannot be infinite. But Pythagoreans asserted these two contradictory things, namely that reality is many and at the same time infinite. In other words, they said that reality is numerable and at the same time innumerable which is contradictory and absurd.

4.0: Conclusion

Zeno brought analysis into his discourse and made philosophy to be more interesting during the period of theorization of ideas.

5.0: Summary

Zeno distinguished himself as an analytic philosopher at a period when philosophers were mostly preoccupied with theories rather than analysis. His ingenious arguments were the result of painstaking analysis and dialectic.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

Briefly assess the contribution of Zeno to the development of philosophy.

7.0: References and Texts for Further Reading

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omogbe, J.O. 2003. *A Simplified History of western Philosophy* Vol. I. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems* (fifth Edition). New York: McGraw Hills.

UNIT 9: THE SOPHISTS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0: Introduction

This unit examines the thinking, teachings and influence of the sophist on the development of philosophy in Greece. It examines the thought and discourse of Sophists such as Gorgias, Hippias and Thrasymachus and their influence on western philosophy.

2.0 Objectives of the Study

This study sets out to achieve the following objectives:

- i. To examine the thinking and teachings of the sophists.
- ii. To analyze the discourse of the sophists.
- iii. To evaluate the thought and contributions of the sophists.

3.0: Main Content

With the arrival of the Sophists, there was a shift in the main direction and focus of Western philosophy. Before the Sophists, philosophy was mainly concerned with the physical world; the philosophers before them focused their attention on the cosmos, speculating on the underlying unity in the midst of diversity, stability in the midst of change, the original stuff or the primary element of which all things are made, etc. The Sophists, however, were not interested in such cosmological speculations; their main interest was man in the society. The Sophists differed from the earlier philosophers not only in the main object of interest but also in methods. The earlier philosophers began with general principles and tried to explain particular cases in terms of these general principles thus employing the deductive method. But the Sophists, began with particular cases which they had observed and drew general conclusions from them. Their method was therefore inductive.

The Sophists were a group of teachers and philosophers in the 5th B.C. that were itinerant teachers who went from one city to another teaching and instructing people, especially the youths. They instructed the youths and all those who aspired to participate in the democratic government of Athens. They taught, not only philosophy, but also grammar and rhetoric, and they charged money for their teaching. It was not the practice among the Greek philosophers to demand money for teaching philosophy, but the Sophists did and it made them unpopular (Omogbe, 2003: 25).

In general, the Sophists were very critical; they questioned the foundations of traditional beliefs, traditional ways of life, traditional institutions and customs. They questioned the foundations of traditional religion and morality, and cast doubts on the real existence of the gods. Religion and morality were for them human inventions. Nevertheless, they did not encourage people to violate the traditions and customary moral law; on the contrary, they encouraged their observance for prudent reasons. The Sophists combined skepticism with their criticism they were very skeptical, they doubted the possibility of knowing anything with certainty. Their skepticism can be seen as the outcome of the cosmological speculation of the earlier philosophers with their conflicting theories. These led the Sophists to doubt the possibility of knowing anything for certain: 'Is it possible for man to know any truth with certainty? What is the foundation or the guarantee of that certainty?' (Omogbe, 2003: 25).

Relativism is another characteristic feature of the Sophists, for they were relativists who denied the existence of objective and universal truths. Truth, for them, is relative, depending on the point of view of the individual. Whether anything can be said to be true or false depends on the way you look at it. Everybody see things from his own point of view; what is true for you is true for you, and what is true for me is true for me. Things appear to different people in different ways, and everybody can only say the way things appear to him, i.e. the way he sees them. Truth therefore depends on the way you look at it; one thing may be true for one man and may not be true for the other. They met severe criticism of Socrates and Plato who believed in the absolute universality and objectivity of truth, and the possibility of man attaining it. It is mainly through this criticism of the Sophists, by Socrates and Plato that the very word Sophism came to acquire a bad connotation. Today Sophism means false argument intended to deceive.

Protagoras of Abdera was one of the most influential Sophists. He is particularly known for his saying that man is the measure of all things, of those that are that they are and of those that are not that they are not. In essence, what man thinks is true is true including god, custom and culture.

Gorgias is noted for his famous statement that nothing exists and that if anything, it would be difficult to know it; more so that if it could be known, it could not be communicated.

4.0: Conclusion The Sophists came with the philosophy of relativism and propagated such philosophy in their days thereby generating serious crises of morality in the society.

5.0: Summary

The Sophists were very critical of the social systems, cultures and customs and questioned the foundations of traditional beliefs, traditional ways of life, traditional institutions and customs. They questioned the foundations of traditional Religion and morality, and cast doubts on the real existence of the gods. They taught that religion and morality were for them human inventions.

6.0: Tutor Marked Assignment

Discuss the basic tenets of the sophists.

7.0: References and Texts for Further Reading

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omogbe, J.O. 2003. *A Simplified History of western Philosophy* Vol. I. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems* (fifth Edition). New York: McGraw Hills.

Module 5: THE GOLDEN AGE OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY

Introduction

This module discusses the Golden Age of Greek Philosophy. It is divided into three major units. They are: Unit I: Socrates; Unit II: Plato; and Unit III: Aristotle. The “golden era” of ancient Greek philosophy represents the turning point of Greek philosophical enterprise with the self-critical reflection on the nature of our concepts and that human reasoning capacity emerged not only as a major concern, but alongside cosmological speculation and enquiry. This period witnessed in succession the three most influential sages (Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle) in the annals of Western philosophy. These epochal trio remains reference point in the discussion of any aspect of philosophy till this contemporary time.

UNIT 1: SOCRATES: (470 -399 B.C)

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0: Introduction

This unit examines the life, person, teachings and contributions of Socrates to the development of western philosophy. It is discussed as follows: historical background, Socratic methods of teaching, The Socratic Irony, Paradoxes and Essence of self knowledge, Trial and Death of Socrates.

2.0: Objectives

The objectives of this unit are:

- i. To examine the life, person and teachings of Socrates.
- ii. To study Socratic methods of dialectics
- iii. To analyze his convictions and contributions the development of western philosophy.

3.0: Main Content.

3.1: Historical Background

Socrates was born in Athens in 469 BC. He was raised there, lived and died there. His mother was a mid-wife named Phaenarrete, his father was a sculptor name Sophroniscus. He followed the footsteps of both. He was reported to have said that the gods have endowed my mother and I to be midwife. While my mother was assisting pregnant women to deliver their babies, I deliver young men who are noble and fair (Christian, 1990: 88). He was married to Xanthippe (5th BC), she was a dutiful house wife and mother. Socrates was of strong build and great endurance, and completely indifferent to wealth and luxury. He served in the Athenian army as a soldier where he evinced an extraordinary power of self-discipline and indifference to discomfort such as cold, heat, hunger, thirst, life or death. Having the habit of going into trance and remaining lost in thought, Socrates soon depicted extraordinary prowess of philosophical knowledge far and above his contemporaries (Plato, *The Symposium*, 1984: 155).

He was believed to be the father of Greek moral and humanist philosophy, whose entire philosophical pattern greatly influenced his generation and the entire Western philosophical temperament. According to Arieti (2005:132),

There is no one else in the whole history of European philosophy who has changed the direction of thought so completely simply by what he was; for Socrates' thought sprang directly and inevitably, in a very special way from the whole character and makeup of the man.

Socrates remains one of the greatest ancient Greek philosophers whose personal moral character and discipline in an extraordinary manner evokes charm and influence among his contemporaries, students, adherents of old and young in the world. Socrates claimed that he was being guided all his life by an interior voice, a divine voice or an oracle (*daimonion*). He was quite convinced that philosophizing was for him a vocation, a divine mission entrusted to him by God and he considered it as a sacred duty about which there could be no compromise. In this context within which he exhibited great effort of being consistent with his philosophic principles, he was eager to please the gods by philosophizing when he observes that it would be a strange thing if, when facing death during the war, as a soldier, he remained at his post, like his fellow warriors, "and yet afterwards, when God appointed me, as I supposed and believed, to the duty of leading the philosophic life, examining myself and others, I were then through fear of death or of any other danger to desert my post"(Plato, *The Apology*, 1984: 424).

As great as Socrates was and well acknowledged by philosophers down the ages, he left no writing or epistle of his own, for he wrote nothing. Nevertheless, his life and teachings created deep impression on his friends and disciples (Xenophon and Plato) who wrote about his thought.

Philosophy, for Socrates was a way of life based on true knowledge and not just an academic exercise. Seeking the truth and helping others towards getting true knowledge is a noble cause worthy of pursuit. He posits thus, “and while I have life and strength I shall not cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy” (Plato *The Apology*, 428); for the purpose of knowledge is to enable one live good life, where knowledge is a means to a moral life.

3.2 The Socratic Method of teaching

The main method of teaching adopted by Socrates was the “*dialectic*”. This is the method of seeking or acquiring knowledge through questions and answers. Socrates asks his interlocutors to define such concepts as justice, good, bad, right, wrong, and in the event that they could not provide the suitable response, Socrates would provide the answer. The second method is that of *inductive reasoning* which begins with a particular case or issue and end at providing universal knowledge as a conclusion.

Socrates gave no lecture to large groups of people, rather he taught by conversing with people, asking them questions and helping them to seek the answers. For Socrates, men have innate knowledge within them, and all they needed was somebody to help them bring out this knowledge from within them. Everyman as it were, is pregnant with inexhaustible innate knowledge, which can only be delivered of him by a philosopher-midwife. Hence, Socrates described himself as a “midwife” in a different sense. Contrary to the relativism and scepticism of the Sophists concerning the issue of the attainment of knowledge, Socrates was convinced that there was an objective and universal knowledge which could be attained by men through his help and guidance. In the light of the above, Socrates aimed at making men live a good life devoid of wrong doings and immoral activities.

3.3: The Socratic Irony, Paradoxes and Essence of self knowledge

Although, through antiquity the Oracle of Delphy confirmed that Socrates was the wisest man in the entire Greek city-states which was justified by all those reputable men of wisdom in Greece, however, he professed to be ignorant. Through his pretended ignorance, he led people to knowledge; though he claimed that both he and his interlocutors were seeking knowledge together which is the cornerstone of

the Socratic irony. For Socrates, a man who knows his ignorance is wiser than the one who does not know his ignorance. In this regard Socrates realized that he was the only one who knew his ignorance; hence he agreed with the oracle that he was the wisest man in Greece.

Socrates developed a number of distinctive ethical views in form of paradoxes. By equating knowledge with virtue, he professed that “knowledge is virtue“. He believed that ignorance was the cause of wrong-doing, because no man who knows what is wrong would go ahead to do it. Wickedness is also due to ignorance, for a wise man will always pursue what is right and refrain from evil deeds. Knowledge in this regard is deep personal conviction about what is right and what is wrong; however, majority of humankind lack this trait in their daily existential life activities.

The goal of life, according to Socrates, is *happiness* and the only path that leads to this universal, eternal goal is virtue. A necessary precondition for attainment of virtue is thus knowledge (moral knowledge). Socrates was not interested in abstract speculative knowledge that has no bearing on human conduct.

Socrates drew men’s attention to themselves and insisted on self-knowledge. Socrates told the people of Athens that his mission was to do the greatest good to every one of them, “to persuade everyone among you that he must look into himself, and seek virtue and wisdom before he looks to his private interests” (Plato *The Apology*, 1984: 430). Therefore, frequent reflection and self-questioning will help to reduce ignorance and ignorant people within the society.

3.4: Trial and Death of Socrates

Socratic ethical and moral epistles were strange to most Athenians. A corrupt and decadent society is always an anathema to morally inclined persons or philosophers. And almost inevitably, Socrates ran afoul of the Athenian authority’s interests and was arrested, charged with impiety and corrupting the morals of the youths of Athens. It is apt to note that in the midst of both private and public (official) corruptions, Socrates was able to demonstrate high level of morality, accountability and discipline. When he was a member of the committee of the Athenian senate, he refused to be part of their dubious corrupt mechanizations. For example, in 404BC, he dissociated himself from the plot by the ruling party in Athenian government to arrest and murder Leon of Salamis, whose property they wanted to confiscate. Again his outstanding moral principle was called to bear. According to Copleston (1961:134):

Socrates showed his moral courage by refusing to agree to the demand that the eight commanders who were to be impeached for their negligence at Arginusae should be tried together, this being contrary to the law and calculated to evoke a hasty sentence.

Meanwhile, it was discovered by Socrates that his former pupils who were influential in the government of the day conspired and betrayed the Athenians by bringing the defeat in the war. Hitherto, Socrates through his teachings had instilled the spirit of criticism in the minds of the Athenian youths.

At his trial, he presented a justification of his life. In Plato's *Apology* Socrates tells the court that he will never stop practicing philosophy, even if the court or state orders him to stop. He was convicted and sentenced to death unless he would admit that he was wrong in his ideas. He refused to renege his ideas and preferred to die (Copleston, 1961: 134). His friends wanted to help him escape from prison and go into voluntary exile. But Socrates refused, on the ground that it was contrary to his moral principle. He remained calm and undaunted: "when a man has reached my age he ought not to be repining at the prospect of death"(Socrates in Plato, *Crito*, 1984: 448).

Socrates fervently believed in the immortality of the soul. While awaiting execution, Socrates continued to discuss philosophy with a strong conviction that he was going to another world where nobody is put to death, a world where he would continue his search for knowledge. When the time for execution came, he told his interlocutors that "the hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways – I to die and you to live. Which is better God only knows" (Omoregbe, 2003: 37). He willingly accepted to drink the hemlock (poison) and died in 399 B.C

4.0: Conclusion

Socratic discourse will continue to evoke new feelings of patriotism, selfless service and the desire to be a good citizen of a nation. He did not only think of such, he believed it, saw it as a vocation, lived it as a personal way of life and died for his believe.

5.0: Summary

Socrates was an Athenian, son of Sophroniscus and Phaenarrete both of whom are sculptor and midwife respectively and he took after them. He saw himself as divinely endowed with the mission of aiding young men with noble ideas to bring them to reality. He believed it, lived it and died for it.

6.0: Tutor Marked Assignment

Briefly assess the contribution of Socrates to the development of Western philosophy.

7.0: References and Text for Further Reading

Amaladass, A. (2001) *Introduction to Philosophy*. Chennai: Satya Nilayan.

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Armstrong, A.H. (1961) *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*. London: Methuen.

Blackburn, S. (2008). *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*. (2nd Ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Christian, J. L. 1990. *Philosophy: An Introduction to the Art of Wondering*. Chocago: Holt, rine hart & Winston.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Copleston, F. (1962). *A History of Philosophy (Vol. 1, Part 1)*. London: Image book.

Omeregbe, J.O. 2003. *A Simplified Histroy of western Philosophy* Vol. I. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems* (fifth Edition). New York: McGraw Hills.

Warmington, E. & Rouse, P. 1984. *The Great Dialogues of Plato*, Canada, Pengium Books.

UNIT 2: PLATO (428-347 B.C)

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0 Introduction

This unit examines the life, person and thought of Plato. It presents the thought of Plato and his contribution to the development of Western philosophy.

2.0: Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are:

- i. To study the life, person and thought of Plato.
- ii. To highlight the basic thinking and teachings of Plato.
- iii. To analyze his contribution to the development of western philosophy.

3.0: Main Content

Plato was one of the most creative and influential thinkers in Western philosophy. He was credited to be the first to use the term “philosophy”, meaning “love of knowledge or wisdom”. Plato dwelt extensively on a whole wide range of topics chief among which was the theory of forms. This theory proposed that objects in the physical world merely resemble or participate in the perfect forms in the ideal world, and that only these perfect forms can be the objects of true knowledge. He held that the goal of the philosopher is to know the perfect forms and to instruct others in that type of knowledge.

His real name was Aristocle and was born in Athens on the seventh Thargelion in the year of the 88 Olympiad – May 427 BC (Christian, 1990: 46). His father traced his lineage to Codrus, the last king of Athens, and his mother, Perictione, traced hers to Solon, Athens’ greatest lawgiver. His was an illustrious heritage, and he moved with statesmen, playwrights, artists, and philosophers all his life. He was called Plato because his coach nicknamed him Plato from the Greek word *Platon* meaning “broad shouldered,” he excelled in sports and wrestled in the Isthmian

games at Corinth. He was multitalented and distinguished himself in every field. He fought in three battles during the Peloponnesian war and was decorated for bravery (Christian, 1990: 46).

Born into an aristocratic wealthy family, Plato was the most intimate friend and devoted disciple of Socrates. His life ambition was to become a politician but was greatly disillusioned by the corrupt attitude of the Athenian political authorities of his time and the manner his master, Socrates was ill – treated by the politicians of Athens. He quickly jettisoned his earlier ambition and decided to educate future political class to become philosophers. For this purpose, Plato founded his famous Academy which later became known as the first European university. Here future politicians were to receive a sound education in philosophy. He believed that only philosophers can be good rulers. Besides philosophy, other disciplines such as Mathematics, Astronomy, Biology, Political theory and Physical sciences were also studied in the Academy. It is pertinent to say that, the Academy provided a comprehensive curriculum for the acquisition knowledge.

Plato's works were in form of dialogues. Some of them (*Apology, Crito, Euthyphron and Phaedo*) are about Socrates' last days. Although, some other works are not directly about Socrates, but Socrates is made the chief speaker in the dialogue, the speaker was made to express Plato's own views and doctrines. These include *Protagoras, Meno, Hippias, synubesium, Phaedrus, Georgias, and Republic*, the most famous of Plato's books. These works depict philosophical ideas being advanced, discussed, and criticized in the context of a conversation or debate involving two or more people. Thus, the earliest total collection of Plato's work includes 35 dialogues and 13 letters (Composta, 1998: 146).

The Republic is the most complex, and most ambitious of Plato's works. This book is based on the nature of justice in the soul and in the state. Plato tries to give a theoretical account of the perfect just state – the ideal state. The fundamental ideas in the book are set forth through analogies e.g. the Mathematical entity of the circle. A circle, to Plato is a plane figure composed of a series of points, all of which are equidistant from a given point, yet none of which itself occupies any space. Thus, an ideal circle would be perfect, timeless, and the model for the circularity of all ordinary circles. In the same way, abstract concepts such as beauty and good are perfect, timeless entities (Composta, 1998: 146).

Plato argues that justice in the soul is linked to justice in the city. Both soul and city have three (3) analogous parts; the id (desiring part), the ego (a spirited part) and the super – ego (a rational part). Justice, therefore, directs that each part should carry out its own function appropriately. The two non- rational parts must be ruled

by the rational part. Thus, the two lower classes of the society must be ruled by the highest class – the philosophers who alone can use their reason to acquire knowledge of the forms (Omoregbe, 2003: 39).

The political structure of the just state would depend on a thorough educational programme which selects the potential philosophers on the basis of merit, and trains them rigorously. Plato's scheme is such that education should be almost life-long endeavour. The most brilliant pupils should be trained to become the philosopher kings or rulers, while those citizens who are less gifted educationally, should be trained for the armed force and other menial professions, depending on their capabilities. The state should shoulder the responsibility of educating all the citizens throughout state. This is a communistic policy in which the state runs everything and all citizens seem to exist for the interest of the state (Composta, 1998: 146).

Once the philosophers are selected from the midst of other citizens, their autocratic rule in the light of reason must be safeguarded from corruption. For Plato, these guardians are deprived of private ownerships of properties and families. They should have everything including women and children in common. No individual in this category can lay claim of paternity in order to avoid distraction. In this scenario, the guardians or philosophers are forced to pay attention to civic affairs. Such a drastic measure, most certainly, ensure that their rule and loyalty is for the sake of the state as a whole and not for pecuniary or private interests.

There is no gain saying the fact that, Plato's influence on later history of philosophy has been monumental. His Academy continued to exist until A D 529, when it was closed by the Byzantine emperor Justinian 1 for conflicting with the tenets of Christianity.

4.0: Conclusion

Plato was enthusiastic about the good and development of Athens. As a result he sacrificed his knowledge, talents and ideas for the growth and development of Athens.

5.0 Summary

Plato was enthusiastic about the good and development of Athens. Thus, he thought of the best way that his society could grow, He joined the military and fought for Athens, and painfully saw his master, Socrates maltreated by the politicians of his days and was disenchanted but still thought of the best way to train future politicians that will bring greater development to Athens.

6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment

Briefly discuss the life, person and thought of Plato.

7.0 References and Further Reading

Armstrong, A.H. (1961) *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*. London: Methuen.
Blackburn, S.(2008). *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*.(2nd Ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Copleston, F. (1962). *A History of Philosophy (Vol. 1, Part 1)*. London: Image book.

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omogbe, J.O. 2003. *A Simplified History of western Philosophy Vol. I*. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems* (fifth Edition). New York: McGraw Hills.

UNIT 3: ARISTOTLE (384-322BC)

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References and Further Reading

1.0: Introduction

This unit studies the life, person, thought and contributions of Aristotle to the development of western philosophy. This unit is centred on the historical development of Aristotle.

2.0: Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

- i. To examine the life, thought and person of Aristotle.
- ii. To analyze the historical development of Aristotle.
- iii. To examine the contributions of Aristotle to the development of western philosophy.

3.0: Main Content

Aristotle, the son of a physician to the royal court was born at Stagira in Macedonia. He was an outstanding philosopher and scientist. He studied at Plato's Academy under Plato as a student and later as a teacher. He shared his teacher's (Plato's) reverence for human knowledge but had certain divergent opinions on some issues originally raised by his master. Aristotle thus, *emphasized methods rooted in observation and experience*.

Aristotle surveyed and systematized nearly all known branches of knowledge and provided the first ordered accounts of biology, psychology, physics, and literary theory. He invented the field known as formal logic, pioneered zoology, and discussed virtually every known major philosophical problem.

Aristotle was tutor to Alexander the Great but returned to Athens when Alexander became the king in 335 B.C, to establish his own school, *the Lyceum*. Upon the death of Alexander in 323 BC, there was strong anti-Macedonia teaching developing in Athens, and Aristotle decided to retire to a family estate in Euboea. He died there the following year (Christian, 1990: 73).

Suffice it to say that, Aristotle was a prolific writer who wrote a number of works on a wide range of topics. He was credited with having written more than 170 separate books, although it is likely that many of these might be false attributions. Aristotle published several philosophical dialogues, apart from summaries of works of other philosophers, and is credited with works on topics as diverse as music and optics, and a book of proverbs. However, only a few brief excerpts have survived. A substantial body of unpublished writings, usually taken to be the materials on which courses in the Lyceum were based is still in existence (Omoregbe, 2003: 49).

Aristotle's greatest achievements were in two distinct areas: *he invented the study of formal logic, devising for it a finished system known as Aristotelian syllogism, and he pioneered the study of zoology, both observation and theoretical, in which his work was not surpassed until the 19th century* (Composta, 1998: 243). Though his works in the natural sciences and zoology are now out-of-date, his intellectual prowess and influence as a scientist is unparalleled in the annals of philosophy.

As a philosopher, he was equally stupendous; although his syllogism is now recognized to be only a small part of formal logic, modern philosophers still consult and relish his writings in ethical and political theory as well as in metaphysics and philosophy of science. Obviously, Aristotle's historical importance and influence is second to none, and his works remain a powerful component in current philosophical debate (Composta, 1998: 243).

Furthermore, Aristotle clearly disagreed with Plato's communistic standpoint. To Aristotle, the structure of the communistic ideal state of Plato was too utopia to be practiced because of the inherent encumbrances of indoctrination of both parents and children in order to make the system work.

As a departure from Plato, Aristotle proposed unrestricted access to acquisition of education by the citizens where they would be able to develop their potential to the fullest. However, Aristotle was in tandem with Platonic division of educational system into stages, starting from the lowest to the highest strata in order to produce rational thinking rulers and citizens. Aristotle believes that the ultimate goal of human existence should be individual happiness which functional education should be able to inculcate into the citizens thereby, enhancing a person's reasoning

capacity and capability. Attainment of this will make the individual a wise person that lives a good moral life.

4.0 Conclusion

Aristotle's contribution to the development of philosophy in Greece and the entire world is manifold. He took philosophy beyond the conception of philosophy in ancient times.

5.0: Summary

Aristotle departed from Plato through his proposed unrestricted access to acquisition of education by the Athenian citizens where they would be able to develop their potential to the fullest. Meanwhile, he agreed with Platonic division of educational system into stages, starting from the lowest to the highest strata in order to produce rational thinking rulers and citizens which should be acquired through functional educational system.

6.0: Tutor Marked Assignment

Briefly assess the contribution of Aristotle to the development of Western philosophy.

7.0: References and Suggestions for Further Reading

Armstrong, A.H. (1961) *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*. London: Methuen.
Blackburn, S.(2008). *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*.(2nd Ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Copleston, F. (1962). *A History of Philosophy (Vol. 1, Part 1)*. London: Image book.

Arieti, J.A. 2005. *Philosophy in the Ancient World: An Introduction*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Composta, D. 1988. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. Vatican: Urbanian University Press.

Omogbe, J.O. 2003. *A Simplified History of western Philosophy Vol. I*. Lagos: Joja Educational Research and Publishers.

Russell, B. 1994. *History of Western Philosophy*. London: The Bertrand Russell foundation.

Stumpf, S.E. 1994. *Philosophy: History and Problems* (fifth Edition). New York: McGraw Hills.