

# An Introduction to Western Philosophy

## (1) What is philosophy?

- Philosophy then as [any knowledge = philosophy]
- Philosophy now as a “second order subject”

## (2) defining philosophy:

tautology or the circularity problem. Paradoxical nature of philosophical problems.

## (3) characteristics of any philosophical discussion:

[a wrong but very practical definition of philosophy, Philosophy is what the philosophers do, when they are doing philosophy!]

- a) Big, fundamental or basic issues,
- b) openness or freedom of queries, and
- c) argumentative analysis [it’s the Method of philosophy.]

Philosophy is not a traditional subject. It’s is a seconder order subject. Actually, it’s a method of engaging with basic issues of other disciplines.

Problem of the definitions of philosophy that start with “জীবন ও জগতের ...”

## (4) Areas of philosophical studies:

### 1. Core philosophy:

- metaphysics [reality or being],
- epistemology [knowledge],

axiology:

- logic [laws of thought and good reasoning]
- ethics [ought or should, normative aspects]
- aesthetics [sense of beauty]

### 3. Branches of philosophy as “philosophy of ...”

### 4. Eastern philosophy:

Muslim philosophy, Indian philosophy, far-eastern philosophy that includes Chinese and Japanese philosophy and Bangladesh philosophy

## (5) History of philosophy:

- Greek philosophy, medieval philosophy, modern philosophy, post-Hegelian philosophy or contemporary philosophy.
- Analytic-continental split.

## (6) Western philosophy vs eastern philosophy:

western philosophy –

- merits [freeness, argument basis, in-depth and it works in all the areas.]
- demerits [Dichotomy or binary]

eastern philosophy –

- merits [hierarchical and integration]
- demerits [ lack of freeness, burden of scriptural reference, descriptive. It doesn’t work in all the relevant areas of human understanding and interest.]

**(7) utility of philosophical studies:**

- analytic power, critical thinking, ethical life, knowledge-based society and social pluralism.

**(8) Contribution of philosophy:**

- Giving rise to and protection the human civilization.
- initiating and guiding science and technology as an outcome.
- Philosophy is the foundation and life line of any scholarly study and research.
- philosophy shows the possible alternative ways
- only philosophy can give us certain of knowledge. A priori truths, square circle, time travel

**(9) Urgent reforms in philosophical studies in Bangladesh:**

- student size, class room facilities and exam system.
- To introduce philosophical contents in primary and secondary level.
- To allow anyone to take credit-earning relevant philosophy courses in their under-grad and graduate level.