

TWELFTH EDITION

PHILOSOPHY

A TEXT
WITH
READINGS

MANUEL VELASQUEZ

Time Period	Important Philosophers	Political, Cultural, and Scientific Events of Period
1500 B.C.	Vedic and Upanishad Philosophers of India (c. 1500–700 B.C.) Buddha (c. 560–480 B.C.) Thales (c. 624–545 B.C.) Confucius (c. 551–479 B.C.)	Shang Dynasty (1600–1027 B.C.) loosely unites China India's first kingdoms rise (1500–330 B.C.) by Ganges River Mycenaean civilization declines in Greece; city-states Athens and Sparta rise (1200–700 B.C.) Homer writes <i>Illiad</i> and <i>Odyssey</i> (c. 750 B.C.)
500 B.C.	Heraclitus (c. 500 B.C.) Parmenides (c. 500 B.C.) Zeno of Elea (c. 490–430 B.C.) Protagoras (c. 481–411 B.C.) Socrates (c. 470–399 B.C.) Democritus (c. 460–370 B.C.) Thrasymachus (c. 450 B.C.) Perictione (c. 450–350 B.C.) Plato (c. 427–348 B.C.) Aristotle (384–322 B.C.) Mencius (c. 372–289 B.C.) Epicurus (341–270 B.C.) Cicero (106–43 B.C.) Lucretius (c. 98–55 B.C.)	Hindu epic <i>Ramayana</i> written (c. 500 B.C.) Asoka (272–231 B.C.) rules first empire of India Greeks defeat Persians at Salamis (480 B.C.) Pericles (495–429 B.C.) leads Athens during “Golden Age”; builds Acropolis, promotes drama of Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, sees flowering of art, mathematics, philosophy In Peloponnesian War, Sparta defeats Athens (431–404 B.C.) Histories of Herodotus (484–425) and Thucydides (460–395) Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.) unites ancient western world and spreads Greek culture as far as India Old Testament Pentateuch completed (c. 400 B.C.) Founding of Rome (508 B.C.) Rome conquers Mediterranean world (380–202 B.C.) Golden Age of Rome (63 B.C.–14 A.D.)
A.D. I	Seneca (c. 1 B.C.–A.D. 65) Epictetus (c. 55–135) Marcus Aurelius (121–180) Plotinus (205–c. 269) St. Augustine of Hippo (354–430)	Jesus Christ (c. 6 B.C.–A.D. 30) initiates Christianity Nero (Roman Emperor, 54–68) persecutes Christians Ptolemy envisions earth-centered universe (c. 90–168) Fall of Roman Empire to Germanic invaders (476) Dark Ages of Europe (476–800)
A.D. 500	Boethius (c. 480–524) Shankara (788–820) Al-Farabi (870–950) Avicenna (980–1037)	Muhammad (570–632) founds Islam in Arab world Arab Muslims expand, Arab empire at its height (700) Charlemagne crowned emperor of former Roman Empire (800) Classical Mayan civilization rises in Mexico (c. 250–c. 900)
A.D. 1000	Anselm (1033–1109) Abelard (1079–1142) Maimonides (1125–1204) Albert the Great (1206–1280) Roger Bacon (1214–1292) Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) Duns Scotus (c. 1266–1308) William of Ockham (c. 1285–1349)	Sung Dynasty (960–1279) rules China, until replaced by Mongol Dynasty (1279–1368) Crusades (1096–1204) drive Muslims from Palestine Renaissance begins in Italy (1215) Dante (1265–1321) writes <i>Divine Comedy</i> (1307–1321) Black Death ravages Europe (1347) Gutenberg prints <i>Bible</i> (1453) Columbus sails to New World (1492)
A.D. 1500	D. Erasmus (1465–1536) N. Machiavelli (1469–1527) Thomas More (1478–1535) Francisco Suarez (1548–1607)	Spanish conquistadores defeat Aztecs of Mexico (1519–1524) Copernicus (1473–1543) argues Earth revolves around sun Luther (1483–1546) begins Protestant Reformation Elizabeth I crowned Queen of England (1558)

Time Period	Important Philosophers	Political, Cultural, and Scientific Events of Period
A.D. 1600	Francis Bacon (1561–1626) Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) Rene Descartes (1596–1650) Anne Conway (1631–1679) Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677) Nicolas de Malebranche (1638–1715) Gottfried Leibniz (1646–1716) William Paley (1743–1805)	Shakespeare (1564–1616) writes plays and poems Kepler (1571–1630) discovers laws of planetary motion Galileo (1564–1642) condemned by Inquisition (1633) Age of Enlightenment begins in Europe (c. 1641) Rembrandt (1606–1669) and Velasquez (1599–1660) paint Manchu Dynasty (1644–1911) rules in China Leibniz and Newton invent the calculus (c. 1670's) Newton (1642–1727) publishes <i>Principia</i> (1687)
A.D. 1700	John Locke (1632–1704) George Berkeley (1685–1753) Voltaire (1694–1778) David Hume (1711–1776) Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) Paul d'Holbach (1723–1789) Edmund Burke (1729–1797) Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797) William Paley (1743–1805)	Swift (1667–1745) publishes <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> (1726) Bach (1685–1750), Handel (1685–1759) compose music American Revolution (1775–1783) Smith (1723–1790) writes <i>Wealth of Nations</i> (1776) Industrial Revolution in England (1780) French Revolution (1789–1791) Mozart (1756–1791), Beethoven (1770–1827) compose symphonies Laplace (1749–1827) writes <i>Celestial Mechanics</i> (1799) Neoclassic art of David (1748–1825) and Ingres (1780–1867)
A.D. 1800	William Whewell (1794–1866) J. G. Fichte (1762–1814) F. Schleiermacher (1768–1834) G. W. F. Hegel (1770–1831) James Mill (1773–1835) Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860)	Jefferson (1743–1836) is president of U.S. (1801–1809) Friedrich (1774–1840), Blake (1757–1827) paint romantic art Goethe (1749–1832) publishes <i>Faust</i> (1808) Napoleon defeated at Waterloo (1815) Revolutions in Paris, Vienna, Venice, Berlin (1848) Mendel (1822–1884) publishes laws of heredity (1866)
A.D. 1850	Ludwig Feuerbach (1804–1872) John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) Soren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) Karl Marx (1818–1883) Friedrich Engels (1820–1895) Herbert Spencer (1820–1903)	Darwin (1809–1882) writes <i>Origin of Species</i> (1859) American Civil War (1861–1865) Lincoln issues Emancipation Proclamation (1863) Tolstoy (1828–1910) publishes <i>War and Peace</i> (1863) Huxley (1825–1895) publishes <i>Man's Place in Nature</i> (1864) Brahms (1833–1897) writes his symphonies Impressionist art of Manet (1832–1883), Degas (1834–1917), Monet (1840–1926), Renoir (1841–1919), Cassatt (1844–1926) Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900)
A.D. 1900	Charles S. Peirce (1839–1914) William James (1842–1910) Francis Bradley (1846–1924) Edmund Husserl (1854–1938) Henri Bergson (1859–1941) John Dewey (1859–1952) J. McTaggart (1866–1925) Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948)	Freud (1856–1939) publishes <i>The Interpretation of Dreams</i> (1900) Wright brothers fly first successful airplane (1903) Einstein (1879–1955) discovers special relativity (1905) and general relativity (1915) Quantum theory developed by Planck (1858–1947), Heisenberg, (1901–1976), Bohr (1885–1962) World War I (1914–1917) October Revolution in Russia begins communist rule (1917)



PHILOSOPHY

A Text with Readings

PHILOSOPHY

A Text with Readings

T W E L F T H E D I T I O N

MANUEL VELASQUEZ

The Charles Dirksen Professor

Santa Clara University



Australia • Brazil • Japan • Korea • Mexico • Singapore • Spain • United Kingdom • United States

This is an electronic version of the print textbook. Due to electronic rights restrictions, some third party content may be suppressed. Editorial review has deemed that any suppressed content does not materially affect the overall learning experience. The publisher reserves the right to remove content from this title at any time if subsequent rights restrictions require it. For valuable information on pricing, previous editions, changes to current editions, and alternate formats, please visit www.cengage.com/highered to search by ISBN#, author, title, or keyword for materials in your areas of interest.

**Philosophy: A Text with Readings,
Twelfth Edition**

Manuel Velasquez

Publisher: Clark Baxter

Senior Sponsoring Editor: Joann Kozyrev

Senior Development Editor: Sue Gleason
Wade

Assistant Editor: Joshua Duncan

Editorial Assistant: Marri Straton

Content Project Manager: Jill Quinn

Art Director: Riezebos Holzbaaur/Andrei
Pasternak

Manufacturing Planner: Sandee Milewski

Rights Acquisition Specialist: Mandy
Groszko

Production Service: S4Carlisle Publishing
Services

Text and Cover Designer: Riezebos
Holzbaaur/Tim Heraldo

Cover Image: © Nikada

Compositor: S4Carlisle Publishing Services

© 2014, 2011, 2008 Wadsworth, Cengage Learning

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No part of this work covered by the copyright herein may be reproduced, transmitted, stored or used in any form or by any means graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including but not limited to photocopying, recording, scanning, digitizing, taping, Web distribution, information networks, or information storage and retrieval systems, except as permitted under Section 107 or 108 of the 1976 United States Copyright Act, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

For product information and technology assistance, contact us
at **Cengage Learning Customer & Sales Support,**
1-800-354-9706

For permission to use material from this text or product, submit
all requests online at **www.cengage.com/permissions**.
Further permissions questions can be emailed to
permissionrequest@cengage.com.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2012938983

ISBN-13: 978-1-133-93342-7
ISBN-10: 1-133-93342-4

Proudly sourced and uploaded by [StormRG]
Kickass Torrents | TPB | ET | h33t

Paper Edition:

ISBN-13: 978-1-133-61210-0
ISBN-10: 1-133-61210-5

Wadsworth

20 Channel Center Street
Boston, MA 02210
USA

Cengage Learning is a leading provider of customized learning solutions with office locations around the globe, including Singapore, the United Kingdom, Australia, Mexico, Brazil and Japan. Locate your local office at **international.cengage.com/region**

Cengage Learning products are represented in Canada by Nelson Education, Ltd.

For your course and learning solutions, visit **www.cengage.com**.

Purchase any of our products at your local college store or at our preferred online store www.cengagebrain.com.

Instructors: Please visit **login.cengage.com** and log in to access instructor-specific resources.

Printed in Canada

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 16 15 14 13 12

For Anita, Rebecca, and Lydia

Contents

Preface xv

CHAPTER I

The Nature of Philosophy 3

- I.1 WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY? 4
 - Plato’s Myth of the Cave 4
 - Plato’s Parable and “Doing” Philosophy 6
 - THINKING CRITICALLY: Assumptions and Critical Thinking 8
 - The Diversity of Philosophy 9
 - THINKING CRITICALLY: Reasoning 10
- I.2 THE TRADITIONAL DIVISIONS OF PHILOSOPHY 11
 - Epistemology: The Study of Knowledge 11
 - THINKING CRITICALLY: Avoiding Vague and Ambiguous Claims 12
 - Metaphysics: The Study of Reality or Existence 13
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Philosophical Issues 15
 - THINKING CRITICALLY: Supporting Claims with Reasons and Arguments 15
 - Ethics: The Study of Values 16
 - Other Philosophical Inquiries 18
- I.3 A PHILOSOPHER IN ACTION: SOCRATES 19
 - Euthyphro*: Do We Know What Holiness Is? 20
 - THINKING CRITICALLY: Evaluating Arguments 24
 - The Republic*: Is Justice What Benefits the Powerful? 24
 - The Apology*: Socrates’ Trial 27
 - Crito*: Do We Have an Obligation to Obey the Law? 29
 - THINKING CRITICALLY: Identifying Premises, Conclusions, and Assumptions 31
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Breaking the Law for the Sake of Justice 32
- I.4 THE VALUE OF PHILOSOPHY 35
 - Achieving Freedom 35
 - Building Your View of Life 36
 - Cultivating Awareness 37
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Albert Ellis and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy 37
 - Learning to Think Critically 38
 - Does Philosophy Have a Male Bias? 38
 - The Theme of This Text 39
 - CHAPTER SUMMARY 40

CHAPTER 2

- 1.5 READING 42
 Voltaire’s, “Story of a Good Brahman” 42
- 1.6 HISTORICAL SHOWCASE: THE FIRST PHILOSOPHERS 43
 Pre-Socratic Western Philosophers 43
 Eastern Philosophers 45
- Human Nature 49**
- 2.1 WHY DOES YOUR VIEW OF HUMAN NATURE MATTER? 50
 THINKING CRITICALLY: Deductive Arguments, Validity,
 and Soundness 52
 The Importance of Understanding Human Nature 54
 PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Is Selflessness Real? 55
- 2.2 WHAT IS HUMAN NATURE? 56
 The Rationalistic Version of the Traditional Western
 View of Human Nature 57
 PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Is Human Nature Irrational? 59
 The Judeo-Christian Version of the Traditional Western
 View of Human Nature 62
 The Darwinian Challenge 65
 THINKING CRITICALLY: Inference to the Best Explanation 71
 The Existentialist Challenge 74
 The Feminist Challenge 77
- 2.3 THE MIND–BODY PROBLEM: HOW DO MIND AND BODY RELATE? 82
 The Dualist View of Human Nature 83
 THINKING CRITICALLY: EVALUATING AN ARGUMENT’S PREMISES 85
 The Materialist View of Human Nature 87
 The Mind/Brain Identity Theory of Human Nature 88
 The Behaviorist View of Human Nature 90
 The Functionalist View of Human Nature 91
 Eliminative Materialism 94
 The New Dualism 95
- 2.4 IS THERE AN ENDURING SELF? 96
 The Soul as the Enduring Self 100
 Memory as the Source of the Enduring Self 101
 The No-Self View 102
- 2.5 ARE WE INDEPENDENT AND SELF-SUFFICIENT INDIVIDUALS? 106
 The Atomistic Self 107
 The Relational Self 109
 Power and Hegel’s View 111
 Culture and Self-Identity 112
 Search for the Real Self 113
 CHAPTER SUMMARY 115

2.6	READINGS	117
	Graham Greene, “The End of the Party”	118
	Garrett I. DeWeese and J. P. Moreland, “The Self and Substance Dualism”	122
	John R. Searle, “The Mind-Body Problem”	123
2.7	HISTORICAL SHOWCASE: PLATO, ARISTOTLE, AND CONFUCIUS	126
	Plato	126
	Aristotle	133
	Confucius	138
	Reality and Being	143
3.1	WHAT IS REAL?	144
	PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: The Experience Machine, or Does Reality Matter?	146
	Metaphysical Questions of Reality	146
	The Search for Reality	147
3.2	REALITY: MATERIAL OR NONMATERIAL?	148
	Materialism: Reality as Matter	148
	Objections to Materialism	150
	PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: The Neutrino	153
	Idealism: Reality as Nonmatter	154
	PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Our Knowledge of the World	157
	THINKING CRITICALLY: Conditional and Disjunctive Arguments	160
	Objections to Idealism	163
3.3	REALITY IN PRAGMATISM	166
	Pragmatism’s Approach to Philosophy	166
	The Pragmatic Method	167
	Objections to Pragmatism	170
3.4	REALITY AND LOGICAL POSITIVISM	171
	PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Parallel Universes	173
	THINKING CRITICALLY: Categorical Syllogism Arguments	175
	Objections to Logical Positivism	178
3.5	ANTIREALISM: THE HEIR OF PRAGMATISM AND IDEALISM	179
	Proponents of Antirealism	181
	Objections to Antirealism	183
3.6	ENCOUNTERING BEING: REALITY IN PHENOMENOLOGY AND EXISTENTIALISM	186
	Phenomenology	187
	Existentialism	194
	Objections to Phenomenology and Existentialism	199

CHAPTER 3

- 3.7 IS FREEDOM REAL? 202
 - Determinism 204
 - Libertarianism 206
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Does Our Brain Make Our Decisions Before We Consciously Make Them? 208
 - Compatibilism 209
- 3.8 IS TIME REAL? 212
 - Time and Human Life 212
 - Augustine: Only the Present Moment Is Real 213
 - McTaggart: Subjective Time Is Not Real 215
 - Kant: Time Is a Mental Construct 216
 - Bergson: Only Subjective Time Is Real 218
 - CHAPTER SUMMARY 220
- 3.9 READINGS 222
 - Russell Maloney, “A Toast to Captain Jerk” 223
 - Robert Nozick, “Being More Real” 225
- 3.10 HISTORICAL SHOWCASE: HOBBS AND BERKELEY 226
 - Hobbes 227
 - Berkeley 231

CHAPTER 4

Philosophy, Religion, and God 237

- 4.1 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RELIGION 238
 - Defining Religion 239
 - Religious Belief, Religious Experience, and Theology 240
- 4.2 DOES GOD EXIST? 241
 - The Ontological Argument 242
 - The Cosmological Argument 246
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Religion and Science 250
 - The Design Argument 251
 - THINKING CRITICALLY: Arguments by Analogy 253
- 4.3 ATHEISM, AGNOSTICISM, AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL 260
 - Atheism 260
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: God’s Omniscience and Free Will 266
 - Agnosticism 267
 - THINKING CRITICALLY: Formal and Informal Fallacies 268
- 4.4 TRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS BELIEF AND EXPERIENCE 272
 - Religious Belief 272
 - “The Will to Believe” 272
 - Personal Experience of the Divine 275

- 4.5 NONTRADITIONAL RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE 279
 - Radical Theology 279
 - Feminist Theology 283
 - Eastern Religious Traditions 286
 - CHAPTER SUMMARY 290
- 4.6 READINGS 291
 - Fyodor Dostoevsky, “Excerpt from *The Brothers Karamazov*” 292
 - William P. Alston, “The Inductive Argument from Evil and the Human Cognitive Condition” 294
- 4.7 HISTORICAL SHOWCASE: AQUINAS, DESCARTES, AND CONWAY 297
 - Aquinas 297
 - Descartes 302
 - Anne Conway 306

CHAPTER 5

The Sources of Knowledge 313

- 5.1 WHY IS KNOWLEDGE A PROBLEM? 314
 - Acquiring Reliable Knowledge: Reason and the Senses 317
 - The Place of Memory 318
- 5.2 IS REASON THE SOURCE OF OUR KNOWLEDGE? 319
 - Descartes: Doubt and Reason 321
 - Innate Ideas 326
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Innate Ideas? 330
- 5.3 CAN THE SENSES ACCOUNT FOR ALL OUR KNOWLEDGE? 333
 - Locke and Empiricism 334
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Science and the Attempt to Observe Reality 337
 - Berkeley and Subjectivism 340
 - Hume and Skepticism 343
 - THINKING CRITICALLY: Inductive Generalizations 346
- 5.4 KANT: DOES THE KNOWING MIND SHAPE THE WORLD? 351
 - Hume’s Challenge 352
 - The Basic Issue 352
 - Space, Time, and Mathematics 353
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Knowledge and Gestalt Psychology 354
 - Causality and the Unity of the Mind 356
 - Romantic Philosophers 359
 - Constructivist Theories and Recovered Memories 361
- 5.5 DOES SCIENCE GIVE US KNOWLEDGE? 363
 - Inductive Reasoning and Simplicity 364
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Society and Truth 366
 - The Hypothetical Method and Falsifiability 367

Paradigms and Revolutions in Science 369
THINKING CRITICALLY: Distinguishing Science from Pseudoscience 372
 Is the Theory of Recovered Memories Science or Pseudoscience? 373
 CHAPTER SUMMARY 374

5.6 READINGS 376
 Ambrose Bierce, “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” 377
 Peter Ungera, “A Defense of Skepticism” 381
 Thomas Nagel, “How Do We Know Anything?” 383

5.7 HISTORICAL SHOWCASE: HUME 385

CHAPTER 6

Truth 393

6.1 KNOWLEDGE, TRUTH, AND JUSTIFICATION 394
 Knowledge as Justified True Belief 395
 Justification 397

6.2 WHAT IS TRUTH? 401
 Correspondence Theory 403
 Coherence Theory 409
 PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Truth and Paradox 410
 PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Historical Facts 412
 Pragmatic Theory 413
 Does Truth Matter? 417
 Reconciling the Theories of Truth 419
 Deflating Truth 419

6.3 DOES SCIENCE GIVE US TRUTH? 421
 The Instrumentalist View 423
 The Realist View 424
 The Conceptual Relativist View 425

6.4 CAN INTERPRETATIONS BE TRUE? 428
 Symbolic Interpretation and Intention 430
 Wittgenstein and the Ideal Clear Language 432
 Gadamer and Prejudice 434
 CHAPTER SUMMARY 436

6.5 READINGS 438
 Ryunosuke Akutagawa, “In a Grove” 438
 Hugh Tomlinson, “After Truth: Post-Modernism and the Rhetoric of Science” 442
 John Searle, “Reality and Truth” 443

6.6 HISTORICAL SHOWCASE: KANT 444

CHAPTER 7

Ethics 455

- 7.1 WHAT IS ETHICS? 456
- 7.2 IS ETHICS RELATIVE? 458
- 7.3 DO CONSEQUENCES MAKE AN ACTION RIGHT? 463
 - Ethical Egoism 465
 - Utilitarianism 467
 - Some Implications of Utilitarianism 472
- 7.4 DO RULES DEFINE MORALITY? 474
 - Divine Command Theory 474
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Embryonic Stem Cell Research 477
 - Implications of Divine Command Ethics 480
 - Kant's Categorical Imperative 483
 - Buddhist Ethics 491
- 7.5 IS ETHICS BASED ON CHARACTER? 495
 - Aristotle's Theory of Virtue 495
 - Love and Friendship 499
 - Male and Female Ethics? 503
 - Conclusions 506
- 7.6 CAN ETHICS RESOLVE MORAL QUANDARIES? 508
 - Abortion 509
 - Euthanasia 514
 - THINKING CRITICALLY: Moral Reasoning 518
 - CHAPTER SUMMARY 521
- 7.7 READINGS 522
 - Fyodor Dostoyevsky, "The Heavenly Christmas Tree" 522
 - Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" 524
- 7.8 HISTORICAL SHOWCASE: NIETZSCHE AND WOLLSTONECRAFT 526
 - Nietzsche 526
 - Wollstonecraft 531

CHAPTER 8

Social and Political Philosophy 537

- 8.1 WHAT IS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY? 538
- 8.2 WHAT JUSTIFIES THE STATE? 540
 - Hobbes and the War of All against All 541
 - Locke and Natural Moral Laws 543
 - Rousseau and the General Will 545
 - Contemporary Social Contract: Rawls 547
 - The Communitarian Critique 549
 - Social Contract and Women 553

- 8.3 WHAT IS JUSTICE? 558
- PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: The Purpose of Business 559
 - Justice as Merit 561
 - Justice as Equality 563
 - Justice as Social Utility 565
 - Justice Based on Need and Ability 567
 - Justice Based on Liberty 569
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Welfare 570
- 8.4 LIMITS ON THE STATE 574
- Unjust Laws and Civil Disobedience 575
 - Freedom 579
 - Human Rights 582
 - War and Terrorism 586
 - PHILOSOPHY AND LIFE: Society and the Bomb 595
 - CHAPTER SUMMARY 598
- 8.5 READINGS 600
- Erich Maria Remarque, From “*All Quiet on the Western Front*” 600
 - Bertrand Russell, “The Ethics of War” 602
- 8.6 HISTORICAL SHOWCASE: MARX AND RAWLS 605
- Marx 605
 - Rawls 611

CHAPTER 9

Postscript: The Meaning of Life 617

- 9.1 DOES LIFE HAVE MEANING? 618
- What Does the Question Mean? 620
- 9.2 THE THEISTIC RESPONSE TO MEANING 621
- 9.3 MEANING AND HUMAN PROGRESS 623
- 9.4 THE NIHILIST REJECTION OF MEANING 626
- 9.5 MEANING AS A SELF-CHOSEN COMMITMENT 627
- CHAPTER SUMMARY 631

Glossary 633

Index 637

Preface

Heraclitus, an early Greek philosopher, is reputed to have declared, “*Panta chorei!*” which is Greek for “Everything changes!” Heraclitus’ words are certainly true of our social world today. And it is also true of the world of textbooks. So although *Philosophy: A Text with Readings* continues to excite readers about philosophy, changes in philosophy and in the world we inhabit necessitate revising the text. In my revisions, I tried to retain what users have said they like best about this book: that it provides depth and rigor yet is easy to read, fun to use, and manages to cover all the traditional issues with a unique combination of attention to the history of philosophy, regard for interesting contemporary concerns, and substantial selections from classical and contemporary texts. I have worked hard to explain the difficult concepts and texts of philosophy in a way that is technically rigorous and accurate, yet uses language and style that make it easy for a beginning college student with modest reading skills to understand them. I have also worked hard at making philosophy interesting and relevant to contemporary undergraduates by showing how it is directly related to their real-life concerns and preoccupations. In addition, by introducing a new series of critical thinking modules, I have tried to provide the tools that will enable students to develop their thinking and reasoning skills.

I should emphasize what a quick glance at the table of contents will confirm: this text is designed to cover more than most instructors would want to

cover in a single course. Because the coverage is broad, the instructor can select those topics that he or she believes are most important and is not limited by the choice of topics that someone else might make. To make it easier for an instructor to choose what his or her course will cover, the chapters are largely independent of one another (with the exception of the new critical thinking modules) so that reading a later chapter will not require reading an earlier one. Moreover, the materials within each chapter are arranged so that the most basic or fundamental topics are at the beginning of the chapter, while later sections in the chapter address aspects of the topic that are less fundamental but that probe more deeply or more broadly into the topic. This arrangement gives the instructor the option of either having students study only the basic issues in a chapter by assigning only the early sections or pursuing the subject matter of the chapter more in depth by also assigning the later sections. Some instructors may want to cover the basics in class, and then assign students (or groups of students) the later sections as special projects. There are thus many different ways of teaching the materials in the book and many different courses that can be put together from these materials.

Changes in the Twelfth Edition

The most important change in this edition is one that affects almost all of the chapters. The text now

includes an extended treatment of critical thinking that is spread out over sixteen new modules designed to develop the reader's critical thinking skills. These modules are entitled "Thinking Critically." Each "Thinking Critically" module not only teaches important reasoning skills, but also helps the reader apply these skills to the philosophical issues discussed in the text. Beginning with the introduction to critical thinking modules in Chapter 1, the aim of these sections is to teach students, step by step, how to critically evaluate their own philosophical thinking and reasoning, as well as the philosophical thoughts and arguments of others. Because critical thinking skills are so important to doing philosophy, most of the "Thinking Critically" modules occur in the earlier chapters of the book (most are in Chapters 1–4). Each "Thinking Critically" module is keyed with a special icon in the chapter-opening Learning Objectives and in the Chapter Summary. The ninth edition's "A Look at Logic" module is also still available separately for custom editions, although most of its content is now covered in the "Thinking Critically" modules.

The "Historical Showcases" have been moved to the very end of each chapter to facilitate briefer custom editions for instructors who want to exclude this coverage.

Seven new end-of-chapter Readings, some from works of fiction, have been added to the book, while numerous new excerpts from classical and contemporary texts have been added within the chapters. Blue icons in the margins indicate when the full texts from which excerpts have been taken are available online in Philosophy CourseMate, an online resource that contains content specific to the text as well as additional resources for students taking an Introduction to Philosophy course. Instructors who wish to do so can now package this text together with Philosophy CourseMate.

Aplia™ for Introduction to Philosophy is now also available with this text. Aplia™ will excite and engage your students with philosophy as never before.

In addition to numerous minor revisions, more substantive changes in specific chapters are as follows:

Chapter 1

- Six new "Thinking Critically" modules appear in this chapter (in sections 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4); these introduce the topic of critical thinking, explain its importance in philosophy, and introduce the elements of an argument.

- Section 1.4 on the value of philosophy has been streamlined and revised.

Chapter 2

- Three new "Thinking Critically" sections have been added. These introduce the notions of deductive and inductive arguments, and validity and soundness (in section 2.1), explain what an inference to the best explanation is (in section 2.2), and show how the premises of an argument can be evaluated (in section 2.3).
- The discussion of Schlick in section 2.1 has been replaced with a discussion of the same issue (psychological egoism) by Mercer.
- The discussion of Darwin in section 2.2 now covers his own arguments for his theory.
- The discussions of eliminative materialism and property dualism in section 2.3 have been revised and expanded for greater clarity.
- New reading: Graham Greene, "The End of the Party."

Chapter 3

- Two new "Thinking Critically" sections have been added: one on evaluating the validity of conditional and disjunctive arguments (in section 3.2), and one on evaluating the validity of categorical syllogisms (in section 3.4).
- The discussions of pragmatism in section 3.3 have been revised, as well as the discussions of phenomenology and existentialism in section 3.6.

Chapter 4

- The chapter has been renamed "Philosophy, Religion, and God" to better indicate its contents.
- Two new "Thinking Critically" sections have been added: one on arguments by analogy (in section 4.2), and one on formal and informal fallacies (section 4.3).
- In section 4.2, the discussions of the ontological argument and the design argument have been revised and expanded, while the discussions of both Newton and the "Big Bang" theory have been expanded to highlight the changing relation between science and religion.
- The discussion of atheism in section 4.3 has been revised, and the discussion of the problem

of evil has been expanded to include discussions of its logical and evidential forms and the free-will defense.

- The discussion of religious experience in section 4.4 has been substantially expanded and revised.
- The discussion of the Hindu notions of Brahman and Atman in section 4.5 has been completely revised.
- New readings: Fyodor Dostoevsky, excerpt from *The Brothers Karamazov*, and William Alston, “The Inductive Argument from Evil and the Human Cognitive Condition.”

Chapter 5

- Two new “Thinking Critically” sections have been added: one on inductive generalizations in section 5.3, and one on distinguishing science from pseudoscience in section 5.5.
- The discussion of Descartes in section 5.2 has been expanded and revised.
- The discussions of both Locke and Berkeley in section 5.3 have been revised.
- The treatment of Kant’s transcendental idealism has been expanded.

Chapter 6

- The discussion of the correspondence theory of truth in section 6.2 has been simplified and shortened.
- New Readings: Ryunosuke Akutagawa, “In a Grove,” and John R. Searle, “Reality and Truth.”

Chapter 7

- A new “Thinking Critically” module on moral reasoning has been added to section 7.6.
- The discussion of moral relativism in section 7.2 has been substantially revised.
- The discussions of utilitarianism and of egoism in section 7.3 have also been substantially revised.
- In section 7.4, a discussion of the *Euthyphro* problem has been added, and the discussions of Kant and of Buddhist ethics have been revised.
- The discussion of feminist ethics in section 7.5 has been revised and streamlined.
- In section 7.6, the discussion of Dewey has been revised, and new excerpts from Mary Anne

Warren and Don Marquis have been added to the discussion of abortion.

- New reading: Fyodor Dostoyevsky, “The Heavenly Christmas Tree.”

Chapter 8

- Statistics on poverty in section 8.1 have been updated.
- The discussion of Nozick in section 8.3 has been expanded.
- The discussion of just war theory in section 8.4 has been updated to reflect current controversies over interrogation techniques involving torture.
- New reading: Bertrand Russell, “The Ethics of War.”

Chapter 9

- The section entitled “What Is Art?” that was formerly part of this chapter is now available as a separate module, and instructors who wish to use it may have it custom-published with the text.

Organization

Self-discovery and autonomy remain the central notions around which this edition is organized (although these notions are critically discussed in Chapter 2). Each chapter repeatedly returns to these notions and links the materials discussed to the reader’s growth in self-knowledge and intellectual autonomy. The ultimate aim of the text is to empower and encourage self-discovery and autonomy in the reader, in part by developing his or her critical thinking skills.

Although the text is organized by topics, the chapters have been arranged in a roughly historical order. The book opens with an introductory chapter on the nature of philosophy that focuses on Socrates as the exemplar of philosophy and includes substantial selections from the Socratic dialogues. Because of the book’s focus on the self and the intrinsic importance of the topic, and because human nature was an important concern from the earliest time of philosophy, I turn immediately in Chapter 2 to the discussion of human nature, a discussion that raises several issues more fully treated in later chapters. Then, because Chapter 2 raises many metaphysical and religious issues, I turn to metaphysical issues in Chapter 3 and then to discussions of God and religion in Chapter 4. These issues, of course, were of passionate concern during the medieval and early modern periods of philosophy. Chapters 5 and 6 focus on questions of epistemology, interest in which

historically followed the medieval and early modern interest in metaphysical issues. Chapters 7 and 8 are devoted respectively to ethics and social and political philosophy, topics that have preoccupied many philosophers during the late modern and contemporary periods. Chapter 9 focuses on the meaning of life, an issue that is particularly important for many of us today.

Yet no historical period has a monopoly on any of these topics. Consequently, each chapter moves back and forth from classic historical discussions of issues to contemporary discussions of the same or related issues. The chapter on metaphysics, for example, moves from the early modern controversy between materialism and idealism to current discussions of antirealism, some of which hark back to idealism.

Special Features

This text is unique in many ways and includes the following special features:

“Historical Showcases.” Substantial summaries of the life and thought of major philosophers, including female and non-Western philosophers, are placed at the end of each chapter. These historical discussions feature large selections from the works of philosophers who have addressed the issues treated in the chapter. Arranged in chronological order, the “Historical Showcases” provide a clear and readable overview of the history of philosophy and enable students to see philosophy as a “great conversation” across centuries.

Readings by Philosophers. Near the end of each chapter are highly accessible readings examining a philosophical question raised in the text. These questions are as diverse as “Does the existence of evil prove God does not exist?” and “Is war morally justified?”

Literature Readings. At the end of many chapters is a short literature selection that addresses the issues discussed in the chapter. These readings provide a friendly entry into philosophy for readers who are unaccustomed to traditional philosophical style.

“Thinking Critically” Modules. A sequence of sixteen modules entitled “Thinking Critically,” designed to develop the critical thinking and reasoning skills of the reader, is integrated into the text.

Marginal “Critical Thinking” Boxes. These boxes help the reader identify and criticize the underlying assumptions on which the arguments in the text depend. Several “Critical Thinking” boxes relate directly to the new “Thinking Critically” modules, described earlier.

Extended Selections from Primary Sources. Primary source material not only is included in all the “Historical Showcases” but also is liberally introduced in the main text, where it is always carefully explained. To make these materials accessible to beginning undergraduates, new and simplified translations of several texts (by Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, and others) have been prepared, and several standard translations (such as Max Mueller’s translation of Kant) have been simplified and edited.

Learning Objectives. The first page of each chapter outlines the chapter contents and describes the pedagogical objectives of each section of the chapter.

“Philosophy and Life” Boxes. These inserts throughout the text show the impact of philosophy on everyday life or its connections to current issues such as medical dilemmas, sociobiology, psychology, and science. Each box ends with a set of questions designed to spark further thought on the subject.

Marginal “Quick Reviews.” These summaries, which appear alongside the text they summarize, help readers identify the main arguments of the chapter and give them an easy way to review the materials they have read.

Marginal References to CourseMate. Marginal references to primary sources at CourseMate provide students with further reading beyond the covers of this book.

“Philosophy at the Movies.” At the end of each section of the text is a short paragraph that summarizes a film that addresses the topics treated in that section, along with questions that link the film to those topics.

End-of-Section Questions. To encourage students to think philosophically, questions and exercises are provided at the end of every section within a chapter.

“Chapter Summary.” Each chapter ends with a summary of the main points that have been covered, organized according to the chapter’s main headings and learning objectives (initially laid out at the chapter opening), making them particularly helpful as an overall review.

Color Illustrations. Color photos and art reproductions are used throughout the text to provide visual illustrations of the people and ideas discussed in the text and to stimulate student interest.

Glossary of Terms. Unfamiliar philosophical terminology is explained and defined in the text and highlighted in bold. These highlighted terms are defined again in an alphabetized glossary at the end of the book for easy reference.

Historical Timeline. Inside the front and back covers is a timeline that locates each philosopher in his or her historical context.

Ancillaries

Aplia™ for Introduction to Philosophy with Velasquez’s Philosophy

An online interactive learning solution that improves comprehension and outcomes by increasing student effort and engagement, Aplia™ provides innovative learning materials, animations, and automatically graded assignments that have detailed, immediate explanations for every question. The organization, core content, and exercises are consistent with many Introduction to Philosophy texts, making it an ideal complement to any Introduction to Philosophy text from Cengage Learning. Aplia’s user-friendly grading and performance interface lets you track both individual and class-wide student performance quickly and easily, as well as generate and download detailed reports about students’ work.

Telecourse The Examined Life

A series of videos for television has been produced to accompany Velasquez’s *Philosophy: A Text with Readings*. Entitled *The Examined Life*, the 26 half-hour videos cover most (but not all) of the topics treated in this edition and move in sequence through each section of each chapter. Each video consists of interviews with contemporary philosophers, dramatizations, historical footage of well-known philosophers,

discussions of classical philosophical texts, and visual interpretations of key philosophical concepts. Among the more than 100 philosophers specially interviewed for this video series are W. V. O. Quine, Hilary Putnam, John Searle, James Rachels, Martha Nussbaum, Marilyn Friedman, Hans Gadamer, Gary Watson, Susan Wolf, Peter Singer, Michael Sandel, Daniel Dennet, Ronald Dworkin, and many others.

CengageCompose. CengageCompose puts the power of the vast Cengage Learning library of learning content at your fingertips to create exactly the text you need. The all-new, web-based CengageCompose site lets you quickly scan contents and review materials to pick what you need for your text. Site tools let you easily assemble the modular learning units into the order you want and immediately provides you with an online copy for review. You can even choose from hundreds of vivid, art-rich, customizable, full color covers. The enrichment modules “A Look at Logic” and “What Is Art?” may be customized with any text.

CourseMate. Philosophy CourseMate contains content specific to the text as well as additional resources for students taking an Introduction to Philosophy Course. The site features quizzing, videos, note-taking guides for readings, web links, and movie screeners for each chapter’s “Philosophy at the Movies.” Discipline content includes guides to studying philosophy and researching and writing philosophy papers, biographies of major philosophers and excerpts from their most important works, and A Guide to Logic. Interactive activities include timelines and visual representations of fields of philosophy. This site also contains chapter-by-chapter links to a multimedia ebook that allows students to highlight text, take notes, and perform searches.

Instructor’s Manual and Test Bank. This extensive manual contains many suggestions to help instructors highlight and promote further thought on philosophical issues. It also comes with a comprehensive Test Bank featuring multiple-choice, true/false, fill-in, and essay questions for each chapter, as well as ExamView® computerized testing.

WebTutor™ ToolBox. Offers basic online study tools, including learning objectives, flashcards, and practice quizzes.

Instructor's Companion Website. Upon adoption, instructors will have access to a variety of resources to aid learning and teaching, including chapter outlines and reviews, the instructor's manual, the test bank, flashcards, the glossary, web links, and chapter quizzes.

Acknowledgments

For their helpful comments and suggestions on the revision of this and earlier editions of the text, I offer sincere thanks to Cathryn Bailey, Minnesota State University; Teresa Cantrell, University of Louisville; A. Keith Carreiro, Bristol Community College at Attleboro; Michael Clifford, Mississippi State University; Christina Conroy, Morehead State University; Stephen Daniel, Texas A&M University; Janice Daurio, Moorpark College; Scott Davison, Morehead State University; Dennis Earl, Coastal Carolina University; Miguel Endara, Los Angeles Pierce College; Philip M. Fortier, Florida Community College at Jacksonville; Paul Gass, Coppin State University; Nathaniel Goldberg, Washington and Lee University; Khalil Habib, Salve Regina University; Randy Haney, Mount San Antonio College; William S. Jamison, University of Alaska Anchorage; Jonathan Katz, Kwantlen Polytechnic University; Stephen Kenzig, Cuyahoga Community College; Hye-Kyung Kim, University of Wisconsin–Green Bay; Emily Kulbacki, Green River Community College;

Thi Lam, San Jacinto College Central; David Lane, Mt. San Antonio College and California State University, Long Beach; Mary Latela, Sacred Heart University, Post University; Matthew Daude Laurents, Austin Community College; George J. Lujan, Mission College; Darryl Mehring, University of Colorado at Boulder; Scott Merlino, California State University Sacramento; Mark Michael, Austin Peay State University; Jonathan Miles, Quincy University; John C. Modschiedler, College of DuPage; Michael Monge, Long Beach City College; Jeremy Morris, Ohio University; Patrice Nango, Mesa Community College; Joseph Pak, Los Angeles City College; William Payne, Bellevue College; Steven Pena, San Jacinto College, Central Campus; Alexandra Perry, Bergen Community College; Michael Petri, South Coast College; James Petrik, Ohio University; Michael T. Prah, Hawkeye Community College and University of Northern Iowa; Randy Ramal, Mt. San Antonio College; Matthew Schuh, Miami Dade College; Ted Shigematsu, Santa Ana College; Karen Sieben, Ocean County College; Paula J. Smithka, University of Southern Mississippi; Doran Smolkin, Kwantlen Polytechnic University; Tim Snead, East Los Angeles College; Mark Storey, Bellevue College; Matthew W. Turner, Francis Marion University; Frank Waters, Los Angeles Valley College; Diane S. Wilkinson, Alabama A&M University; Holly L. Wilson, University of Louisiana at Monroe; and Paul Wilson, Texas State University–San Marcos.



PHILOSOPHY

A Text with Readings

C H A P T E R



The Nature of Philosophy

*The feeling of
wonder is the mark
of the philosopher,
for all philosophy
has its origins
in wonder.*

PLATO

OUTLINE AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

I.1 What Is Philosophy?

OBJECTIVE | When finished, you'll be able to:

- Explain how Plato's Myth of the Cave shows that philosophy is a freeing activity.
- **Show how philosophy is related to critically examining our most fundamental assumptions.**
- Explain the importance of the philosophical perspectives of women and non-Western cultures.
- **Define reasoning and its role in critical thinking.**

I.2 The Traditional Divisions of Philosophy

OBJECTIVE | When finished, you'll be able to:

- Define epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics, and explain the kinds of questions each asks.
- **Recognize and avoid vague or ambiguous claims.**
- **Identify an argument, its conclusion, and its supporting reasons.**

I.3 A Philosopher in Action: Socrates

OBJECTIVE | When finished, you'll be able to:

- Explain how Socrates' unrelenting questioning of conventional beliefs exemplifies the quest for philosophical wisdom.
- **Identify the main premises and conclusions of an argument, and its missing premises or assumptions.**

I.4 The Value of Philosophy

OBJECTIVE | When finished, you'll be able to:

- Compare Plato's and Buddha's claims that philosophical wisdom is related to freedom.

☞ **State how philosophy can help you build your outlook on life, be more mindful, and become a critical thinker.**

- Explain the importance of examining our philosophical assumptions about men and women.

1.5 Reading: Voltaire, “Story of a Good Brahman”

1.6 Historical Showcase: The First Philosophers

1.1 What Is Philosophy?

QUICK REVIEW

Philosophy begins when we start to wonder about and question our basic beliefs.

Philosophy begins with wonder. Although many of us know very little about the jargon and history of philosophy, we have all been touched by the feeling of wonder with which philosophy begins. We wonder about why we are here; about who we really are; about whether God exists and what She or He is like; why pain, evil, sorrow, and separation exist; whether there is life after death; what true love and friendship are; what the proper balance is between serving others and serving ourselves; whether moral right and wrong are based on personal opinion or on some objective standard; and whether suicide, abortion, or euthanasia is ever justified.

This wondering and questioning begin early in our lives. Almost as soon as children learn to talk, they ask: Where did I come from? Where do people go when they die? How did the world start? Who made God? From the very beginning of our lives, we start to ask the questions that make up philosophy.

Indeed, the word *philosophy* comes from the Greek words *philein*, meaning “to love,” and *sophia*, meaning “wisdom.” Philosophy is thus the love of wisdom. It includes the pursuit of wisdom about what it means to be a human being, what the fundamental nature of reality is, what the sources and limits of our knowledge are, and what is good and right in our lives and in our societies.

Although philosophy begins with wonderment and questioning, it does not end there. Philosophy tries to go beyond the answers to these questions that we may have received when we were too young to seek our own answers. The goal of philosophy is to get us to answer these questions for ourselves—to make up our own minds about our self, life, knowledge, society, religion, and morality without simply depending on the authority of parents, peers, television, teachers, or society.

Many of our religious, political, and moral beliefs are beliefs that we accepted as children long before we could question them or understand the reasons behind them. Philosophy examines these beliefs. The aim is not to reject them but to learn why we hold them and to ask whether there are good reasons to continue holding them. In this way, our basic beliefs about reality and life become our own: We accept them because we have thought them through on our own, not because our parents, peers, and society have conditioned us to believe them. In this way, we gain a kind of independence and freedom, or what some modern philosophers call *autonomy*. The goal of philosophy, then, is **autonomy**: the freedom of being able to decide for yourself what you will believe in, by using your own reasoning abilities.

QUICK REVIEW

The goal of philosophy is to answer these questions for ourselves and achieve autonomy.

Plato’s Myth of the Cave

Plato, one of the earliest and greatest Western philosophers, illustrated how philosophy aims at freedom with his famous parable called the Myth of the Cave. The Myth of the Cave is a story Plato tells in *The Republic*, his classic philosophical work on justice.

QUICK REVIEW

In Plato’s Myth of the Cave, chained prisoners watch shadows cast on a cave wall by objects passing in front of a fire. They mistake the shadows for reality.

Here is an edited and simplified translation of the Myth of the Cave, which Plato wrote in his native Greek:

Now let me describe the human situation in a parable about ignorance and learning. Imagine there are men living at the bottom of an underground cave whose entrance is a long passageway that rises through the ground to the light outside. They have been there since childhood and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move. The chains hold their heads so that they must sit facing the back wall of the cave and cannot turn their heads to look up through the entrance behind them. At some distance behind them, up nearer the entrance to the cave, a fire is burning. Objects pass in front of the fire so that they cast their shadows on the back wall where the prisoners see the moving shadows projected as if on a screen. All kinds of objects parade before the fire, including statues of men and animals whose shadows dance on the wall in front of the prisoners.

Those prisoners are like ourselves. The prisoners see nothing of themselves or each other except the shadows each one's body casts on the back wall of the cave. Similarly, they see nothing of the objects behind them, except their shadows moving on the wall.

Now imagine the prisoners could talk with each other. Suppose their voices echoed off the wall so that the voices seem to come from their own shadows. Then wouldn't they talk about these shadows as if the shadows were real? For the prisoners, reality would consist of nothing but the shadows.

Next imagine that one prisoner was freed from his chains. Suppose he was suddenly forced to stand up and turn toward the entrance of the cave. Suppose he was forced to walk up toward the burning fire. The movement would be painful, and the glare from the fire would blind him so that he would not see clearly the real objects whose shadows he used to watch. What would he think if someone explained that everything he had seen before was an illusion, that now he was nearer to reality and that his vision was actually clearer?

Imagine he was then shown the objects that had cast their shadows on the wall and he was asked to name each one—wouldn't he be at a complete loss? Wouldn't he think the shadows he saw before were truer than these objects?

Next imagine he was forced to look straight at the burning light. His eyes would hurt. The pain would make him turn away and try to return to things he could see more easily. He would think that those things were more real than the new things they were showing him.

But suppose that once more someone takes him and drags him up the steep and rugged ascent from the cave. Suppose someone forces him out into the full light of the sun. Won't he suffer greatly and be furious at being dragged upward? As he approaches the light his eyes will be dazzled and he won't be able to see any of this world we ourselves call reality. Little by little he will have to get used to looking at the upper world. At first he will see shadows on the ground best, next perhaps the reflections of men and other objects in water, and then maybe the objects themselves. After this, he would find it easier to gaze at the light of the moon



School of Athens, from the Stanza della Segnatura, 1510–1511 (fresco), Raphael (Raffaello Sanzio di Urbino) (1483–1520) © Vatican Museums and Galleries, Vatican City, Italy, Giraudon/The Bridgeman Art Library International

Walking with his student Aristotle, Plato points upward: “And the climb upward out of the cave into the upper world is the ascent of the mind into the domain of true knowledge.”

QUICK REVIEW

If a prisoner is freed and forced to see the fire and objects, he will have difficulty seeing and will think the shadows are more real than the objects.

QUICK REVIEW

If the prisoner were to be dragged out of the cave to the light of the sun, he would be blinded, and he would look first at shadows, then reflections, then objects, then the moon, and then the sun, which controls everything in the visible world.

and the stars in the night sky than to look at the daylight sun and its light. Last of all, he will be able to look at the sun and contemplate its nature. He will not just look at its reflection in water but will see it as it is in itself and in its own domain. He would come to the conclusion that the sun produces the seasons and the years and that it controls everything in the visible world. He will understand that it is, in a way, the cause of everything he and his fellow prisoners used to see.

Suppose the released prisoner now recalled the cave and what passed for wisdom among his fellows there. Wouldn't he be happy about his new situation and feel sorry for them? They might have been in the habit of honoring those among themselves who were quickest to make out the shadows and those who could remember which usually came before others so that they were best at predicting the course of the shadows. Would he care about such honors and glories or would he envy those who won them? Wouldn't he rather endure anything than go back to thinking and living like they did?

Finally, imagine that the released prisoner was taken from the light and brought back into the cave to his old seat. His eyes would be full of darkness. Now he would have to compete in discerning the shadows with the prisoners who had never left the cave while his own eyes were still dim. Wouldn't he appear ridiculous? Men would say of him that he had gone up and had come back down with his eyesight ruined and that it was better not to even think of ascending. In fact, if they caught anyone trying to free them and lead them up to the light, they would try to kill him.

I say, now, that the prison is the world we see with our eyes; the light of the fire is like the power of our sun. The climb upward out of the cave into the upper world is the ascent of the mind into the domain of true knowledge.¹

QUICK REVIEW

If he returns to the cave, he would be unable to see and would be laughed at.

QUICK REVIEW

The climb out of the cave is the ascent of the mind to true knowledge.

Plato's Parable and "Doing" Philosophy

Plato wrote this intriguing parable more than two thousand years ago. The parable is important for us because it explains much about what philosophy is.

Philosophy as an Activity. First, in the parable, philosophy is the activity of journeying upward from the dark cave to the light. That is, philosophy is an activity. In this respect, it differs from other academic subjects. Unlike some other subjects, philosophy does not consist of a lot of information or theories. True, philosophers have developed many theories and views. However, philosophical theories are the *products* of philosophy, not philosophy itself. While studying philosophy, of course, you will be asked to study the theories of several important philosophers. But the point of studying them is not just to memorize them. You will study them, instead, as an aid to help you learn how to "do" philosophy. By seeing how the best philosophers have "done" philosophy and by considering their views and theories, you can better understand what philosophizing is. More importantly, you can use their insights to shed light on your own philosophical journey. It's the journey—the activity—that's important, not the products you bring back from your journey.

Philosophy Is Hard Work. Second, as Plato made clear in the parable, philosophy is a difficult activity. The journey upward is hard because it involves questioning and thinking through the most basic beliefs that each of us accepts about ourselves and the universe. This means, as the parable suggests, that your philosophical journey sometimes may lead your thinking in directions that society does not support. It may lead you toward views that others around you reject. Philosophy is also hard because it requires us to think critically, consistently, and carefully about our fundamental

1 Plato, *The Republic*, from bk. 7. This translation copyright © 1987 by Manuel Velasquez.

beliefs. We may rebel against being asked to systematically and logically question and criticize views that we have always accepted. Yet the journey out of the darkness of the cave requires intellectual discipline and the hard work of thinking things through as carefully and precisely as we can. That is why someone taking the first steps in philosophy can be helped by a teacher who, as Plato says, “drags him up the steep and rugged ascent from the cave and forces him out into the full light of the sun.” The teacher does this by getting the learner to ask himself or herself the hard questions that the student is reluctant to ask on his or her own.

The Aim of Philosophy Is Freedom. Third, as Plato indicates and as we have already suggested, the aim of philosophy is freedom. Philosophy breaks the chains that imprison and hold us down, chains we often do not even know we are wearing. Like the prisoners in the cave, we uncritically accept the beliefs and opinions of those around us, and this leads us to see the world in narrow, rigid ways. Philosophy aims at breaking us free of the prejudices and unthinking assumptions we have long absorbed from those around us so we can move toward more reflective views that are truly our own.

Philosophy Examines Our Most Basic Assumptions. Fourth, Plato’s parable suggests that the beliefs that philosophy examines are assumptions we have about the most basic aspects of human existence. These include many of the beliefs that we take for granted yet are not aware of even though they play a crucial role in our thinking and our actions. Like the prisoner who is led to look at the real objects whose shadows he always assumed were real, the person who does philosophy examines the most basic assumptions we make about the universe and our place in that universe. The word *philosophy* itself suggests this, for it means “the love of wisdom.” To do philosophy is to love wisdom. Because wisdom is an understanding of the most fundamental aspects of human living, to love wisdom (to do philosophy) is to grapple with and seek to understand the fundamental assumptions we have about ourselves and our world.

The view of philosophy as the activity of examining our assumptions and beliefs about the most fundamental and significant aspects of our lives was perhaps most clearly expressed not by Plato, but by Perictione, a woman philosopher whom we think lived around the time of Plato:

Humanity came into being and exists in order to contemplate the principle of the nature of the whole. The function of wisdom is to gain possession of this very thing, and to contemplate the purpose of the things that are. Geometry, of course, and arithmetic, and the other theoretical studies and sciences are also concerned with the things that are, but wisdom is concerned with the most basic of these. Wisdom is concerned with all that is, just as sight is concerned with all that is visible and hearing with all that is audible. . . . Therefore, whoever is able to analyze all the kinds of being by reference to one and the same basic principle, and, in turn, from this principle to synthesize and enumerate the different kinds, this person seems to be the wisest and most true and, moreover, to have discovered a noble height from which he will be able to catch sight of God and all the things separated from God in serial rank and order.²

Perictione is claiming that philosophy, the search for wisdom, is ultimately a search for an understanding of the ultimate truths about ourselves and our universe. It is a search for a kind of understanding that goes beyond mathematics and the other sciences. These—mathematics and the other sciences—look only at particular aspects

QUICK REVIEW

The Myth of the Cave suggests philosophy is an activity that is difficult, has the aim of freedom, and examines the most basic assumptions of human existence.

QUICK REVIEW

Perictione suggests that philosophy is a search for the purpose of the universe.

2 Quoted in *A History of Women Philosophers*, ed. Mary Ellen Waithe (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff, 1987), 56.

of our world. Philosophy, on the other hand, is the attempt to know the truth about the most basic assumptions we make about ourselves and the universe around us.

Philosophy examines the basic assumptions that underlie religion—for example, when it asks: Is there a God? Is there an afterlife? What truth is there in religious experience? It examines the basic assumptions that underlie science when it asks: Are the methods of science capable of uncovering what the physical universe is really like? Are scientific theories merely useful approximations, or do they impart real truths about the universe? Is there such a thing as truth? Philosophy examines the basic values that underlie our relations with one another when it asks: Is there really such a thing as justice? What, if anything, do we truly owe each other? Is true love really possible or are all our activities based on self-interest? And it examines the basic notions that underlie our views about reality when it asks: Do we really make the choices we think we make, or is everything we do determined by forces we do not control? Are the ordinary objects we experience all that reality contains, or does another kind of reality exist beyond the world that appears around us? To do philosophy, then, is to examine the basic and most important assumptions that underlie everything we do and believe. We can, in fact, define **philosophy**—the love and pursuit of wisdom—as the activity of critically and carefully examining the reasons behind our most fundamental assumptions about ourselves and the world around us.



thinking critically • Assumptions and Critical Thinking

Doing philosophy, then, will often involve trying to discover the assumptions we are making or that are being made by a philosopher we are discussing. Assumptions are beliefs of ours that we take for granted and that would have to be true if the other things we believe and say are true, or if what we do makes sense. For example, most of our religious beliefs assume that God exists. If it were not true that God exists, then most traditional religious beliefs could not be true and traditional religious activities would make little sense. In a similar way, most of us assume that what we perceive with our five senses is real. If it were not true that what we see is real, then most of our beliefs about what we know about reality would not be true. And most of us assume that what we are doing is worth doing, for otherwise it would make little sense for us to continue doing it.

Doing this kind of thinking—trying to discover our own and others' assumptions—is an important part of what is called critical thinking. What is critical thinking? We are always thinking, of course, and we use our thinking any time we decide what we will do or what we will believe. But our thinking can be illogical, biased, close-minded, or based on mistaken assumptions, unsupported beliefs, false generalizations, and fallacious reasoning. Such thinking is bound to lead us astray. Critical thinking is the opposite of this kind of risky undisciplined thinking. **Critical thinking** is the kind of disciplined thinking we do when we base our beliefs and actions on unbiased and valid reasoning that uses well-founded evidence, that avoids false generalizations and unrecognized assumptions, and that considers opposing viewpoints.

Obviously, critical thinking is important in every aspect of life. But it is especially essential in philosophy because, as we have said, philosophy is the activity of thinking through the most basic beliefs we have accepted about ourselves and our world, and trying to form our own thoughtful views about these. If such philosophical thinking is not to go wrong, it has to be critical thinking.

Because critical thinking is so important in philosophy, this book contains several sections, like this one, entitled “Thinking Critically.” Each of these sections explains some aspect of critical thinking and applies critical thinking to the philosophy discussed in the

QUICK REVIEW

Identifying assumptions—beliefs we take for granted and that have to be true if other beliefs are to be true and actions are to make sense—is part of critical thinking, which is essential to philosophy.

book. The aim of these sections is to enable you to learn, step by step, how to evaluate your own philosophical thinking, as well as the philosophical thinking of others. It is sometimes said that philosophy “Teaches you how to think.” This is absolutely true. To learn philosophy is, at the same time, to learn to think critically.

An important part of critical thinking is identifying the assumptions we make but may not realize we make, just as the prisoners in the Myth of the Cave unthinkingly assumed the shadows they saw were real objects. As you read on through this book, we will often remind you to ask yourself what assumptions are being made by the various philosophers you encounter and whether those assumptions are true. To assist you, the “Critical Thinking” questions that appear in the margins will sometimes ask you about a particular assumption this or that philosopher may be making and what the significance of that assumption might be. An example of one of those “Critical Thinking” questions is in the margin next to this paragraph; read it and see what you think. Later we will look more closely at the process of identifying assumptions.



critical thinking

In the “Myth of the Cave,” does Plato assume that it is better to know the truth and be unhappy than to be happy but ignorant? Is this assumption important for him?

The Diversity of Philosophy

Both Plato and Perictione are representatives of so-called Western philosophy. Western philosophy is a part of the cultural tradition that began in ancient Greece and then spread to the inhabitants of Europe, England, and the United States. Yet the search for wisdom has been a concern of all races and cultures. The study of Western philosophy is important for us, of course, because of its profound and direct influence on the social and political institutions that surround us and because it continues to influence and shape the thinking of each of us today. Yet other, non-Western cultural traditions have had equally profound impacts on the planet’s civilizations and populations. Moreover, the nations of the world are now so interdependent that non-Western philosophical traditions influence what happens in our own society. Learning about those other philosophical traditions, therefore, is as vital as learning about the Western traditions that have directly shaped us and our society.

Consequently, although we will spend a good deal of time examining the views of Western philosophers, we cannot ignore the contributions of other cultures and races, such as those of Indian, African, and Asian philosophers. By looking at their contributions, you can expand your horizons. These perspectives provide new ways of looking at yourself and reality. By looking at worlds that are different from the one you live in, you can understand what your world is really like. More important, perhaps, you will envision ways of making it better.

We will also not ignore the contributions of a group of people who are sometimes overlooked in philosophy courses even though they make up 50 percent of the human race: women. For a number of historical reasons (including subtle and overt sexism), the major recognized contributors to Western philosophy have been males. Nevertheless, there are important women philosophers who, like Perictione, have made significant contributions to our philosophical traditions. Therefore, this book includes discussions of an approach to philosophy that tries to capture the special philosophical insights of female philosophers as well. This approach is what is generally referred to as “feminist philosophy.” Feminist philosophy attempts to look at philosophical issues from the perspectives of women. The pages that follow, then, do not ignore the contributions of feminist philosophy, but instead include numerous discussions of the views of important feminist philosophers.

QUICK REVIEW

It is important to also look at philosophy from the perspective of non-Western cultures and of women.