

**Philosophy and Critical Thinking**  
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**Week-02**  
**Lecture 09: Aristotle**

Welcome in lecture 9. Today we are going to talk about Aristotle. Today we are going to cover Aristotle and his theory of knowledge and then definition of doctrine of ideas. Now just let me remind you from the last class that in last class we were discussing about the Plato idea of idea and even before that I would like to remind you discussion about the idea and then matter. So, discussed about whether we have even experiencing something and then getting idea or the idea is there and this world is just on a poor copy of this object in the world is just on a poor copy of idea. In the last class we discussed that how the Plato argued that we have idea and now we are in this world there is an object which is on a poor copy of this idea. So, there is a table we have tableness. So, tableness is idea. Now because of the tableness we know about the object and this object is since there are poor copies of this form that is why what we are doing we are looking the different type of table. So, we have one common idea one eternal idea is called tableness, manness and then there are many different objects I mean suppose for example there is a table can be a different type a different shape different size different color but because of the tableness we are always saying this is table this is table and so on. So, the discussion was all about that idea versus experience. So, there is an object and now we are experiencing this object and then forming an idea there are one way of arguing for example. Now other way is saying no idea and then there is an object. So, we are this particular for example, the particular table is participating in this notion of platonic idea of idea if you take the example of Plato. So, Plato argued that we have formed the idea of table, tableness and then there is a particular table which is participating in this idea because this table is in a poor copy of this form the idea of table. For example, there is we have like for example horseness and there are different kind of horses. We have the cowness and then we have different shape and size of the cows. So, this idea is eternal and this particular 1, 2, 3 and 4 is this cow the different type of cow is what it is in a particular this is in a poor copy of this idea. So, this is what we have discussed in the last class. Now you need to understand because this is at a very basic level. So, I would like to again repeat the argument about discussion about the form and then experience. So, there is a one argument it says that there is an object called T what we are doing we are experiencing this T and then we got this idea T-ness. Now after this experience I have a T-ness. So, later on if there is an T for me there is T because of this T-ness because I have idea of T and therefore there are different type of T so, I am like for me is a T. So, this is the one way of like arguing or another way of and there is an argument is about no there is an T-ness is already with us and the all the particular T different kind of T is just a poor copies of this idea and this what you are saying when I am like

experiencing any one object, Plato will argue it is not learning about T when you are saying that I am like experiencing T and learning things about T and then we have T-ness Plato will say it is not like that. The Soul which is has gone through and many lives So, he has a knowledge now what you are doing we are relearning this idea of T the relearning of this object. This object is in a kind of reminding you of your knowledge. So, this is what even it is not clear I will be again discussing this idea of idea and the similar kind of a concept from the today class idea of the idea in a today class will be because in Aristotle what we have done we have taken the Aristotle argument against the Platonic idea of idea. Now Aristotle is his timing was 384 to 322 BC and Aristotle was student of Plato and age of seventeen, he joined Plato's Academy and next 20 years he stayed there as a student and teacher and after Plato death he also, travelled many different places and then contributed in many different areas. Plato was very influential at the time I mean since this was Aristotle teacher So, many things Aristotle received and accepted from the Platonic idea of idea. So, Aristotle retains the changeless eternal form and idealistic principle of the teacher but rejected it their transcendency. I will be explaining how he did that. Now idea not detached from the world we perceive so, our world of experience is not untrustworthy appearance Aristotle is now arguing that that this world is not just in a poor copy but the Plato has argued he said that and this is not just as false appearance or untrustworthy appearance. He says that experience is the basis of everything. If you can recall the last class where Plato was arguing that experience whatever we are getting the idea of form or idea of idea the Platonic idea of idea argues that and that idea is not result of experience. So, here a total what he is doing he is arguing against the Platonic idea of idea saying that experience is the basis of knowledge. So, we are experiencing and then we are getting knowledge. So, this is what I was trying to explain you I mean before the Plato class and even today that how their discussion is and that is the reason that what we have done we have only concentrated the Aristotle philosophy around this idea of idea. Reason is this that so that you will have an idea of one concept and then their refutation how the philosopher is refuting the one's concept. Aristotle has a huge contribution in many different areas natural science and philosophy he was also, founder of formal logic but in this class, we are not going to discuss everything. Aristotle ethics and again one of the very important parts we will be discussing later when we start ethics. So, Aristotle has contributed in many different areas and he is one of the very important philosophers in the Western world. What we will do is in this class we will just concentrate in Aristotelian how Aristotle has refuted the Platonic idea of idea. Platonic idea of idea is they have Plato is arguing that there is an idea and this idea is eternal is one and then this world which object is in a poor copy of this idea. Now what we have knowledge is form is the genuine knowledge and what we are experiencing that is what in last class we talked about is in a belief. Now through sense perception you will get the opinions not genuine knowledge. So, for Plato genuine knowledge is form. So, conceptual knowledge is genuine knowledge. Now again he argued that we are not learning in this world but we are relearning,

reawakening. So, this is how the Plato argued. Now Aristotle is arguing that no it is not true. True is the experiences are what we are experiencing is the source of our knowledge is a basis of our knowledge. So, we are experiencing and getting knowledge. I hope I am clear.

Now before the refutation of the Platonic idea of idea let us see this how Aristotle had talked about science in a different form. So, first is the logic he put in the top and it elevates the method of inquiry in all the other sciences. Next is theoretical sciences and this is concerned with pure abstract knowledge. So, for example mathematics, physics, biology, psychology and first philosophy. So, first philosophy what we know is nowadays in metaphysics. So, because this is an inquiry of the first cause of everything. It is called primary cause. Now a third one is the practical sciences. Its knowledge is pursued as a means to conduct rather than as an end in itself. The practical sciences are ethics and politics and fourth one is productive sciences. So, in this sphere of the science knowledge is subordinated to the creation of beauty. For example, Aristotle's Poetics. Science is considered to be highest knowledge but metaphysical knowledge is much more than scientific knowledge. It is an inquiry of final cause of all things. So, I have been discussing all the Western philosophers So, far talked about and address the question that what is the primary cause or the final cause of everything. And this is not only in the Western philosophy even in the Indian philosophy it is an important to address this question that how, what is the final cause, what is the first cause or primary cause. Now what does it mean? It means that if you see this world even in the Indian perspective, in a philosophical perspective, if you see this world, this world is in a chain of the cause and effect. And if you are not going to stop Somewhere, if you are not going to accept Something as a first cause and of everything then you may not be able to explain this world. So, first cause is very important and not only Western, even the Indian philosopher has talked about well in detail about the first cause or the primary cause of this world. So, if the primary cause is explained then it will be easy to explain this world. Even today class how we have talked about the final cause that we will also, be discussing.

Let us talk about the argument how Aristotle refuted the Platonic idea of idea. Now, Plato is arguing that ideas are mere abstraction and such cannot account for the existence of the concrete thing. So, basically, he is arguing that we are experiencing any object, for example, we have seen cow, elephant, horse and now we have experience. Now what we are saying that the idea is just an abstraction of this knowledge. So, when I am saying table-ness, so, table-ness is just an abstraction of our experience. So, for example, I have experienced the table. Now I have idea of table. What table can do, shape and size and so, on. Now what I am saying that I have an idea of table. So, this idea of table just an abstraction. And again this, Aristotle is arguing that it cannot account for the existence of any concrete thing. Now form is static and eternal and therefore is unable to explain motion and change of any concrete things. So, for example, there is a clay and now it is in a like

pot. So, there is any object for example you take, there is a piece of wood, now it in a different form. So, it is changing. So, if you are going to accept the platonic idea of idea, this concept cannot explain the motion. It will not be possible. So, if anything is changing, then obvious question arises that what is changing? There is something is there which is changing. So, when we accept this idea of idea, then we may not be able to explain the notion of change. We may not be able to explain the motion. And therefore, the platonic idea of idea is not right. Again, the ideas are posteriori rather than priori to particular things and cannot therefore be used to explain them. In short, ideas are copies of things, not their causes. What are, Plato is arguing, there are two things, the posteriori and a priori. So, first is like your first time you are experiencing an object. Now suppose for example, I have never seen any object for example, take example of cow or horse. So, when I am experiencing this object or thing, and after that I am getting this idea of horse. So, when I am saying I have an idea, this is a post experience. So, I have experience, now what I did, I abstracted through my experience, the knowledge and then we are saying, oh I have now idea of horse So, this idea of horse is posteriori, and therefore, through this idea you cannot explain any object. And he also, arguing that this is other way round, ideas are copies of things. So, when you are experiencing any object and then you have copies, means you have the idea of any object. I hope this is clear. It says that there are two things. When we are saying that we have idea of table or you are saying you have idea of chair, the question arises then what is first, idea and then your or chair. It only means idea or experience. Plato is saying that I have idea of chair, now this chair which is in this world is what is just a poor copy of this idea. But this idea is eternal, it is one. Now Aristotle is saying that this is not the case. You are what you are claiming that you have idea that is a product of experience. So, you have experience, you experience this object X, Y and Z and then you have idea of this X. So, you experience this cow, So, you have you are saying oh I have cowness, idea. Now this idea of cow is product of this experience. And therefore, this idea cannot explain this particular cow. Aristotle is arguing these ideas are copies of this experience, the thing. So, you have experienced this cow and then what you are claiming that you have idea of cow, a form that is in a copy of the object, nothing. Now again that Aristotle is saying that ideas are unnecessary reduplication of things and not explanation of them. So, what we are idea is talking, it is just a reduplication. So, you are experiencing any object. You are claiming you have idea of tableness or you have idea of table. So, this tableness is just an unnecessary reduplication of this table. It is not explanation of this table. So, because is this reason is this tableness is a product of this experience. I hope it is in a very clear that idea and then experience. So, first we are experiencing and then we are getting idea. See the idea it is plays a very important role. If still it is enough difficult to understand, let me repeat it again that this concept of idea plays very important role. Now for example you have idea of blackboard or chalk or pencil or pen and so, on. So, the moment you saw you are saying that oh this is pencil, this is pen and so, on. Now the question arises that it is how did you know that about the pencil that how you were saying

and this is pencil and this is pen, this is table. Now you say that I have idea of pencilness, manness, horses, cowness. So, I have idea of this cowness. For that is why the moment I saw this cow I am saying this is cow, the idea. Now the question arises that fine you have idea and then there is an object. Now the question is what comes first? Idea or this experience? So, when you saw the first time this object, So, are you going to experience it first or you have an idea and that is why you are saying though this is pen, this is a pencil. Let us say the idea is eternal. So, you have an idea and these objects are, these are the poor copies of this idea. It is total is we argue that no you have idea because you have experienced this object. So, you first time you saw cow you experienced it, table, you experienced it and then you have idea of table. So, this idea what you are saying is eternal that is not true. So, this idea table-ness, cow-ness, horse-ness is just an abstraction of this experience, this knowledge. So, when you are experiencing, getting knowledge and then there is an abstraction. So, that is why you believe that this is an idea but that is not true. In reality the knowledge is product of experience. So, you are experiencing and then you are abstracting this knowledge. So, there is an abstract form and then you are saying oh look this is form. And these are unnecessary reduplication of thing. This is not explanation of this particular thing. Now first one, it says that as I am total argued that nothing is explained by saying that things are the copies of or participate in the idea. To say that individual man participates in the ideal man add nothing to our understanding of the individual. And the ideally is at least the relation between the idea and then corresponding thing leads to an infinite regress. Now what is this? Let me explain you. So, what we are saying that first there is something called man-ness or table-ness. What we are saying I mean Plato that this is the idea or table-ness if you have idea. Now this is eternal. This is one and then again it is eternal. We also, have in world man, individual man, particular table and so, on. Now Aristotle is arguing that you are saying that this particular man, individual man or particular table it is participating in the form of table-ness. The man, individual man is participating what is man. But the problem is, first problem is, this is not going to add any new thing in our understanding of individual. First of all, we have our knowledge on understanding of our table and what you are explaining it is not going to adding a new thing. And even you are like accepting this participation is not possible. The relation between the idea of table and the particular table is what is not possible. Now what does it mean it is not possible? For example, in the last class we discussed a platonic idea of idea. We are saying that we have an idea of beauty. So, when I am saying this is X is a very beautiful thing and place and then next day, I am like saw another object called R and then said oh R is the better than the X So, because this is in a very close to the idea of beauty. So, we have done idea beauty is a perfect thing or any object like X, R, P, beautiful thing is participating in what in the form of beauty, the beauty-ness. Now there is a problem with this participation. Beautiful and I will say the beauty-ness this idea this is in form it is not material it is immaterial. Again this idea is participating with P. P is what a beautiful object. So, beautiful is in a

form but this is possible. If you are going to say that this is participating in this particular in form then how there is in a relation because this is the different kind. So, even the participation we need a third type of beauty or like right. Again, if there is an you going to bring another form of beauty which is helping to participate the particular beauty to the idea of beauty but again this will fall in again this category. Again, this is in a form and therefore we need another type of like B idea of beauty form of beauty. I hope it is clear. Now I mean why it is called Third Man?

So, first is like there is an argument that we have an idea of man. So, for example this is an idea of man right this is idea this is form and then this is when an individual man. What Plato is arguing that this individual man is what participating where in the idea of man right. Now what they saying this relation the second one the relation if idea and then the particular thing is not possible. Reason is this this is a form and this is this is in a particular thing. So, it is not possible to participate this individual thing in this man idea of man. For example, I am tall, P is tall, C is tall are the different type of man but tall itself cannot be tall right. So, idea of man for Plato itself is in a man right. Now see this idea is in abstract form I mean from the historical point of view and which is it is not possible to establish the relation between this M and then idea of M. Now if you need to if you want to establish a relation then we need a third man right. So, this is a Man one idea of man, man two and then since this is a relation is not possible the M two cannot participate in the M one. So, therefore another we have to bring third man which can going to establish a relation this participation of particular to the form universal. They got this is eternal this is a universal idea and then since again if you even you are bringing this M three-man third man it will fall in this category right. So, again this is form therefore again it cannot participate in this and therefore we need man four. The same argument and then man five and man six and follow this infinite request and therefore this M for individual man cannot participate in the idea of man right. And this is called the Third Man argument. This argument is a very important argument in the sense that even a later philosopher has used the same argument against another philosopher right. We will be discussing that. Now again this Aristotle is arguing that the theory of idea completely separates the essence or form of a thing from thing itself. But such separation is at variance with the unity of particular as observed by the mind. The idea or form cannot be a self-existent essence apart from the matter. So, the Aristotle is arguing that that particular objects or individual being as a real substance. So, this Plato is arguing about metaphysical position is total metaphysical position is pluralism rather than monism right. Now again Aristotle is arguing that universal and the particular are fused into the complete unity of the individual. So, for Aristotle the idea, the form and then individual is like intermingled right. Now he is trying to explain that individual object, any individual object is in a matter of change right, subject to change is changing. For example, there is seed, the sapling and then tree and then fruit right. So, it is changing. Now if you accept that first idea of idea, operating idea of idea, through this concept we may not be able to explain this change, first thing. Second thing if something is changing

then also, we need to understand what is changing. I have given an example like suppose there is an actor or actresses what they are doing, they are playing a different character in different role. So, at least we have idea that Someone is there who is playing different character. There is an X sometimes playing as Y and Z and So, on. If anything is changing then if you want to explain the change then you have to accept something which is there right, which is changing. The question is if something is changing then what is changing? First is argument is that you cannot argue that our form is changing right, form of one thing cannot change into form of another thing right. So, the Plato is arguing that there must be something underlying change and that is what Aristotle said that that is matter right. So, he argued that for example he was saying there is an argument if you accept the platonic idea of idea. So, the seed is like seed and now sapling the tree and the fruit right. So, you will say that this is change, this change if you want to explain the change you cannot argue that the form of the seed now has changed in this form of sapling. So, the argument is the form of any form of anything cannot change into form of another. So, this is not possible and therefore through the idea of idea we cannot explain the change. Again, if something is changing then it is something is there which is changing. So, we have to accept the existence of that. So, in order to explain the change or growth we must assume a substratum that is matter that persist the changes. Now Plato has argued about potentiality and then actuality and that is a very important topic. So, Aristotle is arguing that matter by itself has a no form but it has potentiality to becoming anything by generating principle of form. For example, clay. So, there is a clay and there is a person a skillful person he can change this clay into a pot right. So, this clay has a potential to become a pot right. So, this is what he argued that this is called potentiality. This matter has a potential to become X. Now what is this meaning of the potentiality and actuality. I will give an example. So, the clay is the potter by skill with the idea of brick and shaping it. So, he has an idea of brick and then he also, has skill. So, what he is doing to this skill he is shaping this clay to the brick. So, form that in a minute clay into the actual brick. Now let take another example the greenness. Greenness is an idea but it can be actualized in a green leaf or any other green thing. So, the form is the principle of actualization. Now I hope it is clear. So, potentiality is supposed there is a person he has a potential or let us say, the potential painter cannot paint on a paint of like for example Urvasi, but the actual painter can paint that. So, the potential thing it has potential but someone and like for example in terms of clay the potter by skill and he also, have an idea of brick and he is what he is doing that this is idea he is shaping this clay into brick clay into pot. So, this idea of form is the principle of actualization. Now actuality is the prior of potentiality even in time. So, if there is a for example there is a trained painter or musician the actual musician who can trained another person a potential person in he can train he as an a real actual musician. For example, there is a potential person who can be a painter potential painter. So, the actual painter can train this person in actual painter. Now if you see this Aristotelian idea of potentiality and actuality and then this is a hierarchy for example individual man and then man animal and then creature. So, he argued that the

first one thus the individual man is matter and then man is form but in terms of this animal this become a matter and this is animal. Animal is in a form. Again, this is in a form and this is in a matter. So, man an individual man this is in a matter in terms of his higher in man. So, individual men are like matter in terms of when we are talking about this man idea of man and if you follow this hierarchy the Aristotle is arguing that in talk there is something called God who is the form who is the actual person. Also, called this God is in a Prime Mover in the sense that it moves everything but itself is remains unmoved. So, if you take the previous argument this argument you will find that this is moved by this and this is moved by this and so on if you go on. But something it is there in Aristotle philosophy which is called God who is mover of everything but in itself is unmoved. So, there is a pure potentiality for it is nothing definite. It is a pure potentiality which under the influence of prime mover progressively gets actualized form to lower order and to higher order. So, till it reaches the highest order. Now God is by his own nature an actual being and for there is nothing of potentiality in him. He is all perfect and nothing is lacking in him. His idea is when we are talking about the potentiality and actuality it only means that this person this thing has a potential to become X and Y and Z. But the God which is an actual and he is a perfect being. He is a mover of everything. So, if you take an example, of clay and then brick clay in the pot, seed and then tree fruit and so on. So, it has potential. Now it is turning into its actual. Potential painter then actual painter. So, actual painter is what it can do things. If you follow this hierarchy, you will find that there is something which is perfect thing. It is an actual thing. It is called God. So, God is by his own nature an actual being and for there is nothing of potentiality in him because he is all perfect and nothing is lacking in him and he is the final cause of everything.

Now, Aristotle recognizes the four principal operative in the any process and then also, we call the four causes. First is the material cause. For example, if you take an example of brick then there is a clay. So, clay is material cause. Now formal cause is a potter what he is doing. He has an idea of this brick. He has an idea of pot. So, this idea is called formal cause. Efficient cause is potter who is moving this one. Who has the skill to turn this clay into pot, clay into brick. So, he is efficient cause and the final cause which is we are taking the same. The final is that is the final cause. So, Aristotle has talked about the four different causes and this also, is a very important contribution from Aristotle to the philosophy. So, this is what we have discussed. Aristotle's idea of how he rejected Aristotle. How Aristotle refuted the platonic idea of idea and then argued that this idea is just mere abstraction of our knowledge which is a product of experience. So, we are experiencing and then this is what idea. Now this is a kind of example. We have taken one philosophy from, one concept from the Plato and then Aristotle what we did we saw their argument how the Aristotle has rejected the idea of idea, platonic idea of idea. So, this course is all about to teach you, trained you how to think critically. So, this is how we have done and that is the reason that we have not like added all the things or many things from Aristotle. So, in the very short class what we did that just we see the, trying to understand the



argument and this argument will train you how to reject the concept, how to think critically. So, we will be taking again in the next class a different concept and we will try to understand their argument. Thank you So, much.

For the reference these two books are important if we can, for this lecture is based on these two books. So, thank you So, much for your kind attention. Thank you.