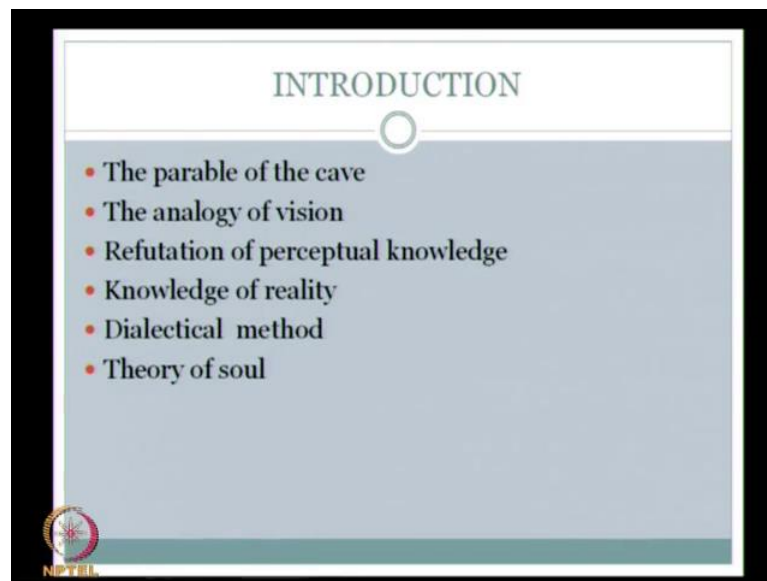


Aspects of Western Philosophy
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Module - 04
Lecture - 04
Plato:
Theory of Knowledge,
The Dialectical Method
Theory of Soul

In continuation with the previous lecture which was primarily dealing with Plato's theory of ideas he would examine some related concepts particularly his theory of knowledge. So, in Plato's these two things are intimately related his theory of knowledge is intimately linked with this theory of knowledge.

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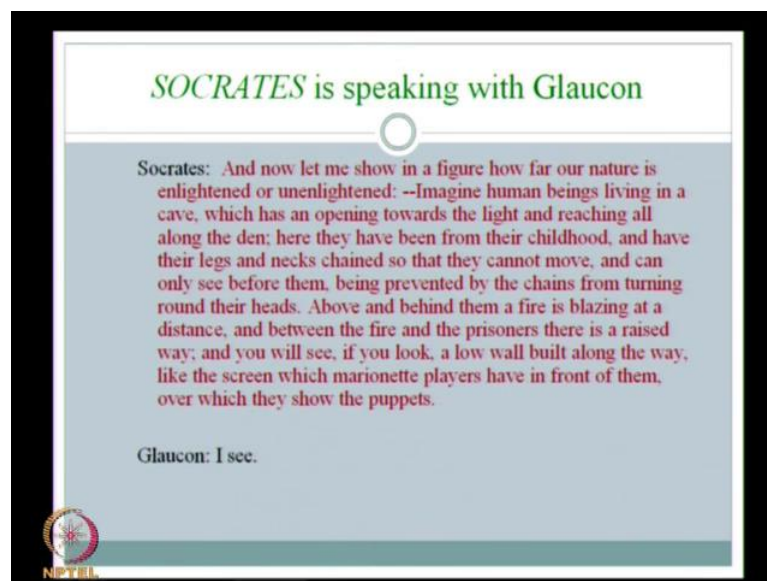


So, will see those issues related to these two concepts their inter relationships in today's lecture. The topics which we are planning to cover in this lecture are the parable of the cave. This is the very interesting because in continuation with what we discussed in the previous lecture about theory of ideas. This theory of ideas can be further clarified with the help of this parable. So, then after that we will see the analogy of vision, which would rather take us to explain his theory of knowledge and which is supplemented by another very important concept the reputation of perceptual knowledge. Because Plato is

one philosopher who never gives importance to perception at all, there is absolutely no rule for perception in his theory of knowledge. He would say that, whatever you gather gain, whatever knowledge you gain through perception sense perception is to be refuted.

Again in this connection, we have to see if perceptual knowledge is refuted, if knowledge gain from perception is treated as a mistaken knowledge then, how do you get knowledge about reality? How do you understand reality at all? So, here he introduce us dialectical method which is again we can see is refers to a Socrates, because it was Socrates was the person who is actually engaged in developing this method. Of course, in Socrates live probably this method was not developed in the sense in which it is employed by Plato, in his dialogues Socrates would have practiced it with of course, certain intensions in his mind, but Plato further develops it into a very matured philosophical method and in association with all these things will see his theory of soul.

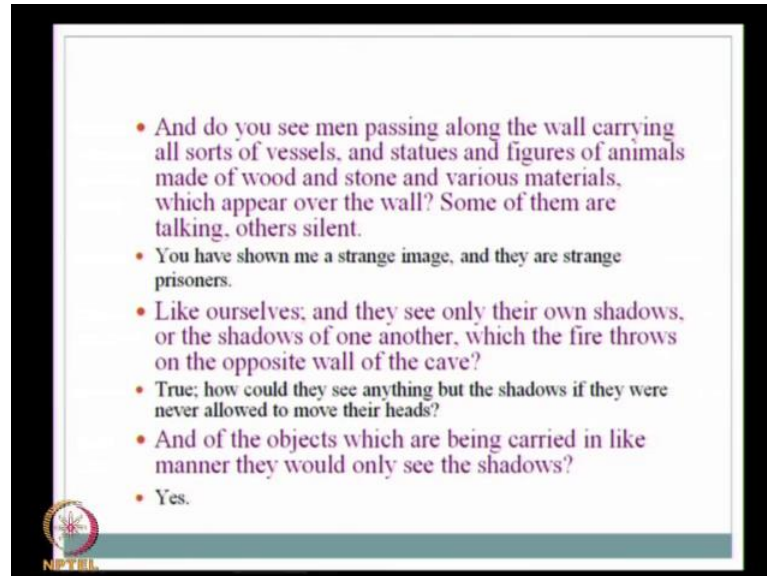
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Now let us examine this Socrates speaking with Glaucon in one of his dialogues. So, Socrates says I will just read it out. And now let me show in figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened: - Imagine human beings living in a cave, which has an opening towards the light and reaching all along the den; here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and prisoners there is

a raised way and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players in front of them, over which they show the puppets.

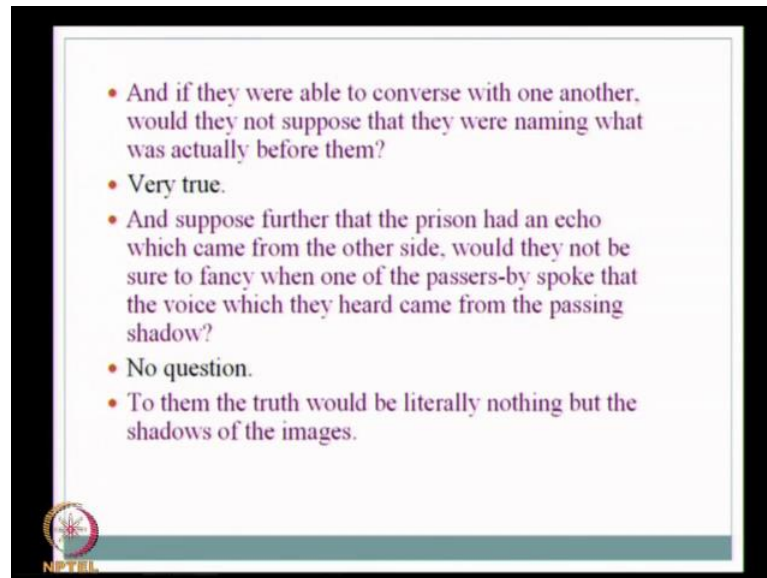
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Then Glaucon says I see, and do you see men passing along the wall carrying all sorts of vessels, the statues and figures of animals made of wood and stone and various materials, which appear over the wall? Some of them are talking, others silent. And Glaucon says, you have shown me a strange image and they are strange prisoners because they are all chained from the very birth, from the very childhood they are chained and they are not able to turn their neck back and see what is happening behind them and behind them, there is fire and in front of them there is a wall. So, whatever objects move in between the fire and the wall would be reflected, their images would be reflected in the wall which is there in front of them.

Like ourselves; and see only they see only their own shadows, that is what Socrates was trying to assert they can see only their own shadows, or shadows of one another, which the fire throws on the opposite wall of the cave? And Glaucon says true. How could they see anything but the shadows if they were never allowed to move their heads? And of the objects which are being carried in the like manner they would only see the shadows? Yes.

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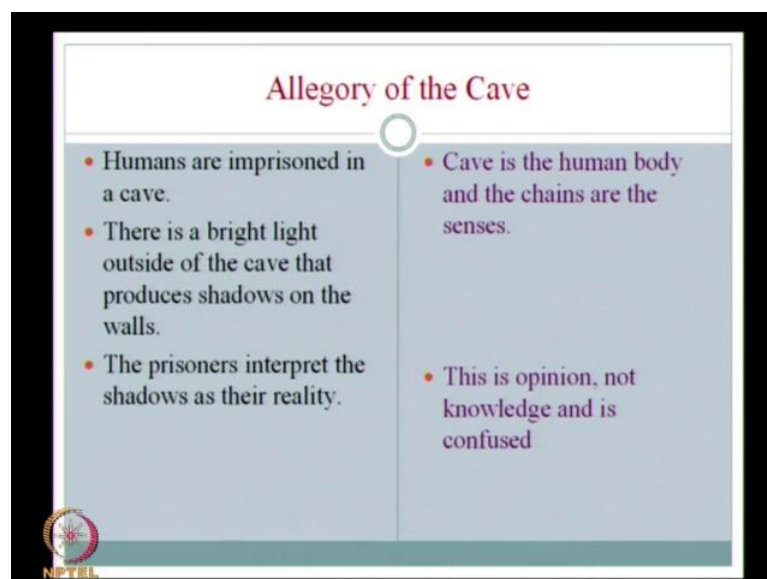


A slide with a white background and a black border. It contains a list of five bullet points in purple text. The first point asks a question about conversation and naming. The second point is a simple affirmation. The third point asks a question about an echo in a prison. The fourth point is a simple affirmation. The fifth point states that the truth is literally nothing but shadows of images. In the bottom left corner, there is a small circular logo with a star and the word 'NPTEL' below it.

- And if they were able to converse with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them?
- Very true.
- And suppose further that the prison had an echo which came from the other side, would they not be sure to fancy when one of the passers-by spoke that the voice which they heard came from the passing shadow?
- No question.
- To them the truth would be literally nothing but the shadows of the images.

And if they were able to converse with one another, would they not suppose that they were naming what was actually before them? Very true, and suppose further that the prison had an echo which came from the other side, would they not be sure of to fancy when one of the passers-by spoke that the voice which they came from the passing shadow? No question, to them the truth would be literally nothing, but the shadows of the images.

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A slide with a white background and a black border. The title 'Allegory of the Cave' is centered at the top in a dark red font. Below the title, there are two columns of purple bullet points. The left column contains three points about imprisonment, light, and interpretation. The right column contains two points about the cave as the human body and the nature of the resulting opinion. In the bottom left corner, there is a small circular logo with a star and the word 'NPTEL' below it.

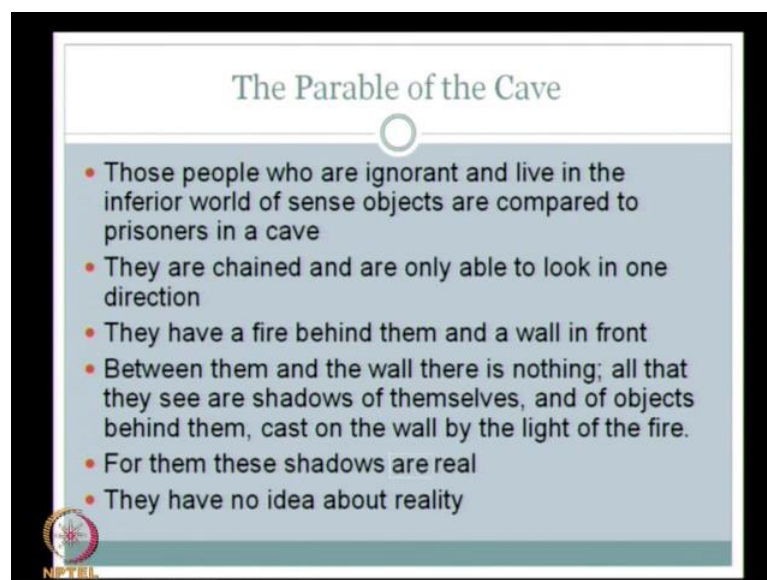
Allegory of the Cave

- Humans are imprisoned in a cave.
- There is a bright light outside of the cave that produces shadows on the walls.
- The prisoners interpret the shadows as their reality.
- Cave is the human body and the chains are the senses.
- This is opinion, not knowledge and is confused

So, this is what Socrates was trying to communicate. This is Plato's famous allegory of the cave. So, humans are the imprisoned in the cave, cave is a human body. So, when you try to understand what does it stands for. Cave is here the human body stands for the human body and the chains are the senses. So, Plato actually tries to tell us that there is a human soul which is pure, which is imperishable, which is eternal, but this human soul is chained within a body and it is covered by the senses. So, in one sense it is changed the soul is unable to see the reality and there is a bright light outside of the cave that produces shadows on the wall. And the prisoners interpret the shadows as their reality, but what is it this is mere opinion. So, Plato would say that this these prisoners would think that these shadows are the reality.


So, they would all talk about these shadows and the sound produced by them, so for them that is reality, and for Plato this talk about the shadow or all these information they get about the shadows are only opinions. They are not knowledge because they are so confused, my opinion would be different from another person's opinion; ours is all we are all locked inside the prison house of our body and the chains of our sense organs. Those people who are ignorant and live in the inferior world of sense objects are compared to prisoners in a cave.

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The Parable of the Cave

- Those people who are ignorant and live in the inferior world of sense objects are compared to prisoners in a cave
- They are chained and are only able to look in one direction
- They have a fire behind them and a wall in front
- Between them and the wall there is nothing; all that they see are shadows of themselves, and of objects behind them, cast on the wall by the light of the fire.
- For them these shadows are real
- They have no idea about reality

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So, Plato ultimately tells us that you know, there are most of us who live in this world who consider this world as real, who treat the objects in this world as ultimate realities

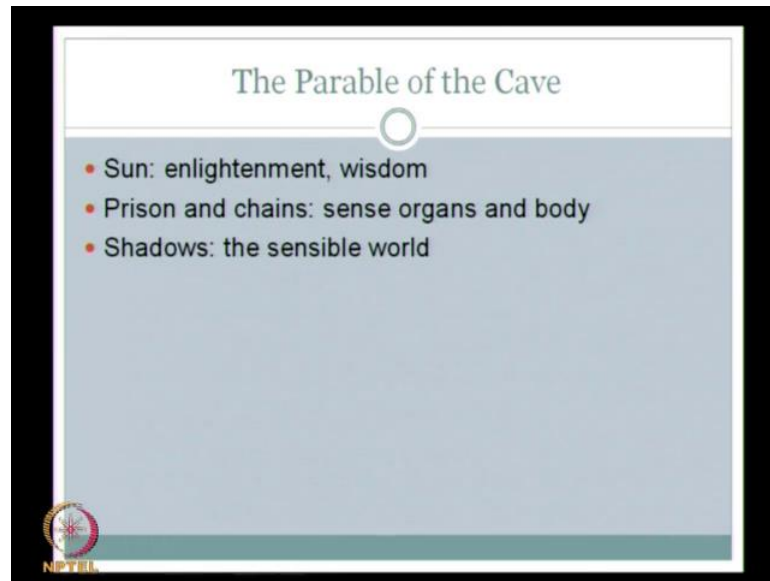
are actually having a very inferior kind of an existence, they are ignorant and live in the inferior world of sense objects. They are chained and are only able to look in one direction, they are not able to see what exactly reality is because they are chained. The sense organs will always drag us to the world of particularities, particular objects in this world. They have a fire behind them and wall in front. Between them and the wall there is nothing all that they see are shadows of themselves and of objects behind them cast on the wall by the light of the fire. For them these shadows are reality. So, they think that they are real.

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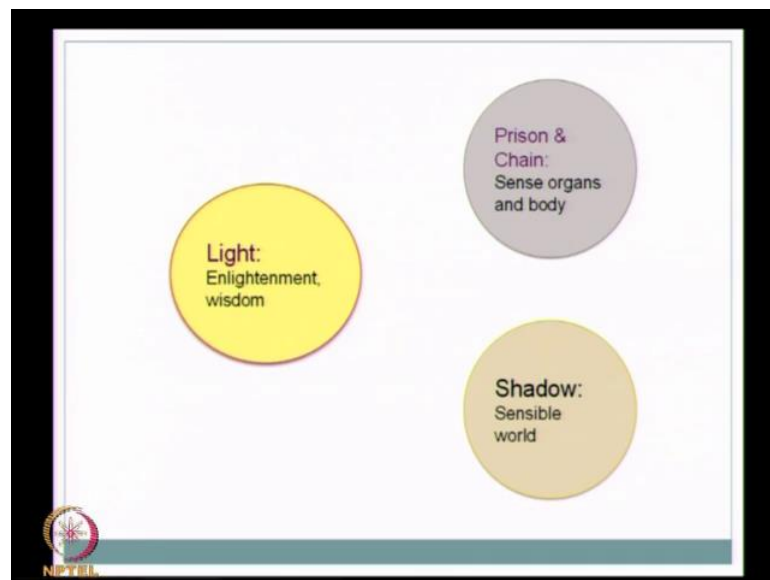
They have no idea about what exactly, what actually reality. So, here I have try to picturize the cave imagery this is the fire, which you see behind and these are the people who are chained, and they are chained all over the bodies. You can see the chain here and this is the wall which is there in front of them and these are objects, see suppose an object is kept here these people would not be able to see the real object, because they cannot turned their head back instead they could see only the shadows which are reflected on the wall in front of them by means of the fire, and these people considered these shadows as ultimate reality.

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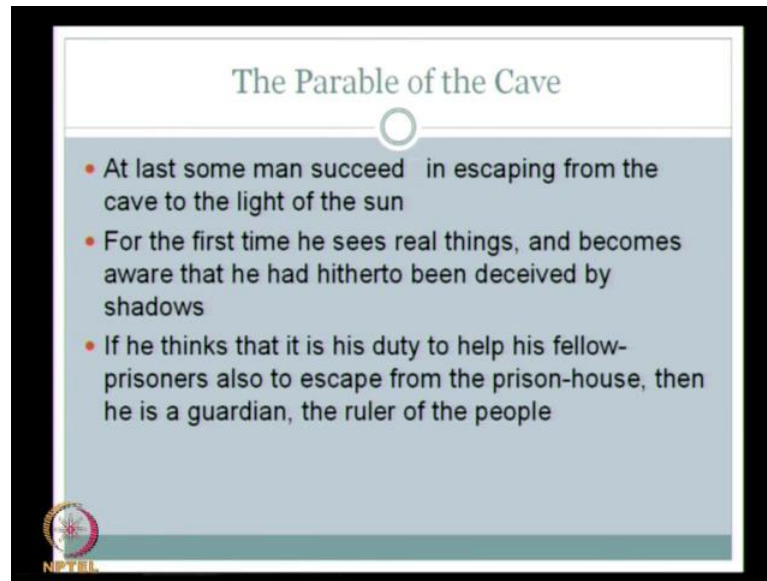
And here the world outside which is enlighten by the sun, is treated as wisdom and the prison and chains as sense organs as already told you and shadows are the sensible world.

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So, the light here stands for enlightenment and wisdom, then the prison and chains they represent, as I already mentioned the sense organs body and shadow the sensible world.

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The Parable of the Cave

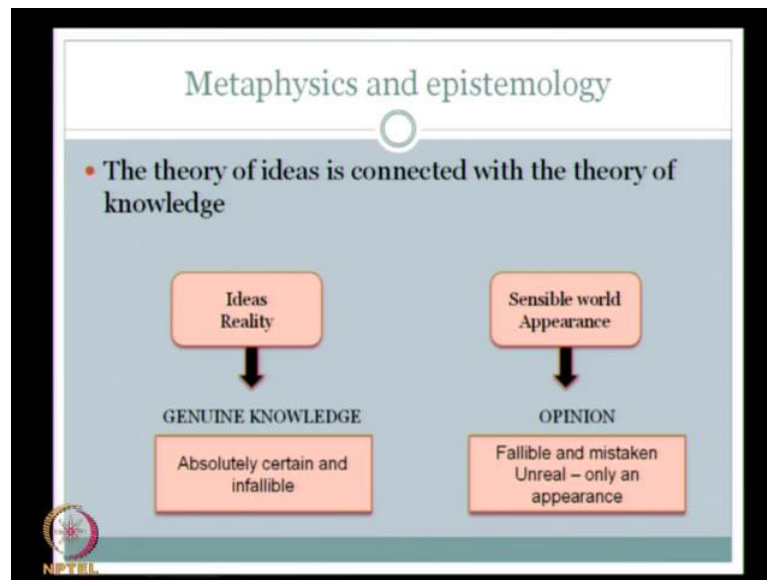
- At last some man succeed in escaping from the cave to the light of the sun
- For the first time he sees real things, and becomes aware that he had hitherto been deceived by shadows
- If he thinks that it is his duty to help his fellow-prisoners also to escape from the prison-house, then he is a guardian, the ruler of the people

NPTEL

So, when we go to the details at least some men see, this is the climax of Plato parable of the cave. At least one man or some men succeed in escaping from the cave to the light of the sun. So, what will happen in such an event? For the first time, he sees the real things and becomes aware that, he had hitherto been deceived by shadows. So, in this is the moment of enlightenment the moment of (Refer Time: 09:59) he realizes this person who comes out. Realizes that, hitherto he has been deceived by the shadows he was not living the real life; he was not perceiving or understanding the real world. Now, reality comes to him. If he thinks that it is his duty to help his fellow prisoners also to escape from the prison house then he is a guardian the ruler of the people. So, he goes back to those people in the cave and tell them that look the reality the what you see in front of you is not real. That they are mere shadows reality is something else you have to come with me, I will show you the reality.

So, this person will go back and he is now capable of ruling, capable of rather helping his fellow prisoners to escape from the cave. And this is very interesting because Plato has a utopia, a political utopia where the state is ruled by such people who are guardians, who have this real vision and wisdom of a philosopher. So, there is a concept a philosopher king those people who have escaped from the prison house of body and sense organs and who are now able to see reality face to face they are the rulers.

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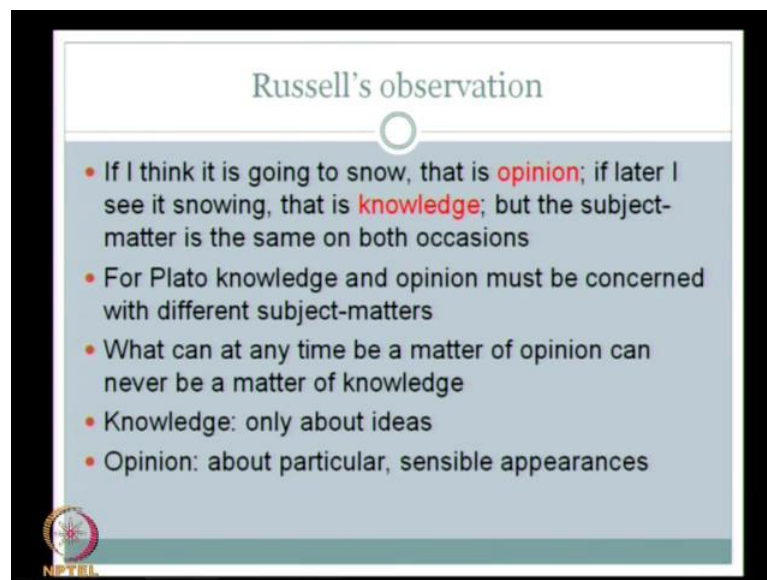
Now, the theory of ideas is connected with the theory of knowledge. So, this is what we are now trying to understand the relationship between metaphysics and epistemology in one sense, these two things are inter related theory of ideas are linked with the a epistemology or theory of knowledge. And when you say the, this dichotomy on the one hand we have already seen that there is Plato maintains a very strict dichotomy between reality and appearance, ideas alone or real for Plato and sensible world is treated as an appearance. So, this is a fundamental dichotomy, fundamental metaphysical dichotomy which lies at the bottom at the foundation of Plato's philosophical theory. And when it comes to ideas, they are we have genuine knowledge when we talk about theory of knowledge.

Genuine knowledge is possible only about these ideas it is only it is about, the ideas we have real knowledge and when it comes to sensible world of appearance; a world which is exposed to us or we have access to by means of sense perception. It is mere opinion it is not knowledge, but mere opinion the problem with opinion is that number 1, different people can have different opinions. Number 2, the same person may have one opinion today and he might change his opinion tomorrow.

So, opinions are not fixed they cannot be dependent upon if it all you depend on something it should be knowledge and knowledge should be on realities which are unchanging and imperishable. And here as far his genuine knowledge is concerned they

are absolutely certain and infallible, but opinions are fallible and mistaken; they are unreal, they are only appearance with this slide gives you a picture about the interrelationship between Plato's metaphysics and epistemology. How this fundamental dichotomy plays a very important role in the scheme of things.

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The slide is titled "Russell's observation" and contains a list of five bullet points. The text is as follows:

- If I think it is going to snow, that is **opinion**; if later I see it snowing, that is **knowledge**; but the subject-matter is the same on both occasions
- For Plato knowledge and opinion must be concerned with different subject-matters
- What can at any time be a matter of opinion can never be a matter of knowledge
- Knowledge: only about ideas
- Opinion: about particular, sensible appearances

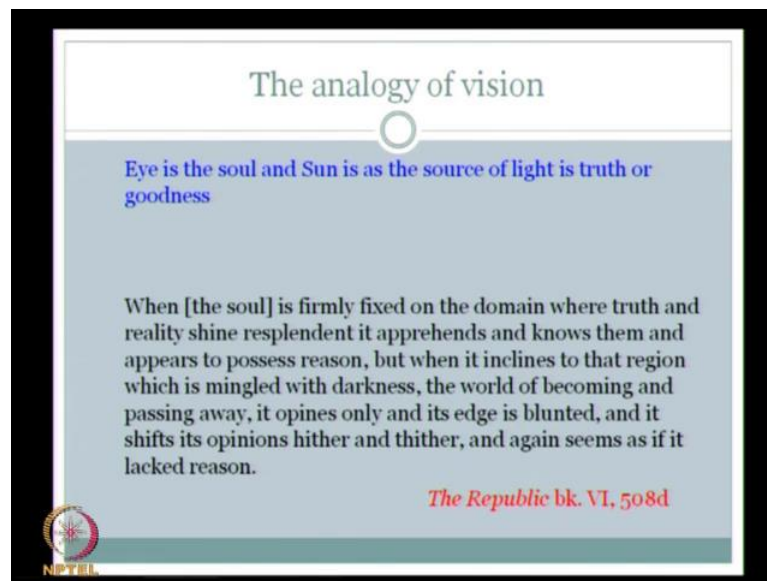
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Now, let us see here a very interesting observation by one of important 20th century philosopher Bertrand Russell, when he writes about Plato's knowledge opinion distinction. He brings out a very interesting aspect about this distinction which Plato originally maintains. So, what is says is that if I think it is going to snow, then it is an opinion; if I later if later I see it is snowing, then it is knowledge, but the subject-matter is the same on both occasions. So, little normally what we do, I think that it is going to snow and after half an hour it actually snows.

Here the subject-matter of my opinion, as well as what is happening now after half an hour, they are one and the same. But for Plato knowledge and opinion must be concerned with different subject-matters, this is very interesting because as in the previous slide as shown knowledge is about realities about ideas opinions are about sensible objects or sense perceptions. So, the object of opinion and knowledge are also different, but in the case of the snow example which Russell had cited at, it is shown we are one at the same that is why the Plato is the hard code (Refer Time: 14:54) and (Refer Time: 14:56) that is it. What can at any time be a matter of opinion can be never be a matter of knowledge at

all for Plato, because they are two different kind of entities. Reality deals with ideas which are imperishable and knowledge deals with ideas which are imperishable and opinions deal with sensible objects which cannot be depended upon. And as far as the question of knowledge is concerned, we have to attach it with the ideas and opinion about the particular sensible appearances.

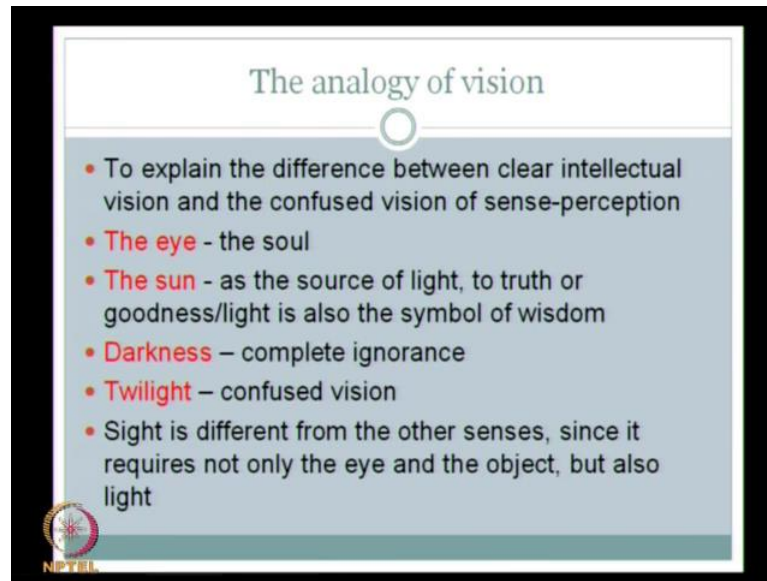
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So, here again since we are trying to a move from metaphysics to epistemology from theory of reality to theory of knowledge, let us see this is another very interesting analogy of vision. So, when we see an object this is what the analogy is when what happens, when you see an object and you need an eye, the eye is compared as the soul, which I have already mentioned which is pure, which is a eternal and imperishable, but which is unfortunately chained in the prison house of a the body. So, the eye is compared here in this analogy with the soul and sun as the source of light is nothing but the truth or goodness which we have discussed in the previous lecture, which is treated as by Plato as a (Refer Time: 16:27) the ultimate reality.


So, republic says, I read when the soul is firmly fixed on the domain where truth and reality shine resplendent in it apprehends and knows them and appears to possess reason, but when it inclines to that region which is mingled with darkness the world of becoming and passing away it opines only and its edge is blunted and it shifts it is opinions hither and thither and again seems as if it lacked reason.

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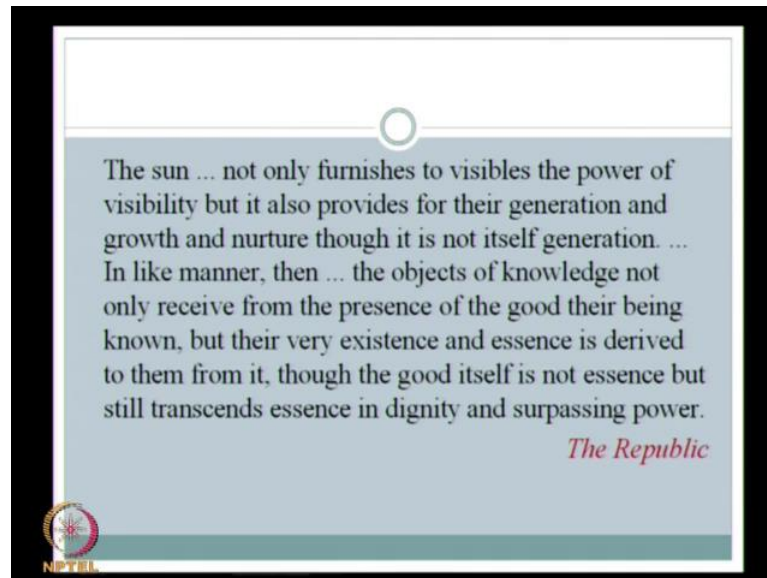
The analogy of vision

- To explain the difference between clear intellectual vision and the confused vision of sense-perception
- **The eye** - the soul
- **The sun** - as the source of light, to truth or goodness/light is also the symbol of wisdom
- **Darkness** – complete ignorance
- **Twilight** – confused vision
- Sight is different from the other senses, since it requires not only the eye and the object, but also light

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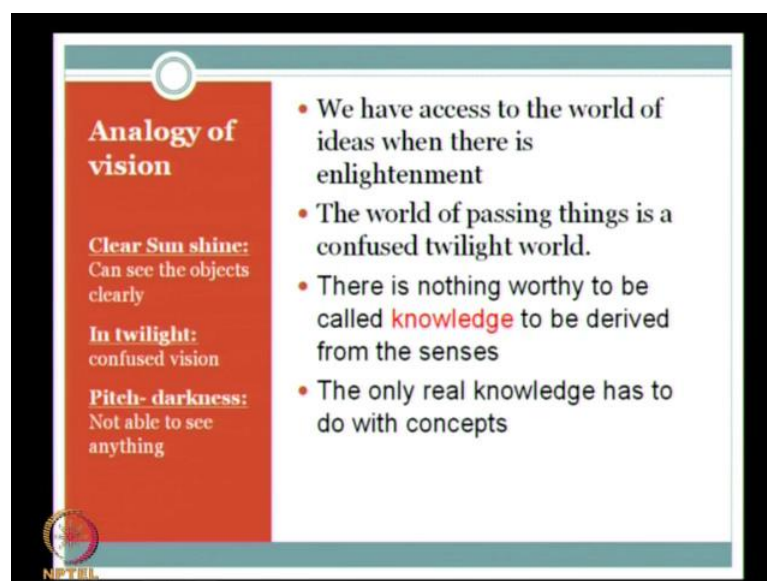
So, what is it I will explain this, to explain the difference between clear intellectual vision and the confused vision of sense perception, this is what Plato was trying to do. Following the fundamental dichotomy he maintained, he has actually initiated in his theory of knowledge. So, difference between clear intellectual visions and confused vision of sense perception the eye as I already mentioned soul, the sun is a source of light to truth or goodness light is also a symbol of wisdom, then again the darkness is complete ignorance. But again in twilight there is confused vision. So, these are three stages, why this analogy of vision has been taken by Plato because sight is different from other senses since it requires not only the eye and the object, but also light.

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So, that is a reason why he takes up this particular analogy and here the sun this is again from republic. The sun not only furnishes to visibles the power of visibility but it also provides for their generation and growth and nurture through it nurture through it is not itself generation. In like manner, then the objects of knowledge not only receive from the presence of the good their being known, but their very existence and essence is derived them from it, though the good itself is not essence, but still transcends essence in dignity and surpassing power.

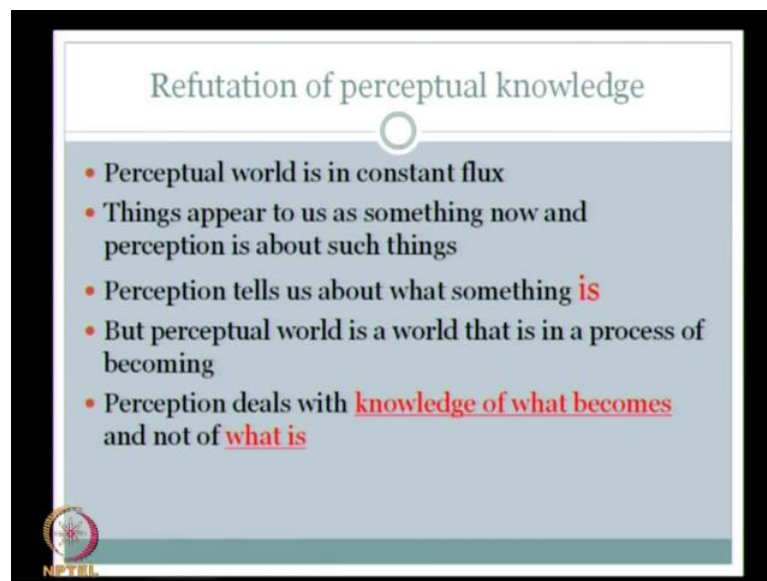
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So, what is it? Here clear sunshine where we can see the objects very clearly as I already mention the three stages or the three possible ways in which, we encounter objects in the world and in twilight what happens is that we are not very sure of it; what is it, there is something in front of me, but I am not able to distinguish it from I mean what exactly it is. So, there is confused vision and then pitch darkness I am not able to see anything. So, absolutely nothing is seen here and we have, here we can say that we have access to the world of ideas when there is enlightenment.

So, only when there is a clear sunshine, we can see the world clearly similarly only when there is enlightenment, only when there is wisdom we have access to the world of ideas and the world of passing things is confused twilight world. And there is nothing worthy to be called knowledge to be derived from the senses, though that is the ultimate conclusion Plato derives from this analogy. The only real knowledge has to do with concepts we have already mentioned it the previous lecture, it is about ideas or forms or essences.

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The slide is titled "Refutation of perceptual knowledge" and features a list of five bullet points. The text is presented in a clean, sans-serif font. The word "is" in the third bullet point and "knowledge of what becomes" and "what is" in the fifth bullet point are highlighted in red. The slide includes the NPTEL logo in the bottom left corner.

- Perceptual world is in constant flux
- Things appear to us as something now and perception is about such things
- Perception tells us about what something **is**
- But perceptual world is a world that is in a process of becoming
- Perception deals with **knowledge of what becomes** and not of **what is**

Now, to substantiate to supplement, what he has already stated Plato would refute perceptual knowledge the very legitimacy of perceptual knowledge. It is being stated from the very outside that, perceptual world is in constant flux we all know everything changes in the perception world. There is no certain knowledge possible about the perceptual world because things which we see today would not be there tomorrow,

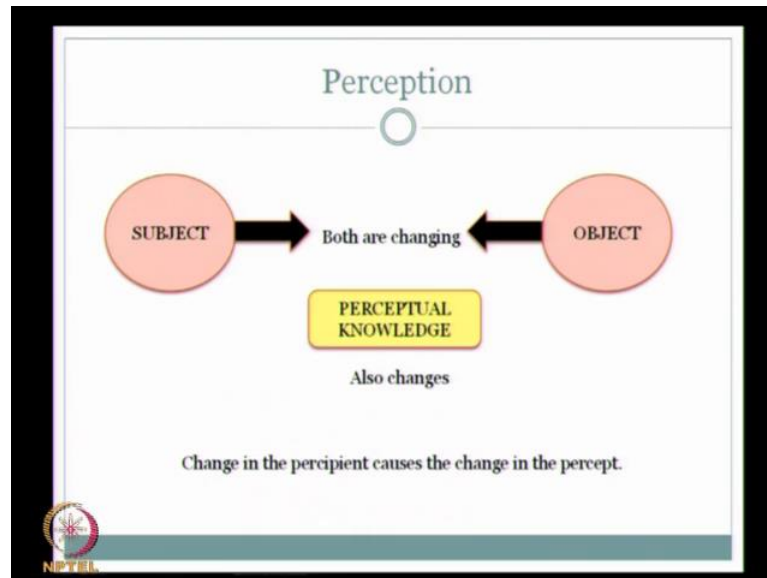
things might change the nature, they are qualities are going to change. So, everything is uncertain in such a world things appear to us as something now and perception is about such things.

So, when I perceive something and say that OK, the rose is red. I am talking about the rose which is there in front of me at this moment, and it is red. After one week, what will happen to the rose, I do not know I have to come back and see. So, perceptual knowledge is always about appearances and appearances are always momentary, they are as it is right now in front of me. Perception tells us about what something is there is a very interesting aspect of perception, perception also tries to tell us about what something is, what is the case but there are problems perceptual world is a world that is in a process of becoming.

So, there is an apparent contradiction between what something is and what something is becoming. So, an object which is under constant process of becoming is under constant change. There is no state of keys that object does not exist as something more than a moment. How can you have knowledge genuine knowledge about that object? So, perception deals with knowledge of what become and not knowledge of what is. So, this is interesting distinction Plato means, perception deals only with knowledge of what becomes the change and not what is.

So, what is exact sense, the unchangeable the imperishable the non-changeable essence of an object is never revealed in perception. Here, just to animate it, when you talk about a perception introduce a epistemology, when you talk about perception you have the subject of perception and the object of perception.

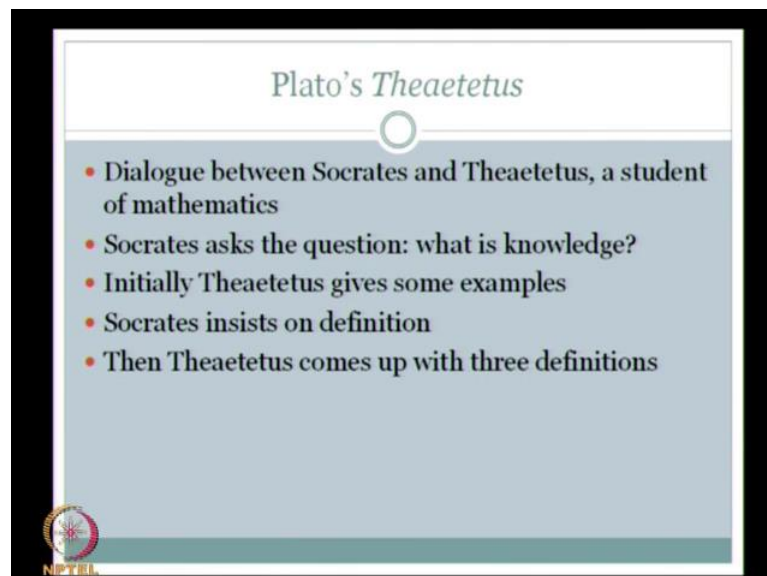
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So, there is some sort of an interaction between such subject and object, but even we can understand that from the very outside it is true that both the subject and the object are changed. So, here we are reminded of Heraclitus who famously said one cannot step into the same era twice because both wants end and the river would be changed.

So, here both the subject and the object are subjected to change. Now as a result of a relationship between the subject and object, we get perceptual knowledge and since both subject and object are under constant change the perceptual knowledge also changes.

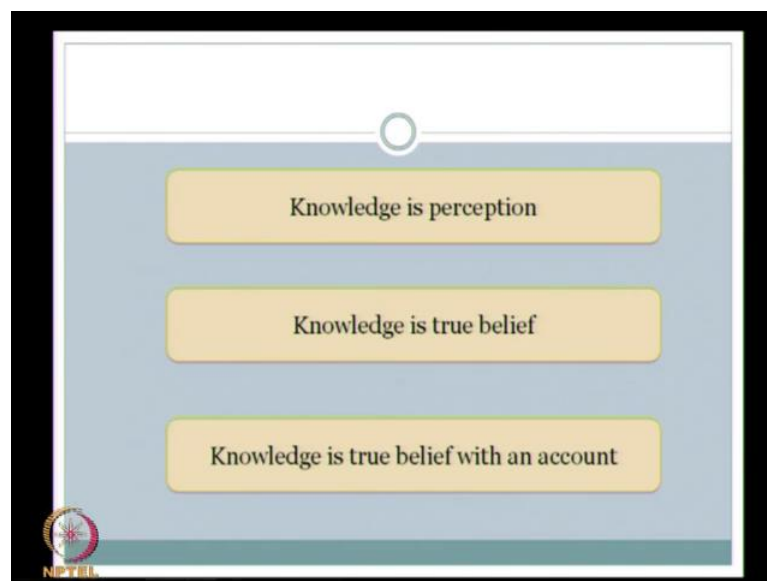
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In this process what happens to knowledge, change in the percipient causes the percept. So, nothing is fixed, nothing can be certain everything is in the process of constant flux and change, this is where Plato initiates a dialogue between Socrates and Theaetetus, a student of mathematics. The question is what is knowledge? And this particular dialogue is or this section in this dialogue is very interesting and it is very crucial in understanding Plato's theory of knowledge I am not going to the details of it, because there are several stages. Actually there are 4 ways in which Theaetetus tries to answer Socrates question, what is knowledge and each stage Socrates refutes it and ultimately shows that perception is not a valid genuine source of knowledge, perception can never take us to the knowledge the domain of knowledge. Socrates asks a question: what is knowledge? And initially Theaetetus gives some examples; this is what knowledge in geometry in mathematics this happens.

He tries to point out refer to actually what happens when that knows, but then Socrates says that, this is not what I want. What I want is a definition of knowledge. What do you mean by knowledge, you are giving me instances of knowledge forget about that you tell me what exactly knowledge is? And it is here the classical that dialogue between these people have initiated with these proposals given by Theaetetus, who comes up with three definitions of knowledge.

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The first one is, knowledge is perception; the second one is, knowledge is true belief; third one is, knowledge is true belief with an account. Actually the second and third are more or less related, the third one is only a supplemented form of second one, but it is a very important supplementation which all the 3 definitions are refuted by Socrates Plato's Socrates.

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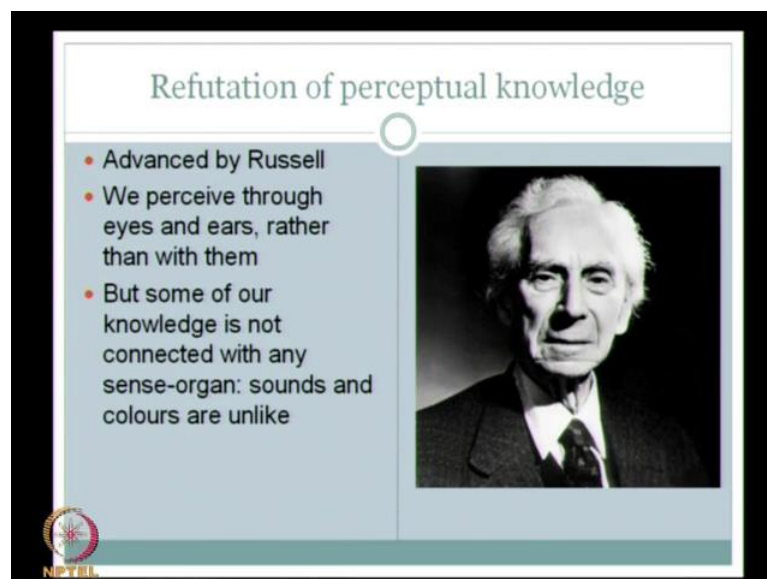
The philosophical background: Protagoras and Heraclitus	
Protagoras	Heraclitus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Man is the measure of all things• There are many kinds of percipients: men, animals, mad men, dream perception• All on equal footing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One cannot step into the same river twice• We cannot make any assertion about anything• To talk about something, there must be some point where we can fix its meaning

So, the problem is that, when you take up the first definition. The first definition is knowledge is perception what happens is that there are two philosophers. Two important philosophers who come into picture here, the philosophical background of this position is actually as far as Plato is concerned, Plato Socrates is concerned this statement knowledge is perception is being analyzed by analyzing the philosophical positions advocated by Protagoras and Heraclitus. Protagoras says, a man is the measure of all things famous statement by Socrates, man is the measure of all things and there are many kinds of percipients. So, this is what basically Plato says. Or Socrates says there are many type of many times of percipients and many kinds of a perception. Say for example, human beings perceives, animals perceive, mad men also have perception and in dream also we perceive. Since man is the measure of all things or rather perception is knowledge, let us not talk about Protagoras here. For Protagoras is, it is very clear he reduces this to man and to some extent to sensible human beings, but when you take up this identification of perception with knowledge you have to deal with all kinds of perceptions, all kinds of by heavy percipient.

So, the percipient need not necessarily be a human being, it can be animals as well. So, how do you make that distinction? How do you distinguish between the perception of a mad man, and the perception of a normal man? All on equal footing, you cannot put all of them you cannot keep all of them on equal footing, but if you once you say, perception is knowledge then that is too vague. Now, we come to Heraclitus one cannot step into the same river twice we cannot make any assertion about anything, because everything keeps on changing. The next moment it is another object to talk about something, there must be some point where we can fix it is meaning. So, that is the point which Plato was trying to assert to talk about something, when we talk about a man. So, this man is running, this man is an athlete, so when I say that, particular person is an athlete say, Sachin Tendulkar is a cricketer.

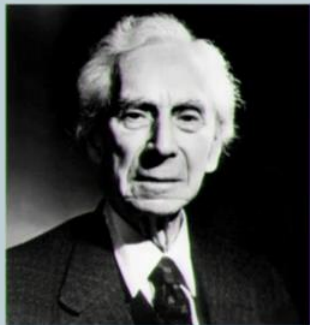
So, these assertion necessities that I should be able to fix the meaning of some terms, say for example, most prominently what I mean by athlete, in this example of course, Sachin Tendulkar is a cricketer. So, what I mean by a cricketer, there are different cricketers Kapil Dev, Sunil Gavaskar all these people were cricketers once upon a time. Now they are no longer cricketers, they are doing other things now. So, what do you mean by a cricketer. So, Plato would say that there is an ideal cricketer, the essence of cricketer to which all these people participates when they play cricket. And again this is advanced by Russell refutation of perceptual knowledge, Bertrand Russell actually described what Plato does by summarizing Plato's views.

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Refutation of perceptual knowledge

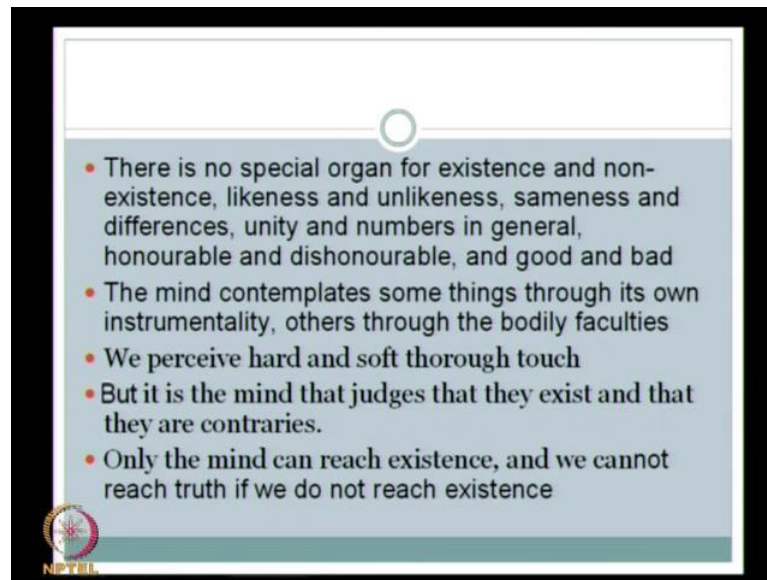
- Advanced by Russell
- We perceive through eyes and ears, rather than with them
- But some of our knowledge is not connected with any sense-organ: sounds and colours are unlike



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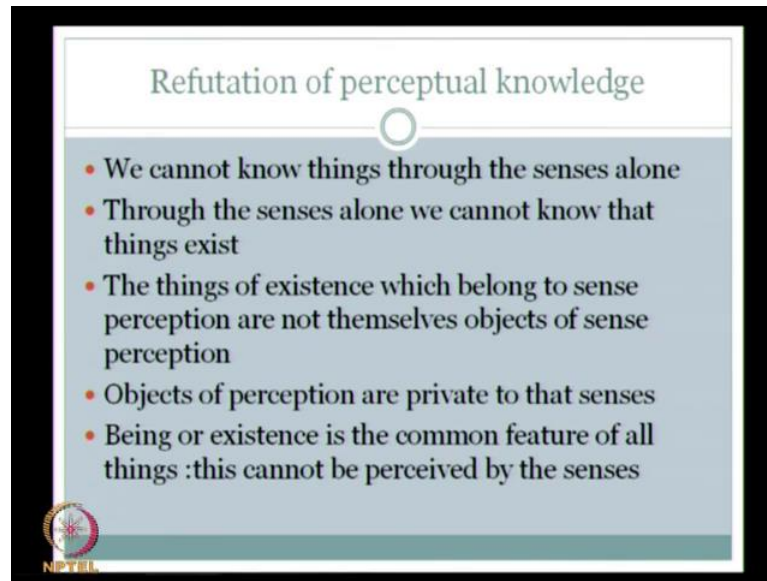
So, what he says is that, we perceive through eyes and ears rather than with them through them not with them and, but some of our knowledge is not connected with any one particular or any sense organ at all for example, sounds and colors are unlike.

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There is no special organ of for existence and nonexistence likeness and unlikeness, sameness and differences, unity and numbers in general honorable and dishonorable, and good and bad. And the mind contemplates some things through it is own instrumentality, others through the bodily faculties. So, that is why, certain some of these things are through bodily faculties, but some of these things are contemplated through it is only instrumentality by the mind. We perceive hard and soft through touch, but it is in the mind that judges that they exist and that they are contraries hard and soft. We perceive by touching, this table is hard and a cotton is soft so, but it is the mind which judges that they exist and that they are contraries. Only the mind can reach existence, and we cannot reach truth if we do not reach existence.

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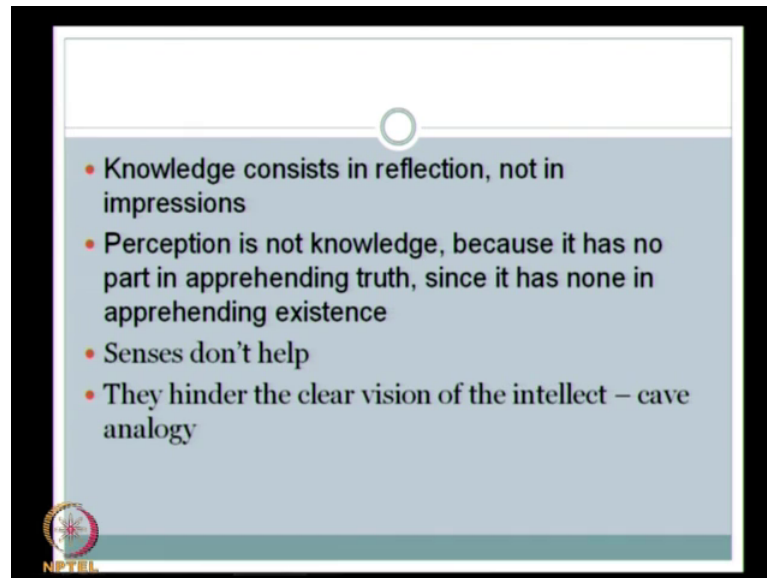
Refutation of perceptual knowledge

- We cannot know things through the senses alone
- Through the senses alone we cannot know that things exist
- The things of existence which belong to sense perception are not themselves objects of sense perception
- Objects of perception are private to that senses
- Being or existence is the common feature of all things :this cannot be perceived by the senses

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So, this is a point. This is a point which Plato also makes the point about existence only the mind can reach existence and we cannot reach through, if we do not reach existence. We cannot know things through the senses alone. Through the senses alone we cannot know that things exist, so knowledge about things always involves knowledge about their existence as well. So, about their existence we never know it through senses, the things of existence which belong to sense perceptions are not themselves objects of sense perceptions. So, this is the distinction which Plato maintains things of existence which belong to sense perception and are not themselves, objects of sense perception. And objects of perception are private to that senses. Being or existence is the common feature of all things: this cannot be perceived by the senses.

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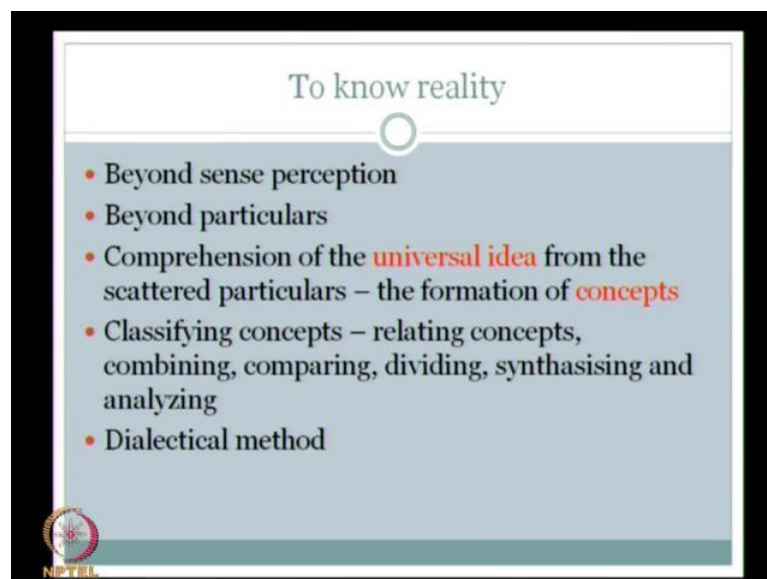


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- Knowledge consists in reflection, not in impressions
- Perception is not knowledge, because it has no part in apprehending truth, since it has none in apprehending existence
- Senses don't help
- They hinder the clear vision of the intellect – cave analogy

So, Plato ultimately tells us that, what is important is not that information which we derive through senses knowledge consists in reflection, not in impressions. So, he ultimately takes us to this point that reflection is very important and reflection is done by the mind and they are absolutely no role for sense perception. Perception is not knowledge because it has no part in apprehending truth since it has none in apprehending existence and again senses do not help you. They hinder the clear vision of the intellect which was as shown in the cave analogy.

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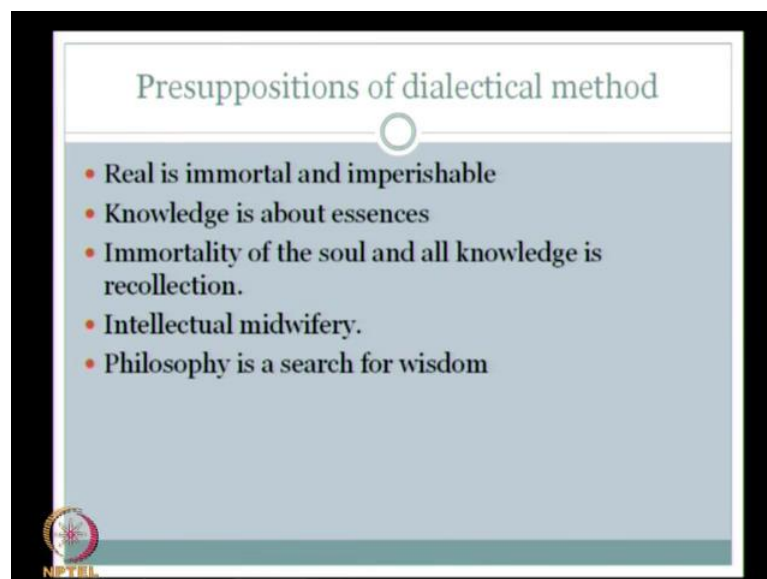
To know reality

- Beyond sense perception
- Beyond particulars
- Comprehension of the **universal idea** from the scattered particulars – the formation of **concepts**
- Classifying concepts – relating concepts, combining, comparing, dividing, synthesising and analyzing
- Dialectical method

Now, the question is, if this is the case then how do you know reality which is beyond sense perception. So, Plato was trying to show that, you know how do you know reality? Which we definitely cannot know, through sense perception; which is beyond the particularities, the particular objects in this universe. So, here comprehension of the universal idea from the scattered particulars is what we understand as the formation of concepts. So, only by understanding only by grasping this concept you can have knowledge about these ideas, knowledge about realities and these ideas are true universal classifying concepts. So, what to actually, what knowledge consists in knowing this concept, classifying them, relating them, combining, comparing, dividing, synthesising and analyzing concepts?

So, this philosophical enterprise of Plato aims at understanding concepts and that is the process which is known as the dialectical method, which helps you to do that. So, the dialectical method is nothing, but a method by means of which the human mind is capable of thinking in terms of concepts. It is an art of thinking in terms of concepts nothing else you are absolutely cut off from the sensible world, but you are contemplating. So, that traditional image of a philosopher as a person who thinks who contemplates in darkness probably or in night in solitude because he has nothing to do with what is happening in the world, he is no longer living in the world of particular objects. He is actually dwelling in a place along with the universal ideas and concepts and this is actually this method is originally employed by Socrates.

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Presuppositions of dialectical method

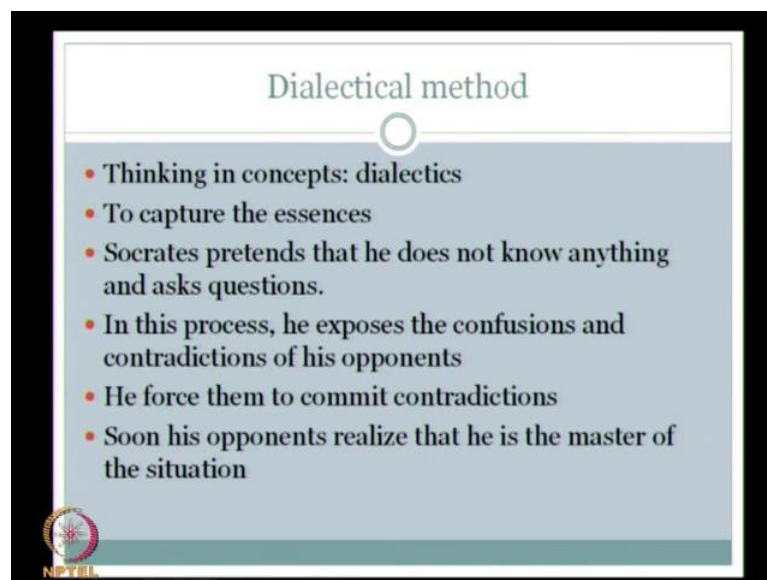
- Real is immortal and imperishable
- Knowledge is about essences
- Immortality of the soul and all knowledge is recollection.
- Intellectual midwifery.
- Philosophy is a search for wisdom

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So, very interestingly Plato takes a lot from Socrates here, and this theory again it presupposes their immortality of these realities or ideas as I already discussed in the previous lecture. Then again the idea that knowledge is about essences, but also very importantly the immortality of the soul the knower, because to know the immortal to know the imperishable and eternal realities you need a soul which is also immortal and imperishable and eternal.

So, the immortality of the soul and all knowledge is recollection, that is another very interesting theory initiated by Plato and from this we can derive this famous Socratic intellectual midwifery, Socrates always considered him as a midwife as an intellectual midwifery philosophy is a search for wisdom.

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The slide is titled "Dialectical method" and features a list of six bullet points. The text is as follows:

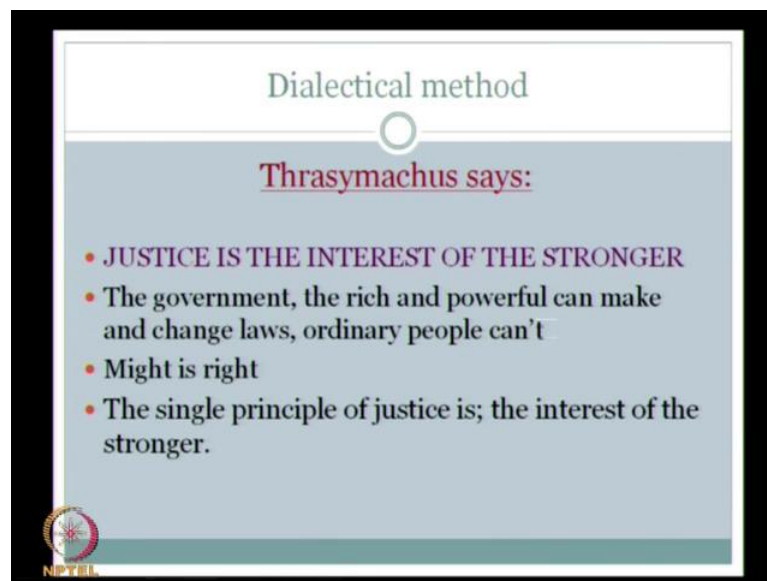
- Thinking in concepts: dialectics
- To capture the essences
- Socrates pretends that he does not know anything and asks questions.
- In this process, he exposes the confusions and contradictions of his opponents
- He forces them to commit contradictions
- Soon his opponents realize that he is the master of the situation

The slide also includes the NPTEL logo in the bottom left corner.

So, what is dialectical method as I already mentioned, it is thinking in terms of concepts to capture the essences that is an objective of this dialectical method, and Socrates pretends that he does not know anything and asks questions in this process. He exposes the confusions and contradictions of his opponents, he forces them to commit contradictions soon his opponents realize that he is the master of the situation. So, this what happens he pretends that he does not know anything or he knows very little about it and as if is raising very innocent question what is this what do you mean by exactly can you explain it.

So, in this manner Socrates approaches his opponents and in that process what happens is he forces his opponents to come up with exact clear definitions and if there is an element of confusion, then they are bound to come off with contradiction. Socrates ultimately force his opponents to make contradictions and once they contradict they realize that there is some problem with them and gradually again they realize that Socrates knows better than them.

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The slide is titled "Dialectical method" and features a small circle icon below the title. The main content is a quote from Thrasymachus: "JUSTICE IS THE INTEREST OF THE STRONGER". Below this, there are four bullet points: "The government, the rich and powerful can make and change laws, ordinary people can't", "Might is right", and "The single principle of justice is; the interest of the stronger." A small logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the slide.

Dialectical method

Thrasymachus says:

- **JUSTICE IS THE INTEREST OF THE STRONGER**
- The government, the rich and powerful can make and change laws, ordinary people can't
- Might is right
- The single principle of justice is; the interest of the stronger.

So, here is an example, Thrasymachus says: that just justice is the interest of the stronger which Plato, Socrates encounters this view. So, he says that, the government rich and powerful can make and change laws ordinary people cannot might is right, the single principle of justice is the interest of the stronger.


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Argument with Socrates

? In defining justice you have yourself used the word "interest", which I would also use
Yes

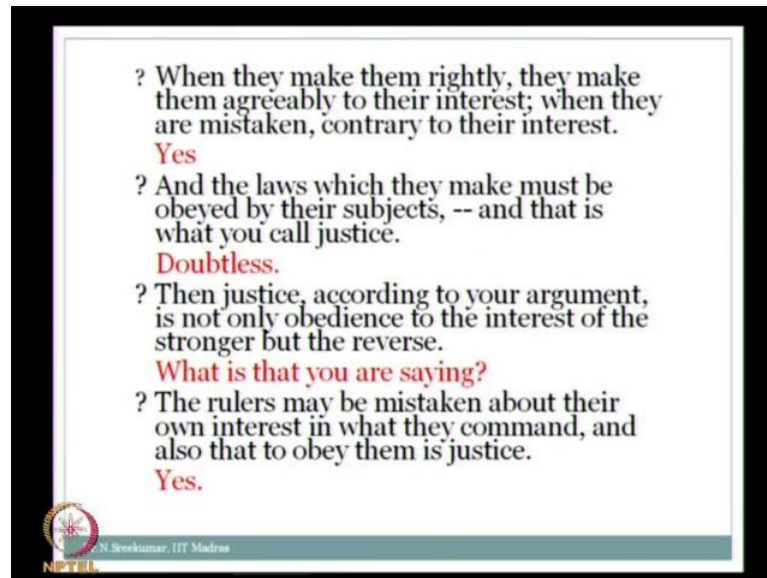
? Now we are both agreed that justice is interest of some sort, for you "of the stronger".
Yes

? You admit that it is just for subjects to obey their rulers. You may also agree that rulers of states are not absolutely infallible, and they are sometimes liable to err. Hence in making their laws they may sometimes make them rightly, and sometimes not.
Absolutely

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Now there is an argument with Socrates, in defining justice Socrates asks in defining justice you have yourself used the word interest which I would also use yes, I just read it out. Now we are both agreed that justice is interest of some sort for you of the stronger yes. You admit that, it is just for subject to obey their rulers; you may also agree that rulers of states are not absolutely infallible and they are sometimes liable to err. Hence in making their laws they may sometimes make them rightly, sometimes not. Absolutely why they make them rightly, this is again Socrates. When they make them rightly, they make them agreeably to their interest; when they are mistaken, contrary to their interest. Yes.

(Refer Slide Time: 37:14)




? When they make them rightly, they make them agreeably to their interest; when they are mistaken, contrary to their interest.
Yes

? And the laws which they make must be obeyed by their subjects, -- and that is what you call justice.
Doubtless.

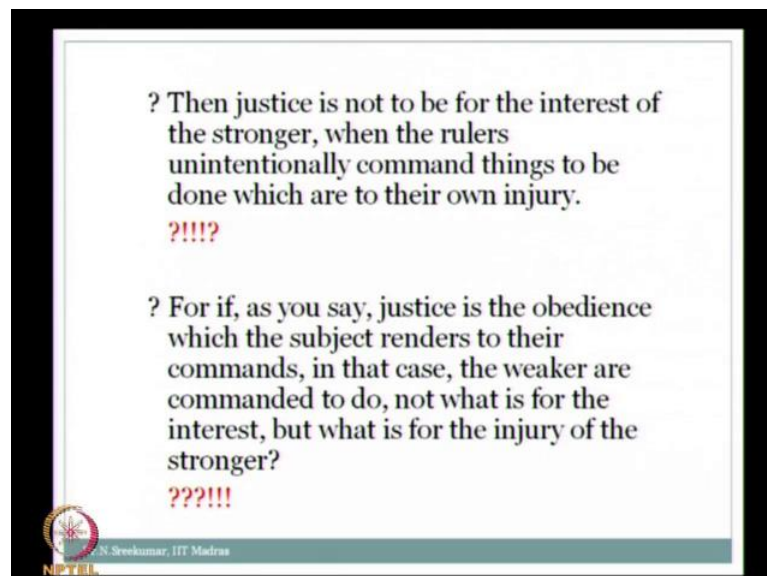
? Then justice, according to your argument, is not only obedience to the interest of the stronger but the reverse.
What is that you are saying?

? The rulers may be mistaken about their own interest in what they command, and also that to obey them is justice.
Yes.

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And the laws which they make must be obeyed by their subjects, and that is what you call justice, doubtless. Then in justice according to your argument, is not only obedience to the interest of the stronger but the reverse. So, from here onwards his opponent is confused, what is that you are saying? Now Socrates explains. The rulers may be mistaken about their own interest in what they command, and also that to obey them is in justice. Yes.

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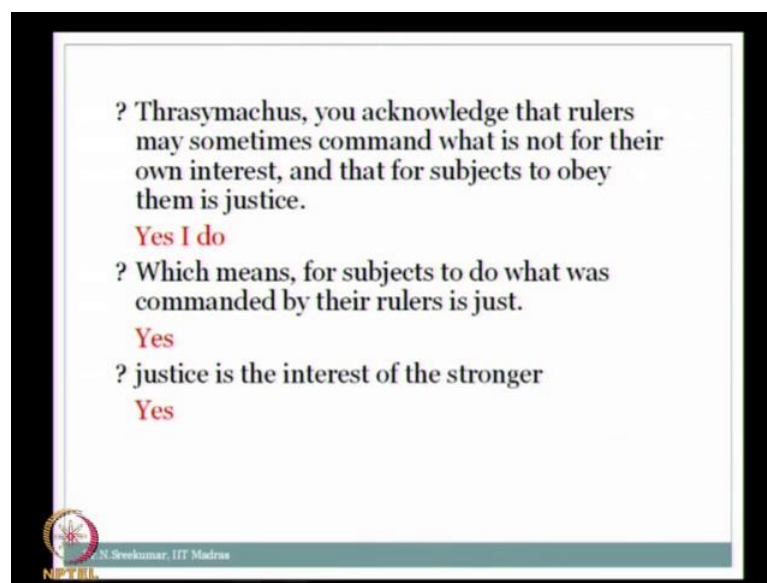
? Then justice is not to be for the interest of the stronger, when the rulers unintentionally command things to be done which are to their own injury.
?!!!?

? For if, as you say, justice is the obedience which the subject renders to their commands, in that case, the weaker are commanded to do, not what is for the interest, but what is for the injury of the stronger?
???!!!

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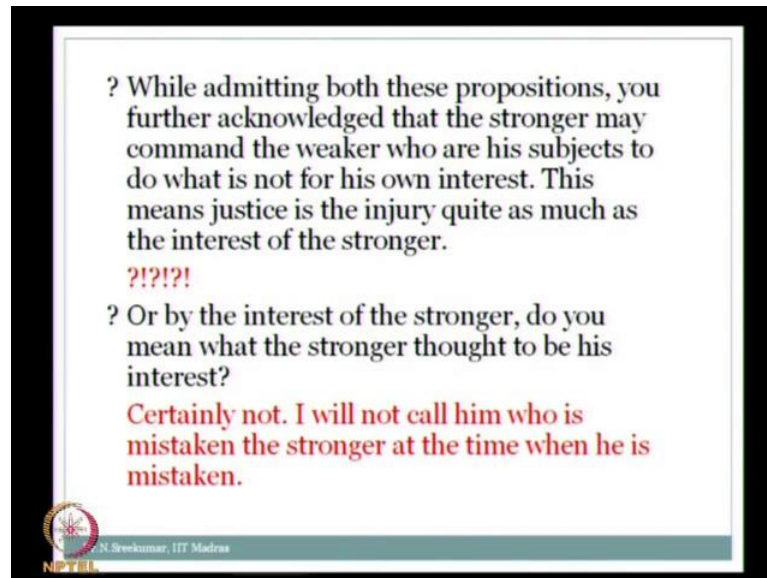
Then justice is not to be for the interest of the stronger, when the rulers unintentionally command things to be done which are to their own injury. Now his opponents is a little confused; for if, as you say justice is the obedience which the subject renders to their commands, in that case, the weaker are commanded to do, not what is for the interest, but what is for the injury of the stronger, again confused. So, Socrates is gradually bringing his opponent to realize his contradiction, his confusion Thrasymachus you acknowledge that rulers may sometimes command, what is not for their own interest and that for subjects to obey them is justice yes I do.

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Which means for subjects to do what was commanded by the rulers is just yes justice is of the stronger yes.

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? While admitting both these propositions, you further acknowledged that the stronger may command the weaker who are his subjects to do what is not for his own interest. This means justice is the injury quite as much as the interest of the stronger.

?!?!?

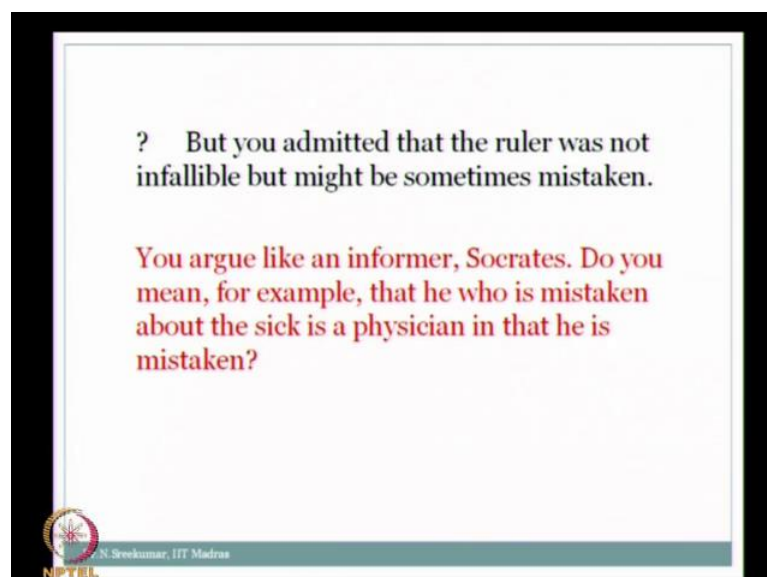
? Or by the interest of the stronger, do you mean what the stronger thought to be his interest?

Certainly not. I will not call him who is mistaken the stronger at the time when he is mistaken.

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While admitting both these propositions, you further acknowledge that, the stronger make the man the weaker, who are his subjects to do what is not for his own interest. This means justice is the injury quite as much as the interest of the stronger. Again confused or by the interest of the stronger, do you mean what the stronger thought to be his interest? Certainly not, I will not call him who is mistaken the stronger at the time when he is mistaken.

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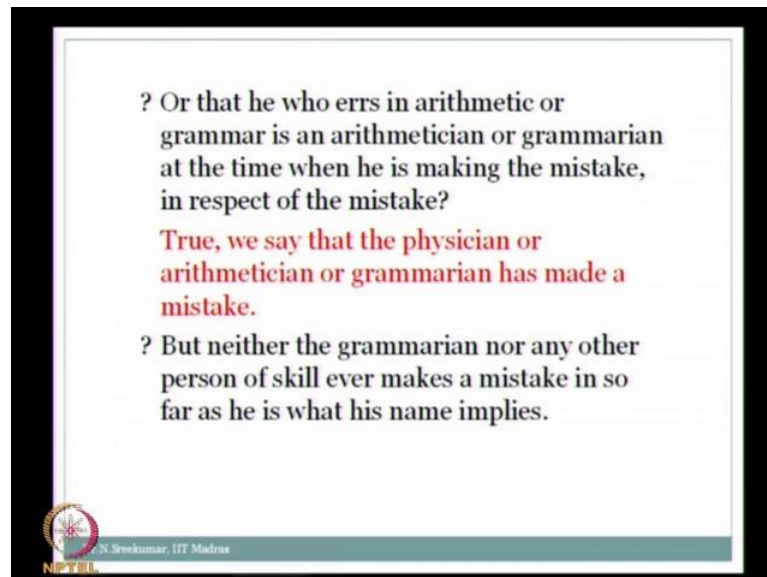
? But you admitted that the ruler was not infallible but might be sometimes mistaken.

You argue like an informer, Socrates. Do you mean, for example, that he who is mistaken about the sick is a physician in that he is mistaken?

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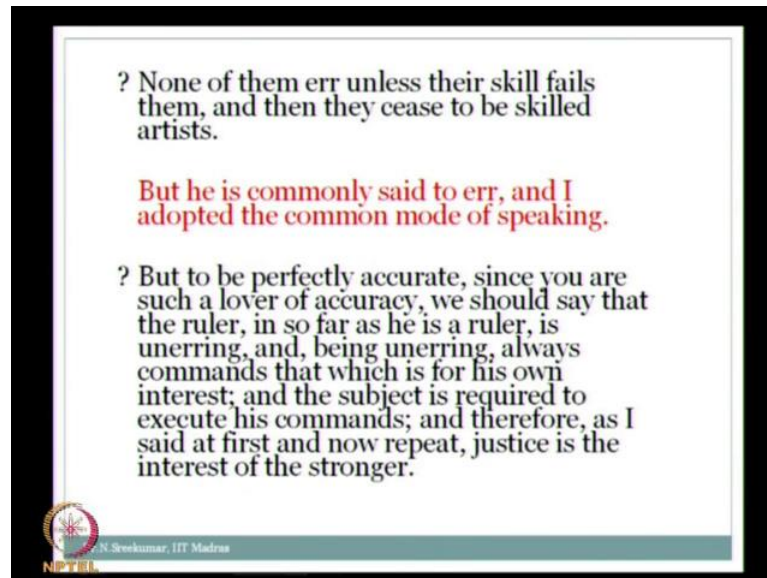
But you admitted that the ruler was not infallible but might be sometimes mistaken. You argue like an informer, Socrates. Now he is getting irritated his opponent realizing that Socrates is (Refer Time: 39:43) him he is getting irritated. Do you mean for example, that he who is mistaken about the sick is the physician in that he is mistaken?

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Or that he who errs in arithmetic or grammar is an arithmetician or grammarian at the time when he is making the mistake, in respect of the mistake? True, we say that the physician or arithmetician or grammarian has made mistakes, but neither the grammarian nor any other person of skill ever makes a mistake in so far as he is what his name implies. None of them err unless their skill fails them and then they cease to be skilled artists, but he is commonly said to err, and I adopted the common mode of speaking.

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A slide with a white background and a black border. It contains two paragraphs of text. The first paragraph is a question: "? None of them err unless their skill fails them, and then they cease to be skilled artists." Below it is a red line of text: "But he is commonly said to err, and I adopted the common mode of speaking." The second paragraph is another question: "? But to be perfectly accurate, since you are such a lover of accuracy, we should say that the ruler, in so far as he is a ruler, is unerring, and, being unerring, always commands that which is for his own interest; and the subject is required to execute his commands; and therefore, as I said at first and now repeat, justice is the interest of the stronger." At the bottom left is a small circular logo with a book and a lamp, and the text "N. Sreekumar, IIT Madras" and "NPTEL" below it.

? None of them err unless their skill fails them, and then they cease to be skilled artists.

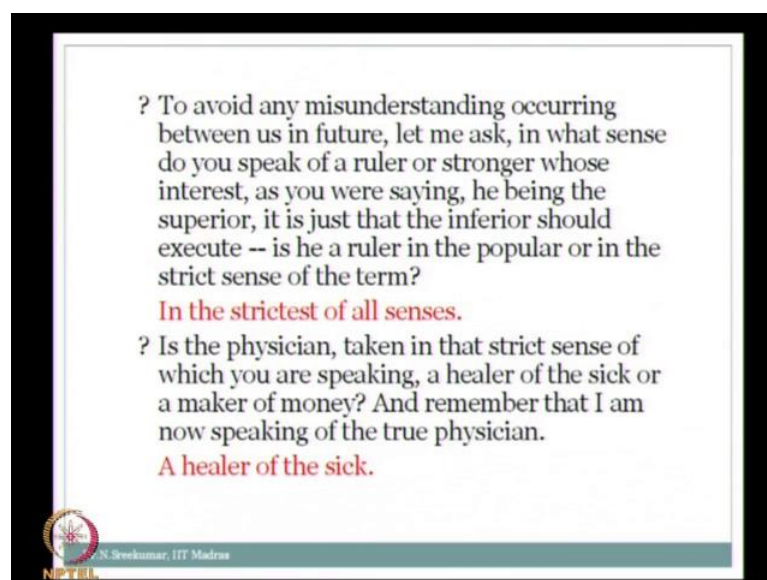
But he is commonly said to err, and I adopted the common mode of speaking.

? But to be perfectly accurate, since you are such a lover of accuracy, we should say that the ruler, in so far as he is a ruler, is unerring, and, being unerring, always commands that which is for his own interest; and the subject is required to execute his commands; and therefore, as I said at first and now repeat, justice is the interest of the stronger.

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Again Socrates says, but to be perfectly accurate, since you are such a lover of accuracy, we should say that the ruler, in so far as he is a ruler, is unerring, and being unerring always commands that which is for his own interest, and the subject is required to execute his commands and therefore, as I said at first and now repeat justice is the interest of the stronger.

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A slide with a white background and a black border. It contains two paragraphs of text. The first paragraph is a question: "? To avoid any misunderstanding occurring between us in future, let me ask, in what sense do you speak of a ruler or stronger whose interest, as you were saying, he being the superior, it is just that the inferior should execute -- is he a ruler in the popular or in the strict sense of the term?" Below it is a red line of text: "In the strictest of all senses." The second paragraph is another question: "? Is the physician, taken in that strict sense of which you are speaking, a healer of the sick or a maker of money? And remember that I am now speaking of the true physician." Below it is a red line of text: "A healer of the sick." At the bottom left is a small circular logo with a book and a lamp, and the text "N. Sreekumar, IIT Madras" and "NPTEL" below it.

? To avoid any misunderstanding occurring between us in future, let me ask, in what sense do you speak of a ruler or stronger whose interest, as you were saying, he being the superior, it is just that the inferior should execute -- is he a ruler in the popular or in the strict sense of the term?

In the strictest of all senses.

? Is the physician, taken in that strict sense of which you are speaking, a healer of the sick or a maker of money? And remember that I am now speaking of the true physician.

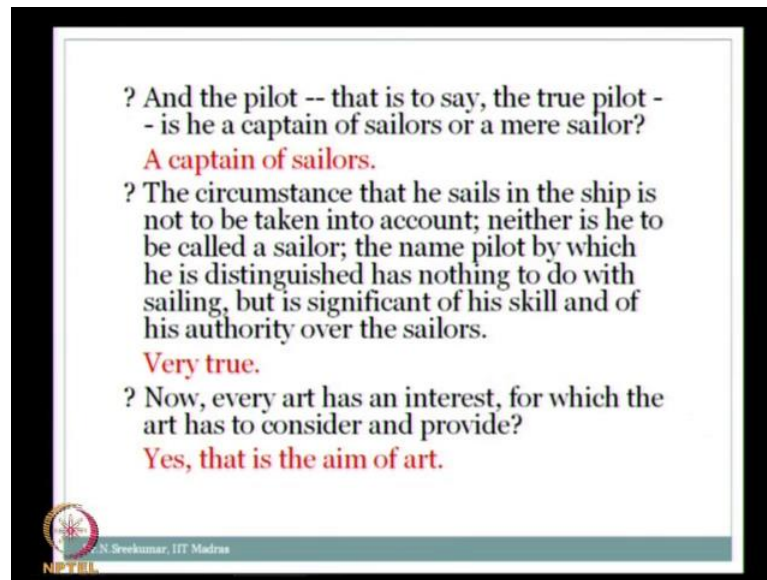
A healer of the sick.

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To avoid any misunderstanding occurring between us in future, let me ask, in what sense do you speak of a ruler or stronger whose interest, as you were saying, he being the

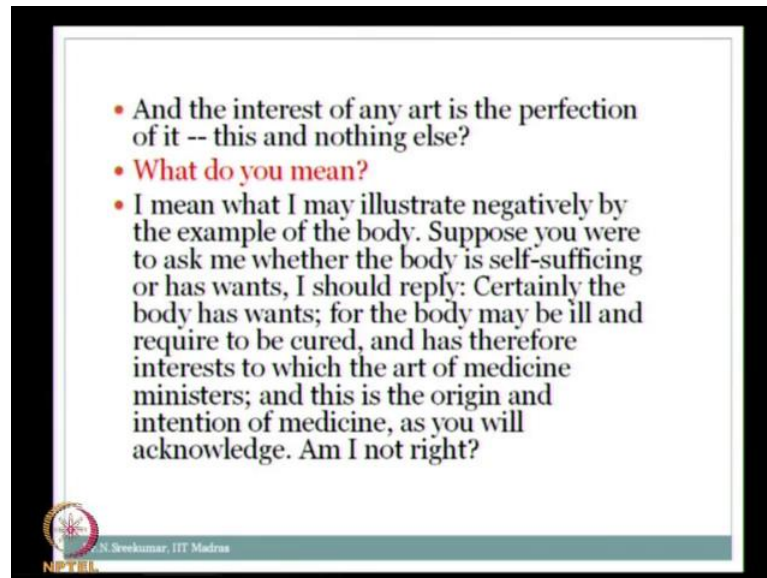
superior, it is just that inferior should be execute - is he a ruler in the popular or in the strict sense of the term, in the strictest of all senses. Is the physician, taken in that strict sense of which you are speaking, a healer of the sick or a maker of money? And remember that I am now speaking of the true physician.

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Now, Thrasymachus says a healer of the sick and the pilot that is to say, the true pilot is he a captain of sailors or a mere sailor, a captain of sailors. The circumstances that he sails in the ship is not to be taken into account; neither is he to be called a sailor; the name pilot by which he is distinguished as nothing to do with sailing, but is significant of his skill and of his authority over the sailors, very true. Now every art has an interest, for which the art has to consider and provide? Yes, that is the aim of an art. And interest of any art is the perfection of it this and nothing else, what do you mean? I mean what I may illustrate negatively by the example of the body.

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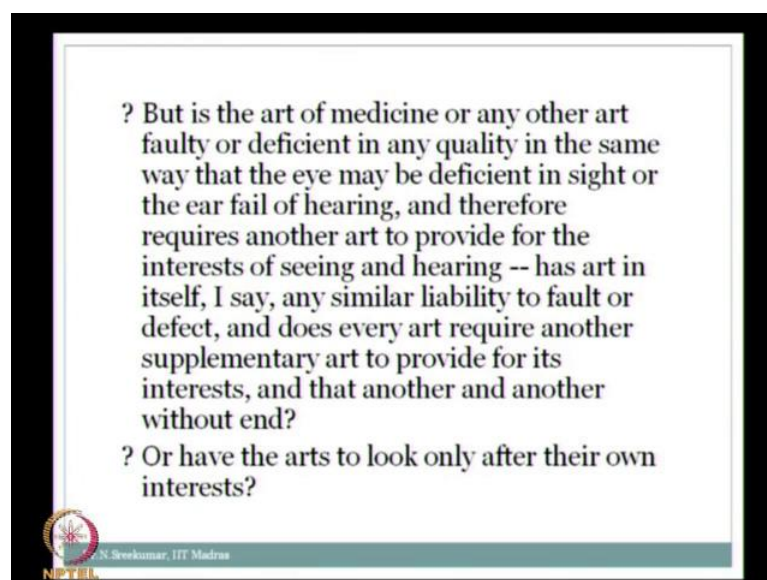


- And the interest of any art is the perfection of it -- this and nothing else?
- **What do you mean?**
- I mean what I may illustrate negatively by the example of the body. Suppose you were to ask me whether the body is self-sufficing or has wants, I should reply: Certainly the body has wants; for the body may be ill and require to be cured, and has therefore interests to which the art of medicine ministers; and this is the origin and intention of medicine, as you will acknowledge. Am I not right?

 N. Sreekumar, IIT Madras


Suppose you were to ask me whether the body is self-sufficing or has wants, I should say I should reply certainly the body has wants; for the body may be ill and require to be cured, and has therefore interests to which the art of medicine ministers; and this is the origin and intention of medicine, as you will acknowledge. Am I not right? Thrasymachus says quite right.

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? But is the art of medicine or any other art faulty or deficient in any quality in the same way that the eye may be deficient in sight or the ear fail of hearing, and therefore requires another art to provide for the interests of seeing and hearing -- has art in itself, I say, any similar liability to fault or defect, and does every art require another supplementary art to provide for its interests, and that another and another without end?

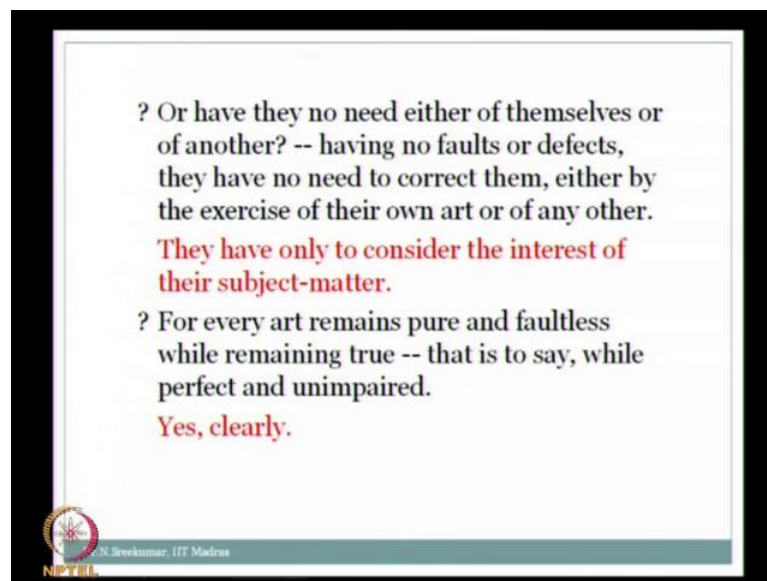
? Or have the arts to look only after their own interests?

 N. Sreekumar, IIT Madras

But is the art of medicine or any other art faulty or deficient in any quality in the same way that the eye may be deficient in sight or the ear fail of hearing, and therefore

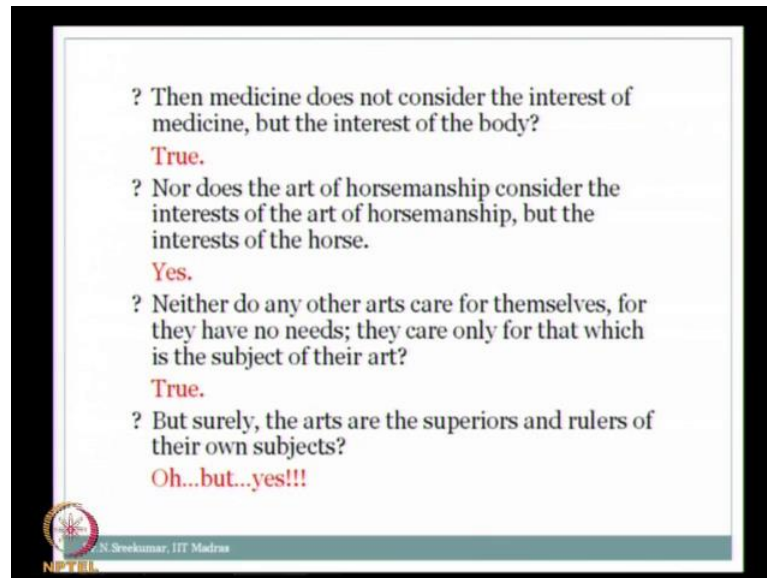
requires another art to provide for the interests of seeing and hearing - has art in itself, I say, any similar liability to fault or defect, and does every art require another supplementary art to provide for its interest, and what that another and another without end? Or have the art to look only after their own interests, or have they no need either of themselves or of another, having no faults or defects they have no need to correct them, either by the exercise of their own art or of any other.

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Now Thrasymachus says, they have only to consider the interest of their subject-matter. For every art remains pure and faultless while remaining true that is to say, while perfect and unimpaired. Yes, clearly.

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? Then medicine does not consider the interest of medicine, but the interest of the body?
True.

? Nor does the art of horsemanship consider the interests of the art of horsemanship, but the interests of the horse.
Yes.

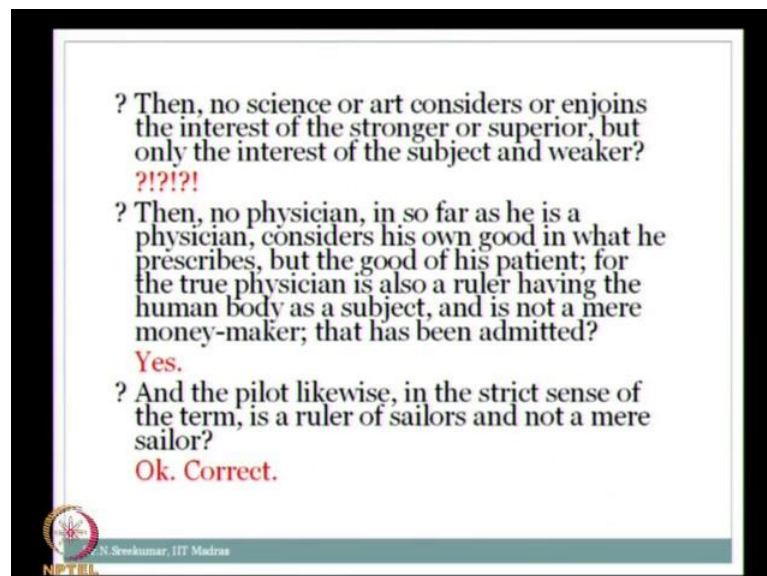
? Neither do any other arts care for themselves, for they have no needs; they care only for that which is the subject of their art?
True.

? But surely, the arts are the superiors and rulers of their own subjects?
Oh...but...yes!!!

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Then medicine does not consider the interest of medicine, but the interest of the body, true. Nor does the art of horsemanship consider the interest of the art of horsemanship, but the interest of the horse. Yes. Neither do any other arts care for themselves, for they have no needs; they care only for that which is the subject of their art, true. But surely the arts are the superiors and rulers of their own subjects? Oh, but yes! This is what Thrasymachus now says, now he is visibly confused.


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? Then, no science or art considers or enjoins the interest of the stronger or superior, but only the interest of the subject and weaker?
?!?!?

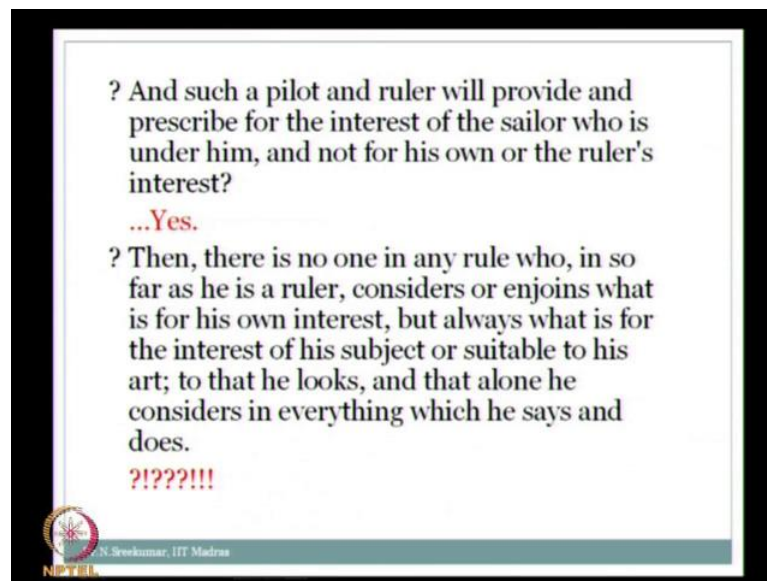
? Then, no physician, in so far as he is a physician, considers his own good in what he prescribes, but the good of his patient; for the true physician is also a ruler having the human body as a subject, and is not a mere money-maker; that has been admitted?
Yes.

? And the pilot likewise, in the strict sense of the term, is a ruler of sailors and not a mere sailor?
Ok. Correct.

 N. Sreekumar, IIT Madras

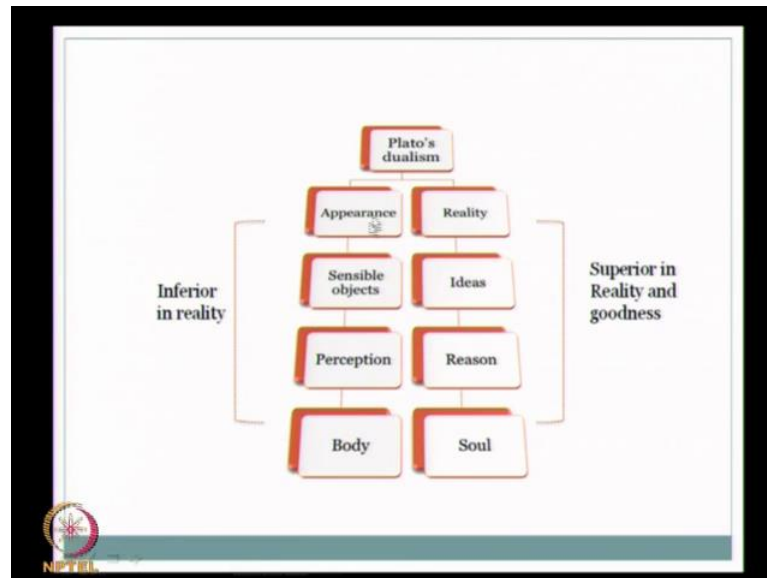
Then no science or art considers or enjoins the interest of the stronger or superior, but only the interest of the subject and weaker. Now he is completely confused then no physician in so far as he is a physician, considers his own good in what he prescribes, but the good of his patient; for the true physician is also a ruler having the human body as a subject, and is not a mere money-maker, that has been admitted? Yes. And the pilot likewise, in the strict sense of the term, is a ruler of sailors and not a mere sailor? Ok, correct.

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And such a pilot and ruler will provide and prescribe for the interest of the sailor who is under him, and not for his own ruler's interest. Now, Thrasymachus has to accept it yes. Then, there is no one in any rule who, in so far as he is a ruler, considers or enjoins what if for his own interest, but always what is for the interest of his subject or suitable to his art; to that he looks, and that alone he considers in everything which he says and does. So, this is the overall picture I have just read it out, because to give a hang to the students about how actually dialectical and dialogue progress. And when you try to understand the underlying notion of his theory of knowledge as I already mentioned the theory of the mortality of the soul is there, knowledge as recollection comes into picture and intellectual midwifery comes.

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So, this picture will give you a idea you know, there is Plato's idealism on the top you have appearance and reality here sensible objects and appearances ideas are real perception, and reason body and the soul and these things are inferior in reality and this right hand things, that is reality ideas reason and soul are superior in reality and goodness in Plato's scheme of thing.

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Soul and body

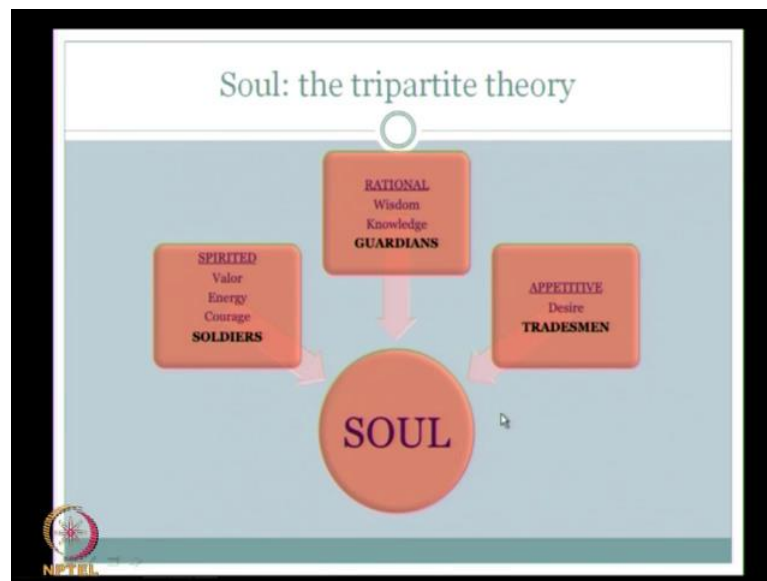
- Philosopher should not be a slave to ordinary pleasures
- The philosopher must not care for worldly pleasures
- He must be entirely concerned with the soul, and not with the body
- Philosopher should try to free the soul from communion with the body

So, body and soul is more real and true than body, philosopher should not be a slave to ordinary pleasures this is what Plato says. The philosopher must not care for worldly

pleasure; he must be entirely concerned with the soul and not with the body and philosopher should try to free the soul from communion with the body.

So, this is the ultimate objective of philosopher to free the soul from the communion of the body. Body is a hindrance in the acquisition of knowledge and this thus culminates in a complete rejection of empirical knowledge.

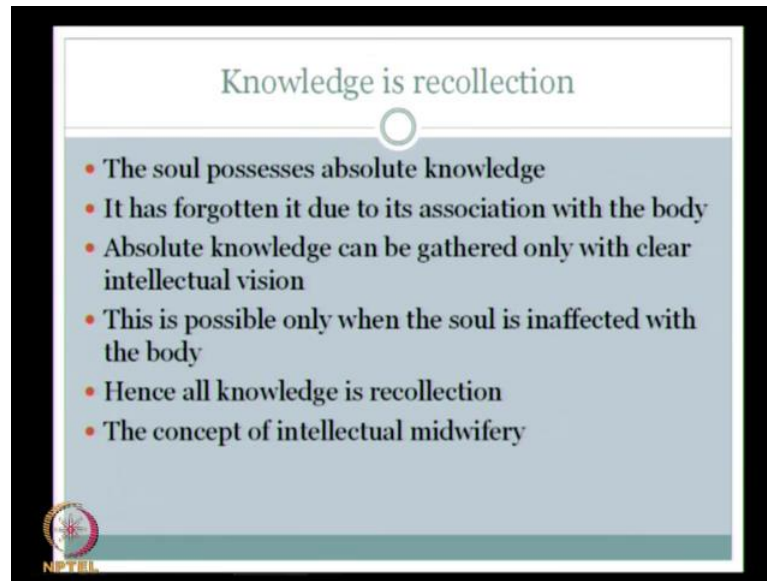
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So, this picture will summarize it, and this is also the tripartite theory of soul which he advocates. So, in the middle you can see the rational aspect of the self where wisdom and knowledge comes and this particular aspect is dominant among the guardians and the rulers of the state. And here on the left hand side, you would see spirited valor energy and courage which is dominant among soldiers and this is appetitive aspect of soul where desire dominates which will find among tradesmen.

So, there are three types of human being in Plato's ideal state, the guardians are the rulers, the soldiers protect, and the tradesmen do other kinds of business trading and agriculture activities to conclude knowledge is recollection.

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Knowledge is recollection

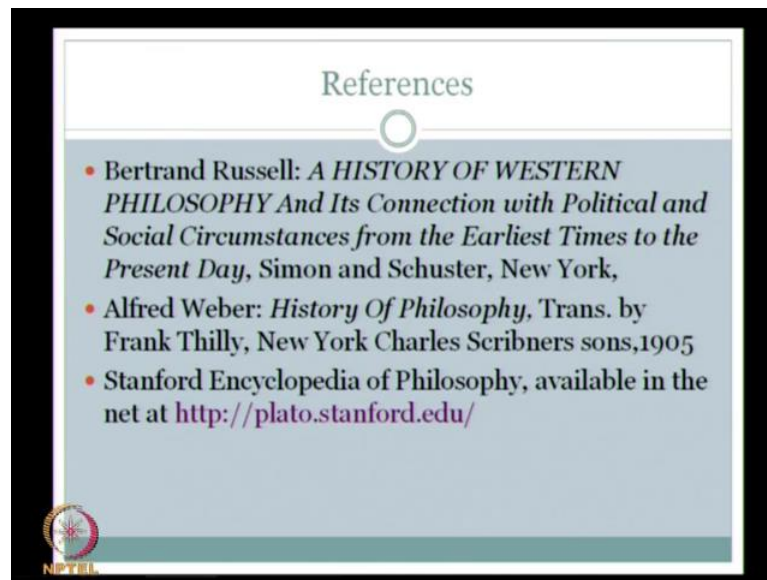
- The soul possesses absolute knowledge
- It has forgotten it due to its association with the body
- Absolute knowledge can be gathered only with clear intellectual vision
- This is possible only when the soul is unaffected with the body
- Hence all knowledge is recollection
- The concept of intellectual midwifery

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So, that is what ultimately Plato's theory of knowledge says, the soul possesses absolute knowledge, it has forgotten it due to the association with the body and absolute knowledge can be gathered only with clear intellectual vision and this is possible only when the soul is unaffected with the body. Hence all knowledge is recollection. So, the Plato ultimately condemns that the human soul which is pure, which is imperishable and eternal knows everything in advance it has a clear knowledge about the ideas which are also imperishable and abstract, but due to its association with the body the soul has forgotten it.

Now, with the employment of conceptual dialectical thinking where thinking in terms of concepts the influence of the body and the sense organs can be minimized, can be avoided, can be bracketed completely and then the soul can graduate to the domain of knowledge. And this process is actually, it is nothing but a kind of recollection which it already knows which is forgotten now it recollects. So, all knowledge according to Plato's recollections and it is in this context Socrates advocates intellectual midwifery, a midwife job is to help a woman to deliver, a baby which is already there; the baby which is there, inside the body. Similarly a philosopher is an intellectual midwife who helps other human beings to deliver to come up with knowledge and wisdom which is already there in themselves, to recollect he or she would help ordinary human beings to recollect what they already know.

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So, these are the references out of which this lecture is prepared, basically from three sources Bertrand Russell's history of western philosophy, Alfred Weber's history of philosophy and Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy, it has also referred to many other books which are very minor.

Thank you.