

# Philosophy

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- [I. Definition of Philosophy](#) .
- [II. Division of Philosophy](#) .
- [III. The Principal Systematic Solutions](#) .
- [IV. Philosophical Methods](#) .
- [V. The Great Historical Currents of Thought](#) .
- [VI. Contemporary Orientations](#) .
- [VII. Is Progress in Philosophy Indefinite, or Is there a Philosophia Perennis?](#)
- [VIII. Philosophy and the Sciences](#) .
- [IX. Philosophy and Religion](#) .
- [X. The Catholic Church and Philosophy](#) .
- [XI. The Teaching of Philosophy](#) .

## Definition of philosophy

### Etymology

According to its etymology, the word "philosophy" (*philosophia*, from *philein*, to love, and *sophia*, wisdom) means "the love of wisdom". This sense appears again in *sapientia*, the word used in the [Middle Ages](#) to designate philosophy.

In the early stages of Greek, as of every other, civilization, the boundary line between philosophy and other departments of [human knowledge](#) was not sharply defined, and philosophy was understood to mean "every striving towards [knowledge](#)". This sense of the word survives in Herodotus (I, xxx) and Thucydides (II, xl). In the ninth century of our era, [Alcuin](#), employing it in the same sense, says that philosophy is "naturarum inquisitio, rerum

humanarum divinarumque cognitio quantum homini possibile est aestimare" —  
investigation of  
[nature](#)  
, and such  
[knowledge](#)  
of things human and Divine as is possible for  
[man](#)  
(  
*P.L.*  
, Cl, 952).

In its proper acceptation, philosophy does not mean the aggregate of the [human sciences](#) ,  
but "the general  
[science](#)  
of things in the  
[universe](#)  
by their ultimate determinations and reasons"; or again, "the intimate  
[knowledge](#)  
of the causes and reasons of things"; the profound  
[knowledge](#)  
of the universal order.

Without here enumerating all the historic definitions of philosophy, some of the most  
significant may be given. [Plato](#) calls it "the acquisition of [knowledge](#) ";, *ktêsis*  
*epistêmês*  
(Euthydemus, 288 d).

[Aristotle](#)  
, mightier than his master at compressing  
[ideas](#)  
, writes:  
*tên onomazomenên sophian peri ta prôta aitia kai tas archas hupolambanousi pantes*  
— "All men consider philosophy as concerned with first causes and principles" ( *Metaph.*  
, I, i). These notions were perpetuated in the post-Aristotelean schools (Stoicism,  
[Epicureanism](#)  
,  
[neo-Platonism](#)  
) , with this difference, that the  
[Stoics](#)  
and  
[Epicureans](#)  
accentuated the

[moral](#)

bearing of philosophy (&quot;Philosophia studium summae virtutis&quot;;, says Seneca in &quot;Epist.&quot;;, lxxxix, 7), and the

[neo-Platonists](#)

its

[mystical](#)

bearing (see

[section V](#)

below). The

[Fathers of the Church](#)

and the first philosophers of the

[Middle Ages](#)

seem not to have had a very clear

[idea](#)

of philosophy for reasons which we will develop later on (

[section IX](#)

), but its conception emerges once more in all its purity among the Arabic philosophers at the end of the twelfth century and the masters of

[Scholasticism](#)

in the thirteenth.

[St. Thomas](#)

, adopting the

[Aristotelean](#)

[idea](#)

, writes: &quot;Sapientia est scientia quae considerat causas primas et universales causas; sapientia causas primas omnium causarum considerat&quot;; — Wisdom [i.e. philosophy] is the

[science](#)

which considers first and universal causes; wisdom considers the first causes of all causes&quot;; (In

*Metaph.*

, I, lect. ii).

In general, modern philosophers may be said to have adopted this way of looking at it. [Desc](#)

[artes](#)

regards philosophy as wisdom: &quot;Philosophiae voce sapientiae studium denotamus&quot;;

— &quot;By the term philosophy we denote the pursuit of wisdom&quot;; (

*Princ. philos.*

, preface); and he understands by it &quot;cognitio veritatis per primas suas causas&quot;; —

&quot;knowledge of

[truth](#)

by its first causes&quot;; (ibid.). For Locke, philosophy is the

[true](#)

[knowledge](#)

of things; for Berkeley, &quot;the study of wisdom and

[truth](#)

&quot; (

*Princ.*

). The many conceptions of philosophy given by

[Kant](#)

reduce it to that of a

[science](#)

of the general principles of

[knowledge](#)

and of the ultimate objects attainable by

[knowledge](#)

— &quot;Wissenschaft von den letzten Zwecken der menschlichen Vernunft&quot;,. For the numerous German philosophers who derive their inspiration from his criticism — Fichte,

[Hegel](#)

, Schelling, Schleiermacher, Schopenhauer, and the rest — it is the general teaching of

[science](#)

(Wissenschaftslehre). Many contemporary authors regard it as the synthetic theory of the particular

[sciences](#)

: &quot;Philosophy&quot;,, says Herbert Spencer, &quot;is completely unified

[knowledge](#)

&quot; (

*First Principles*

, #37). Ostwald has the same

[idea](#)

. For Wundt, the object of philosophy is &quot;the acquisition of such a general conception of the world and of life as will satisfy the exigencies of the

[reason](#)

and the needs of the heart&quot; — &quot;Gewinnung einer allgemeinen Welt — und Lebensanschauung, welche die Forderungen unserer Vernunft und die Bedürfnisse unseres Gemüths befriedigen soll&quot; (

*Einleit. in d. Philos.*

, 1901, p. 5). This

[idea](#)

of philosophy as the ultimate

[science](#)

of values (Wert lehre) is emphasized by Windelband, Déring, and others.

The list of conceptions and definitions might be indefinitely prolonged. All of them affirm the eminently synthetic character of philosophy. In the opinion of the present writer, the most exact and comprehensive definition is that of [Aristotle](#) . Face to face with [nature](#) and with himself,

[man](#)

reflects and endeavours to discover what the world is, and what he is himself. Having made the real the object of studies in detail, each of which constitutes

[science](#)

(see

[section VIII](#)

), he is led to a study of the whole, to inquire into the principles or reasons of the totality of things, a study which supplies the answers to the last

*Why*

's. The last

*Why*

of all rests upon all that is and all that becomes: it does not apply, as in any one particular

[science](#)

(e.g. chemistry), to this or that process of becoming, or to this or that being (e.g. the combination of two bodies), but to all being and all becoming. All being has within it its constituent principles, which account for its

[substance](#)

(constitutive material and formal causes); all becoming, or change, whether superficial or profound, is brought about by an efficient cause other than its subject; and lastly things and events have their bearings from a finality, or final cause. The harmony of principles, or causes, produces the universal order. And thus philosophy is the profound

[knowledge](#)

of the universal order, in the sense of having for its object the simplest and most general principles, by means of which all other objects of thought are, in the last resort, explained.

By these principles, says [Aristotle](#) , we [know](#) other things, but other things do not suffice to make us

[know](#) these principles (*dia gar tauta kai ek toutôn t'alla gnôrizetai, all' ou tauta dia tôn hupokeimenôn*

—  
*Metaph.*

, I). The expression

*universal order*

should be understood in the widest sense.

[Man](#)

is one part of it: hence the relations of

[man](#)

with the world of sense and with its

[Author](#)

belong to the domain of philosophy. Now

[man](#)

, on the one hand, is the responsible author of these relations, because he is free, but he is

[obliged](#)

by

[nature](#)

itself to reach an aim, which is his

[moral](#)

end. On the other hand, he has the power of reflecting upon the

[knowledge](#)

which he acquires of all things, and this leads him to study the

[logical](#)

structure of

[science](#)

. Thus philosophical

[knowledge](#)

leads to philosophical acquaintance with morality and

[logic](#)

. And hence we have this more comprehensive definition of philosophy: "The profound

[knowledge](#)

of the universal order, of the

[duties](#)

which that order imposes upon

[man](#)

, and of the

[knowledge](#)

which

[man](#)

acquires from reality" — "La connaissance approfondie de l'ordre universel, des devoirs qui en résultent pour l'homme et de la science que l'homme acquiert de la vérité" (Mercier, "Logique", 1904, p. 23). — The development of these same

[ideas](#)

under another aspect will be found in

[section VIII](#)

of this article.

## Divisions of philosophy

Since the universal order falls within the scope of philosophy (which studies only its first principles, not its reasons in detail), philosophy is led to the consideration of all that is: the world, [God](#) (or its cause), and man himself (his [nature](#), origin, operations, [moral](#) end, and [scientific](#) activities).

It would be out of the question to enumerate here all the methods of dividing philosophy that have been given: we confine ourselves to those which have played a part in history and possess the deepest significance.

## In Greek philosophy

Two historical divisions dominate Greek philosophy: the [Platonic](#) and the [Aristotelean](#).

(1) [Plato](#) divides philosophy into [dialectic](#), [physics](#), and [ethics](#). This division is not found in [Plato's](#) own writings, and it would be impossible to fit his dialogues into the triple frame, but it corresponds to the spirit of the

[Platonic](#) philosophy. According to Zeller, Xenocrates (314 B.C.) his [disciple](#)

, and the leading representative of the Old Academy, was the first to adopt this triadic division, which was destined to go down through the ages (

*Grundriss d. Geschichte d. griechischen Philosophie*, 144), and

[Aristotle](#) follows it in dividing his master's philosophy.

[Dialectic](#) is the [science](#) of objective reality, i.e., of the [Idea](#)

(*idea eidos*), so that by

[Platonic dialectic](#) we must understand [metaphysics](#)

• [Physics](#) is concerned with the manifestations of the [Idea](#)

, or with the Real, in the sensible [universe](#), to which

[Plato](#) attributes no real value independent of that of the [Idea](#)

• [Ethics](#) has for its object [human acts](#)

• [Plato](#) deals with

[logic](#)

, but has no system of

[logic](#)

; this was a product of

[Aristotle's](#)

genius.

Plato's classification was taken up by his [school](#) (the Academy), but it was not long in yielding to the influence of [Aristotle's](#) more complete division and according a place to

[logic](#)

. Following the inspirations of the old Academics, the

[Stoics](#)

divided philosophy into

[physics](#)

(the study of the real),

[logic](#)

(the study of the structure of

[science](#)

) and

[morals](#)

(the study of

[moral](#)

acts). This classification was perpetuated by the

[neo-Platonists](#)

, who transmitted it to the

[Fathers of the Church](#)

, and through them to the

[Middle Ages](#)

.

(2) [Aristotle](#) , [Plato's](#) illustrious [disciple](#) , the most didactic, and at the same time the most synthetic, [mind](#) of the Greek world, drew up a remarkable scheme of the divisions of philosophy. The philosophical

[sciences](#)

are divided into theoretic, practical, and poetic, according as their scope is pure speculative

[knowledge](#)

, or conduct (

*praxis*

), or external production (

*poiêsis*

). Theoretic philosophy comprises: (a)



[physics](#)

, or the study of corporeal things which are subject to change (

*achôrista men all' ouk akinêta*

) (b) mathematics, or the study of

[extension](#)

, i.e., of a corporeal property not subject to change and considered, by

[abstraction](#)

, apart from

[matter](#)

(

*akinêta men ou chôrista d'isôs, all' hôs en hulê*

); (c)

[metaphysics](#)

, called

[theology](#)

, or first philosophy, i.e. the study of being in its unchangeable and (whether naturally or by

[abstraction](#)

) incorporeal determinations (

*chôrista kau akinêt*

). Practical philosophy comprises

[ethics](#)

,

[economics](#)

, and politics, the second of these three often merging into the last. Poetic philosophy is concerned in general with the external works conceived by

[human](#)

intelligence. To these may conveniently be added

[logic](#)

, the vestibule of philosophy, which

[Aristotle](#)

studied at length, and of which he may be called the creator.

To [metaphysics](#) [Aristotle](#) rightly accords the place of [honour](#) in the grouping of philosophical studies. He calls it "first philosophy". His classification was taken up by the Peripatetic School and was famous throughout antiquity; it was eclipsed by the

[Platonic](#)

classification during the Alexandrine period, but it reappeared during the

[Middle Ages](#)

.

## In the Middle Ages

Though the division of philosophy into its branches is not uniform in the first period of the [Mi](#)

### [Middle Ages](#)

in the West, i.e. down to the end of the twelfth century, the classifications of this period are mostly akin to the

#### [Platonic](#)

division into

#### [logic](#)

#### [ethics](#)

, and

#### [physics](#)

#### [Aristotle's](#)

classification of the theoretic

#### [sciences](#)

, though made known by

#### [Boethius](#)

, exerted no influence for the reason that in the early

#### [Middle Ages](#)

the West

#### [knew](#)

nothing of

#### [Aristotle](#)

except his works on

#### [logic](#)

and some fragments of his speculative philosophy (see

#### [section V](#)

below). It should be added here that philosophy, reduced at first to

#### [dialectic](#)

, or

#### [logic](#)

, and placed as such in the

#### [Trivium](#)

, was not long in setting itself above the

#### [liberal arts](#)

The [Arab](#) philosophers of the twelfth century ( [Avicenna](#) , [Averroes](#) ) accepted the [Aristotelian](#)

classification, and when their works — particularly their translations of

#### [Aristotle's](#)

great original treatises — penetrated into the West, the

#### [Aristotelean](#)

division definitively took its place there. Its coming is heralded by Gundissalinus (see

#### [section XII](#)

), one of the Toletan translators of

[Aristotle](#)

, and author of a treatise, "De divisione philosophiae", which was imitated by Michael Scott and

[Robert Kilwardby](#)

.  
[St. Thomas](#)

did no more than adopt it and give it a precise

[scientific](#)

form. Later on we shall see that, conformably with the

[medieval](#)

notion of

*sapientia*

, to each part of philosophy corresponds the preliminary study of a group of special

[sciences](#)

. The general scheme of the division of philosophy in the thirteenth century, with

[St. Thomas's](#)

commentary on it, is as follows:

There are as many parts of philosophy as there are distinct domains in the order submitted to the philosopher's reflection. Now there is an order which the intelligence does not form but only considers; such is the order realized in [nature](#). Another order, the practical, is formed either by the acts of our intelligence or by the acts of our will, or by the application of those acts to external things in the arts: e.g., the division of practical philosophy into

[logic](#)

,  
[moral](#)  
philosophy, and

[aesthetic](#)

, or the philosophy of the arts (

*"Ad philosophiam naturalem pertinet considerare ordinem rerum quem ratio humana considerat sed non facit; ita quod sub naturali philosophia comprehendamus et metaphysicam. Ordo autem quem ratio considerando facit in proprio actu, pertinet ad rationalem philosophiam, cujus est considerare ordinem partium orationis ad invicem et ordinem principiorum ad invicem et ad conclusiones. Ordo autem actionum voluntariarum pertinet ad considerationem moralis philosophiae. Ordo autem quem ratio considerando facit in rebus exterioribus per rationem humanam pertinet ad artes mechanicas."*

) To natural philosophy pertains the consideration of the order of things which

[human](#)

[reason](#)

considers but does not create — just as we include

[metaphysics](#)

also under natural philosophy. But the order which

[reason](#)

creates of its own act by consideration pertains to rational philosophy, the office of which is to consider the order of the parts of speech with reference to one another and the order of the principles with reference to one another and to the conclusions. The order of voluntary actions pertains to the consideration of

[moral](#)

philosophy, while the order which the

[reason](#)

creates in external things through the

[human](#)

[reason](#)

pertains to the mechanical arts. — In "X Ethic. ad Nic.", I, lect. i.

The philosophy of [nature](#), or speculative philosophy, is divided into [metaphysics](#), mathematics, and

[physics](#)

, according to the three stages traversed by the intelligence in its effort to attain a synthetic comprehension of the universal order, by abstracting from movement (physics), intelligible

[quantity](#)

(mathematics), being (

[metaphysics](#)

) (

*In lib. Boeth. de Trinitate*

, Q. v., a. 1). In this classification it is to be noted that,

[man](#)

being one element of the world of sense,

[psychology](#)

ranks as a part of

[physics](#)

.

### In modern philosophy

The [Scholastic](#) classification may be said, generally speaking, to have lasted, with some exceptions, until the seventeenth century. Beginning with [Descartes](#), we find a multitude of classifications arising, differing in the principles which inspire them.

[Kant](#)

, for instance, distinguishes

[metaphysics](#)

,

[moral](#)

philosophy, religion, and anthropology. The most widely accepted scheme, that which still governs the division of the branches of philosophy in teaching, is due to Wolff (1679-1755), a

[disciple](#)

of

[Leibniz](#)

, who has been called the educator of

[Germany](#)

in the eighteenth century. This scheme is as follows:

1. Logic.
2. Speculative Philosophy.
  - Ontology, or General [Metaphysics](#) .
  - Special [Metaphysics](#) .
  - Theodicy (the study of [God](#) ).
  - Cosmology (the study of the [World](#) ).
  - [Psychology](#) (the study of [Man](#) ).
- Practical Philosophy.
  - Ethics
  - Politics
  - Economics

Wolff broke the ties binding the particular [sciences](#) to philosophy, and placed them by themselves; in his view philosophy must remain purely rational. It is easy to see that the members of Wolff's scheme are found in the

[Aristotelean](#)

classification, wherein

[theodicy](#)

is a chapter of

[metaphysics](#)

and

[psychology](#)

a chapter of

[physics](#)

. It may even be said that the Greek classification is better than Wolff's in regard to speculative philosophy, where the ancients were guided by the formal object of the study — i.e. by the degree of

[abstraction](#)

to which the whole

[universe](#)

is subjected, while the moderns always look at the material object — i.e., the three categories of being, which it is possible to study,

[God](#)

, the world of sense, and

[man](#)

.

### In contemporary philosophy

The impulse received by philosophy during the last half-century gave rise to new philosophical [sciences](#), in the sense that various branches have been detached from the main stems. In [psychology](#) this phenomenon has been remarkable:

epistemology, or

[epistemology](#) (the study of the [knowledge](#))

certitude of

[logic](#)

has developed into a special study. Other branches which have formed themselves into new

[psychological sciences](#)

are: physiological

[psychology](#)

or the study of the physiological concomitant of psychic activities; didactics, or the

[science](#)

of teaching; pedagogy, or the

[science](#)

of

[education](#)

; collective

[psychology](#)

and the

[psychology](#)

of people (Völkerpsychologie), studying the psychic phenomena observable in human groups as such, and in the different races. An important section of

[logic](#)

(called also noetic, or canonic) is tending to sever itself from the main body, viz., methodology, which studies the special

[logical](#)

formation of various

[sciences](#)

. On

[moral](#)

philosophy, in the wide sense, have been grafted the philosophy of

[law](#)

, the philosophy of

[society](#)

, or social philosophy (which is much the same as

[sociology](#)

), and the philosophies of religion and of history.

### The principal systematic solutions

From what has been said above it is evident that philosophy is beset by a great number of questions. It would not be possible here to enumerate all those questions, much less to detail the divers solutions which have been given to them. The solution of a philosophic question is called a philosophic doctrine or theory. A philosophic system (from *sunistêmi*, put together) is a complete and organized group of solutions. It is not an incoherent assemblage or an encyclopedic amalgamation of such solutions; it is dominated by an organic unity. Only those philosophic systems which are constructed conformably with the exigencies of organic unity are really powerful: such are the systems of the Upanishads, of

[Aristotle](#)

, of

[neo-Platonism](#)

, of

[Scholasticism](#)

, of

[Leibniz](#)

,

[Kant](#)

and Hume. So that one or several theories do not constitute a system; but some theories, i.e. answers to a philosophic question, are important enough to determine the solution of other important problems of a system. The scope of this section is to indicate some of these theories.

### Monism, or Pantheism, and Pluralism, Individualism, or Theism

Are there many beings distinct in their reality, with one Supreme Being, [God](#) at the summit of the hierarchy; or is there but one reality (

*monas*

, hence

[monism](#)

), one All-God (

*pan-theos*

) of whom each

[individual](#)

is but a member or fragment (Substantialistic

[Pantheism](#)

), or else a force, or energy (Dynamic

[Pantheism](#)

)? Here we have an important question of

[metaphysics](#)

the solution of which reacts upon all other domains of philosophy. The system of

[Aristotle](#)

, of the

[Scholastics](#)

, and of

[Leibniz](#)

are Pluralistic and Theistic; the Indian,

[neo-Platonic](#)

, and

[Hegelian](#)

are

[Monistic](#)

.

[Monism](#)

is a fascinating explanation of the real, but it only postpones the difficulties which it

[imagines](#)

itself to be solving (e.g. the difficulty of the interaction of things), to say nothing of the objection, from the

[human](#)

point of view, that it runs counter to our most deep-rooted sentiments.

### Objectivism and Subjectivism

Does being, whether one or many, possess its own [life](#), independent of our [mind](#), so that to be known by us is only

[accident](#)

to being, as in the objective system of

[metaphysics](#)

(e.g.

[Aristotle](#)

, the

[Scholastics](#)

,

[Spinoza](#)

)? Or is being no other reality than the

[mental](#)

and subjective presence which it acquires in our representation of it as in the Subjective system (e.g. Hume)? It is in this sense that the "Revue de métaphysique et de morale" (see bibliography) uses the term

[metaphysics](#)

in its title. Subjectivism cannot explain the passivity of our

[mental](#)

representations, which we do not draw out of ourselves, and which therefore

[oblige](#)

us to infer the reality of a non-ego.



### Substantialism and Phenomenism

Is all reality a flux of phenomena (Heraclitus, Berkeley, Hume, Taine), or does the manifestation appear upon a basis, or [substance](#), which manifests itself, and does the phenomenon demand a noumenon (the

[Sch](#)

[olastics](#)

)? Without an underlying

[substance](#)

, which we only

[know](#)

through the medium of the phenomenon, certain realities, as walking, talking, are inexplicable, and such facts as

[memory](#)

become absurd.

### Mechanism and Dynamism (Pure and Modified)

Natural bodies are considered by some to be aggregations of homogeneous particles of [matter](#)

(atoms) receiving a movement which is extrinsic to them, so that these bodies differ only in the number and arrangement of their

[atoms](#)

(the

[Atomism](#)

, or

[Mechanism](#)

, of Democritus,

[Descartes](#)

, and Hobbes). Others reduce them to specific, unextended, immaterial forces, of which

[extension](#)

is only the superficial manifestation (Leibniz). Between the two is Modified

[Dynamism](#)

(

[Aristotle](#)

), which distinguishes in bodies an

[immanent](#)

specific principle (form) and an indeterminate element (matter) which is the source of limitation and

[extension](#)

. This theory accounts for the specific characters of the entities in question as well as for the reality of their

[extension](#)

in

[space](#)

.

### Materialism, Agnosticism, and Spiritualism

That everything real is material, that whatever might be immaterial would be unreal, such is the cardinal [doctrine](#) of [Materialism](#) (the [Stoics](#), Hobbes, De Lamettrie). Contemporary [Materialism](#)

is less outspoken: it is inspired by a

[Positivist](#)

ideology (see

[section VI](#)

), and asserts that, if anything supra-material exists, it is unknowable (

[Agnosticism](#)

, from

a

and

*gnôsis*

,

[knowledge](#)

; Spencer, Huxley).

[Spiritualism](#)

teaches that incorporeal, or immaterial, beings exist or that they are possible (Plato,

[Aristotle](#)

,

[St. Augustine](#)

, the

[Scholastics](#)

,

[Descartes](#)

,

[Leibniz](#)

). Some have even asserted that only

[spirits](#)

exist: Berkeley, Fichte, and

[Hegel](#)

are exaggerated

[Spiritualists](#)

. The

[truth](#)

is that there are bodies and

[spirits](#)

; among the latter we are acquainted (though less well than with bodies) with the

[nature](#)

of our

[soul](#)

, which is revealed by the

[nature](#)

of our immaterial acts, and with the

[nature of God](#)

, the

[infinite](#)

intelligence, whose

[existence](#)

is demonstrated by the very

[existence](#)

of finite things. Side by side with these solutions relating to the problems of the real, there is another group of solutions, not less influential in the orientation of a system, and relating to psychical problems or those of the

[human](#)

ego.

### Sensualism and Rationalism, or Spiritualism

These are the opposite poles of the ideogenetic question, the question of the origin of our [knowledge](#)

. For Sensualism the only source of

[human](#)

[knowledge](#)

is sensation: everything reduces to transformed sensations. This theory, long ago put forward in Greek philosophy (Stoicism,

[Epicureanism](#)

), was developed to the full by the English Sensualists (Locke, Berkeley, Hume) and the English Associationists (Brown, Hartley, Priestley); its modern form is

[Positivism](#)

(John Stuart Mill, Huxley, Spencer, Comte, Taine,

[Littré](#);

etc.). Were this theory

[true](#)

, it would follow that we can

[know](#)

only what falls under our senses, and therefore cannot pronounce upon the

[existence](#)

or non-existence, the reality or unreality, of the super-sensible.

[Positivism](#)

is more

[logical](#)

than

[Materialism](#)

. In the

[New World](#)

, the term

[Agnosticism](#)

has been very happily employed to indicate this attitude of reserve towards the super-sensible.

[Rationalism](#)

(from

*ratio*

,

[reason](#)

), or

[Spiritualism](#)

, establishes the

[existence](#)

in us of concepts higher than sensations, i.e. of abstract and general concepts (Plato,

[Aristotle](#)

,

[St. Augustine](#)

, the

[Scholastics](#)

,

[Descartes](#)

,

[Leibniz](#)

,

[Kant](#)

, Cousin etc.). Ideologic

[Spiritualism](#)

has won the adherence of

[humanity's](#)

greatest thinkers. Upon the spirituality, or immateriality, of our higher

[mental](#)

operations is based the

[proof](#)

of the spirituality of the principle from which they proceed and, hence, of the

[immortality](#)

of the

[soul](#)

.

## Scepticism, Dogmatism, and Criticism

So many answers have been given to the question whether [man](#) can attain [truth](#), and what is the foundation of certitude, that we will not attempt to enumerate them all.

[Scepticism](#)

declares

[reason](#)

incapable of arriving at the

[truth](#)

, and holds certitude to be a purely subjective affair (Sextus Empiricus, Aenesidemus).

Dogmatism asserts that

[man](#)

can attain to

[truth](#)

, and that, in measure to be further determined, our cognitions are

[certain](#)

. The motive of certitude is, for the

[Traditionalists](#)

, a

[Divine revelation](#)

, for the Scotch School (Reid) it is an inclination of

[nature](#)

to affirm the principles of

[common sense](#)

; it is an irrational, but social,

[necessity](#)

of admitting certain principles for practical dogmatism (Balfour in his "Foundations of

Belief" speaks of "non-rational impulse", while Mallock holds that

"certitude is found to be the child, not of

[reason](#)

but of

[custom](#)

"and

[Brunetti's](#)

writes about "the bankruptcy of

[science](#)

and the need of

[belief](#)

""); it is an affective sentiment, a

[necessity](#)

of wishing that certain things may be verities (

[Voluntarism](#)

;

[Kant's](#)

Moral Dogmatism), or the fact of living certain verities (contemporary

[Pragmatism](#)

and

[Humanism](#)

, William James, Schiller). But for others — and this is the theory which we accept — the motive

of certitude is the very evidence of the connection which appears between the predicate and the

subject of a proposition, an evidence which the

[mind](#)

perceives, but which it does not create (Moderate Dogmatism). Lastly for Criticism, which is the [Kantian](#) solution of the problem of [knowledge](#), evidence is created by the [mind](#) by means of the structural functions with which every [human intellect](#) is furnished (the categories of the understanding). In conformity with these functions we connect the impressions of the senses and construct the world. Knowledge, therefore, is valid only for the world as represented to the [mind](#).

· [Kantian](#) Criticism ends in excessive [Idealism](#), which is also called Subjectivism or [Phenomenalism](#), and according to which the [mind](#) draws all its representations out of itself, both the sensory impressions and the categories which connect them: the world becomes a [mental](#) poem, the object is created by the subject as representation (Fichte, Schelling, [Hegel](#)).

### Nominalism, Realism, and Conceptualism

[Nominalism, Realism, and Conceptualism](#) are various answers to the question of the real objectivity of our predications, or of the relation of fidelity existing between our general representations and the external world.

### Determinism and Indeterminism

Has every phenomenon or fact its adequate cause in an antecedent phenomenon or fact (Cosmic [Determinism](#))? And, in respect to acts of the will, are they likewise determined in all their constituent elements (Moral [Determinism](#), [Stoicism](#), [Spinoza](#))? If so, then liberty disappears, and with it human responsibility, [merit](#) and demerit. Or, on the contrary, is there a category of volitions which are not necessitated, and which depend upon the discretionary power of the will to act or not to act and in acting to follow

freely chosen direction? Does liberty exist? Most [Spiritualists](#) of all schools have adopted a libertarian philosophy, holding that liberty alone gives the [moral](#) life an acceptable meaning; by various arguments they have confirmed the testimony of [conscience](#) and the data of common [consent](#). In physical [nature](#) [causation](#) and [determinism](#) rule; in the [moral](#) life, liberty. Others, by no means numerous, have even pretended to discover cases of indeterminism in physical [nature](#) (the so-called Contingentist theories, e.g. Boutroux).

### Utilitarianism and the morality of obligation

What constitutes the foundation of morality in our actions? Pleasure or utility say some, personal or egoistic pleasure ( [Egoism](#) — Hobbes, [Bentham](#) , and “the arithmetic of pleasure”; or again, in the pleasure and utility of all ( [Altruism](#) — John Stuart Mill). Others hold that morality consists in the performance of [duty](#) for [duty's](#) sake, the observance of [law](#) because it is [law](#) , independently of personal profit (the Formalism of the [Stoics](#) and of [Kant](#) ). According to another [doctrine](#) , which in our opinion is more correct, utility, or personal advantage, is not incompatible with [duty](#) , but the source of the [obligation](#) to act is in the last

[analysis](#)

, as the very exigencies of our

[nature](#)

tell us, the ordinance of

[God](#)

.

## Philosophical methods

Method (*meth' hodos*) means a path taken to reach some objective point. By philosophical method is understood the path leading to philosophy, which, again, may mean either the process employed in the construction of a philosophy (constructive method, method of invention), or the way of teaching philosophy (method of teaching, didactic method). We will deal here with the former of these two senses; the latter will be treated in

[section XI](#)

. Three methods can be, and have been, applied to the construction of philosophy.

### Experimental (Empiric, or Analytic) method

The method of all [Empiric](#) philosophers is to observe facts, accumulate them, and coordinate them. Pushed to its ultimate consequences, the

[empiri](#)

[cal](#)

method refuses to rise beyond observed and observable fact; it abstains from investigating anything that is absolute. It is found among the

[Materialists](#)

, ancient and modern, and is most unreservedly applied in contemporary

[Positivism](#)

. Comte opposes the "positive mode of thinking", based solely upon observation, to the

[theological](#)

and

[metaphysical](#)

modes. For Mill, Huxley, Bain, Spencer, there is not one philosophical proposition but is the product, pure and simple, of experience: what we take for a general

[idea](#)

is an aggregate of sensations; a judgment is the union of two sensations; a syllogism, the passage from particular to particular (Mill, "A System of Logic, Rational and Inductive", ed. Lubbock, 1892; Bain, "Logic", New York, 1874). Mathematical propositions, fundamental axioms such as  $a = a$ , the principle of contradiction, the principle of

[causality](#)

are only "generalizations from facts of experience" (Mill, op. cit., vii, #5). According to this author, what we

[believe](#)



to be superior to experience in the enunciation of

[scientific](#)

laws is derived from our subjective incapacity to conceive its contradictory; according to Spencer, this inconceivability of the negation is developed by

[heredity](#)

.

Applied in an exaggerated and exclusive fashion, the experimental method mutilates facts, since it is powerless to ascend to the causes and the [laws](#) which govern facts. It suppresses the character of objective [necessity](#)

which is inherent in

[scientific](#)

judgments, and reduces them to collective formulae of facts observed in the past. It forbids our asserting, e.g., that the men who will be born after us will be subject to death, seeing that all certitude rests on experience, and that by mere observation we cannot reach the unchangeable

[nature](#)

of things. The

[empirical](#)

method, left to its own resources, checks the upward movement of the

[mind](#)

towards the causes or object of the phenomena which confront it.

### **Deductive, or Synthetic *a Priori*, method**

At the opposite pole to the preceding, the [deductive method](#) starts from very general principles, from higher causes, to descend (

[Latin](#)

*deducere*

, to lead down) to more and more complex relations and to facts. The dream of the Deductionist is to take as the point of departure an

[intuition](#)

of the

[Absolute](#)

, of the Supreme Reality — for the Theists,

[God](#)

; for the

[Monists](#)

, the Universal Being — and to draw from this

[intuition](#)

the synthetic

[knowledge](#)

of all that depends upon it in the

[universe](#)

, in conformity with the  
[metaphysical](#)  
scale of the real.

[Plato](#) is the father of [deductive](#) philosophy: he starts from the world of [Ideas](#), and from the  
[Idea](#)  
of the  
[Sovereign Good](#)  
, and he would  
[know](#)  
the reality of the world of sense only in the  
[Ideas](#)  
of which it is the reflection.  
[St. Augustine](#)  
, too, finds his satisfaction in studying the  
[universe](#)  
, and the least of the beings which compose it, only in a synthetic  
[contemplation](#)  
of  
[God](#)  
, the exemplary, creative, and final cause of all things. So, too, the  
[Middle Ages](#)  
attached great importance to the  
[deductive method](#)  
. "I propose", writes  
[Boethius](#)  
, "to build  
[science](#)  
by means of concepts and maxims, as is done in mathematics."  
[Anselm of Canterbury](#)  
draws from the  
[idea](#)  
of  
[God](#)  
, not only the  
[proof](#)  
of the real  
[existence](#)  
of an  
[infinite](#)  
being, but also a group of theorems on  
[His attributes](#)  
and  
[His relations with the world](#)

. Two centuries before

[Anselm](#)

,

[Scotus Eriugena](#)

, the father of anti-Scholasticism, is the completest type of the Deductionist: his

[metaphysics](#)

is one long description of the Divine Odyssey, inspired by the

[neo-Platonic](#)

,

[monistic](#)

conception of the descent of the One in its successive generations. And, on the very threshold of the thirteenth century,

[Alain de Lille](#)

would apply to philosophy a mathematical methodology. In the thirteenth century

[Raymond Lully](#)

[believed](#)

that he had found the secret of "the Great Art" (

*ars magna*

), a sort of syllogism-machine, built of general tabulations of

[ideas](#)

, the combination of which would give the solution of any question whatsoever.

[Descartes](#)

,

[Spinoza](#)

, and

[Leibniz](#)

are Deductionists: they would construct philosophy after the manner of geometry (

*more geometrico*

), linking the most special and complicated theorems to some very simple axioms. The same tendency appears among the

[Ontologists](#)

and the post-Kantian

[Panteists](#)

in

[Germany](#)

(Fichte, Schelling,

[Hegel](#)

), who base their philosophy upon an

[intuition](#)

of the

[Absolute Being](#)

.

The [deductive](#) philosophers generally profess to disdain the [sciences](#) of observation. Their

great fault is the compromising of fact, bending it to a preconceived explanation or theory assumed *a priori*, whereas the observation of the fact ought to precede the assignment of its cause or of its adequate reason. This defect in the [deductive method](#) appears glaringly in a youthful work of [Leibniz's](#), "Specimen demonstrationum politicarum pro rege Polonorum eligendo", published anonymously in 1669, where he demonstrates by geometrical methods (*more geometrico*), in sixty propositions, that the Count Palatine of Neuburg ought to be elected to the Polish Throne.

### Analytico-Synthetic method

This combination of [analysis](#) and synthesis, of observation and [deduction](#), is the only method appropriate to philosophy. Indeed, since it undertakes to furnish a general explanation of the universal order (see [section I](#)), philosophy ought to begin with complex effects, facts known by observation, before attempting to include them in one comprehensive explanation of the [universe](#). This is manifest in [psychology](#), where we begin with a careful examination of activities, notably of the phenomena of sense, of intelligence, and of [appetite](#); in [cosmology](#), where we observe the series of changes, superficial and profound, of bodies; in [moral](#) philosophy, which sets out from the observation of [moral](#) facts; in [theodicy](#), where we interrogate religious [beliefs](#) and feelings; even in [metaphysics](#), the starting-point of which is really existing being.

But observation and [analysis](#) once completed, the work of synthesis begins. We must pass onward to a synthetic [psychology](#) that shall enable us to

comprehend the destinies of  
[man's](#)  
vital principle; to a  
[cosmology](#)  
that shall explain the constitution of bodies, their changes, and the stability of the  
[laws](#)  
which govern them; to a synthetic  
[moral](#)  
philosophy establishing the end of  
[man](#)  
and the ultimate ground of  
[duty](#)  
; to a  
[theodicy](#)  
and  
[deductive](#)  
[metaphysics](#)  
that shall examine the  
[attributes of God](#)  
and the fundamental conceptions of all being.

As a whole and in each of its divisions, philosophy applies the analytic-synthetic method. Its ideal would be to give an account of the [universe](#) and of [man](#) by a synthetic [knowledge](#) of [God](#), upon whom all reality depends. This panoramic view — the eagle's view of things — has allured all the great geniuses. [St. Thomas](#) expresses himself admirably on this synthetic [knowledge](#) of the [universe](#) and its first cause. The analytico-synthetic process is the method, not only of philosophy, but of every [science](#), for it is the [natural law](#) of thought, the proper function of which is unified and orderly [knowledge](#). "Sapientis est ordinare." [Aristotle](#), St. Thomas, [Pascal](#), Newton, [Pasteur](#)

, thus understood the method of the [sciences](#)

. Men like Helmholtz and Wundt adopted synthetic views after doing analytical work. Even the [Positivists](#)

are

[metaphysicians](#)

, though they do not

[know](#)

it or wish it. Does not Herbert Spencer call his philosophy synthetic? and does he not, by reasoning, pass beyond that domain of the 'observable'; within which he professes to confine himself?

## The great historical currents

Among the many peoples who have covered the globe philosophic culture appears in two groups: the [Semitic](#) and the Indo-European, to which may be added the [Egyptians](#) and the Chinese. In the

[Semitic](#)

group (

[Arabs](#)

,

[Babylonians](#)

,

[Assyrians](#)

, Aramaeans, Chaldeans) the

[Arabs](#)

are the most important; nevertheless, their part becomes insignificant when compared with the [intellectual](#)

life of the Indo-Europeans. Among the latter, philosophic life appears successively in various ethnic divisions, and the succession forms the great periods into which the history of philosophy is divided; first, among the people of

[India](#)

(since 1500 B.C.); then among the Greeks and the Romans (sixth century B.C. to sixth century of our era); again, much later, among the peoples of Central and Northern

[Europe](#)

.

## Indian philosophy

The philosophy of [India](#) is recorded principally in the sacred books of the [Veda](#), for it has always been closely united with religion. Its numerous poetic and religious productions carry within themselves a

[chronology](#)

which enables us to assign them to three periods.

*(1) The Period of the Hymns of the Rig Veda (1500-1000 B.C.)*

This is the most ancient monument of Indo-Germanic civilization; in it may be seen the progressive appearance of the fundamental theory that a single Being exists under a thousand forms in the multiplied phenomena of the [universe](#) (Monism).

*(2) The Period of the Brahmins (1000-500 B.C.)*

This is the age of [Brahminical](#) civilization. The theory of the one Being remains, but little by little the concrete and [anthropomorphic ideas](#) of the one Being are replaced by the doctrine that the basis of all things is in oneself ( *âtman* ).

[Psychological Monism](#)

appears in its entirety in the Upanishads: the absolute and adequate identity of the Ego — which is the constitutive basis of our

[individuality](#)

( *âtman* ) — and of all things, with Brahman, the

[eternal](#)

being exalted above

[time](#)

,  
[space](#)

,  
[number](#)

, and change, the generating principle of all things in which all things are finally reabsorbed — such the fundamental theme to be found in the Upanishad under a thousand variations of form. To arrive at the *âtman*, we must not stop at empirical reality which is multiple and cognizable; we must pierce this husk, penetrate to the unknowable and ineffable superessence, and identify ourselves with it in an unconscious unity.

### *(3) The Post-Vedic or Sanskrit, Period (since 500 B.C.)*

From the germs of theories contained in the Upanishad a series of systems spring up, orthodox or heterodox. Of the orthodox systems, Vedanta is the most interesting; in it we find the principles of the Upanishads developed in an integral philosophy which comprise [metaphysics](#), [cosmology](#),

[psychology](#)

, and

[ethics](#)

(transmigration,

[metempsychosis](#)

). Among the systems not in harmony with the Vedic dogmas, the most celebrated is

[Buddhism](#)

, a kind of

[Pessimism](#)

which teaches liberation from pain in a state of unconscious repose, or an extinction of

[personality](#)

(

*Nirvâna*

).

[Buddhism](#)

spread in

[China](#)

, where it lives side by side with the doctrines of

[Lao Tse](#)

and that of

[Confucius](#)

. It is evident that even the systems which are not in harmony with the

[Veda](#)

are permeated with religious

[ideas](#)

.

## Greek philosophy

This philosophy, which occupied six centuries before, and six after, [Christ](#), may be divided into four periods, corresponding with the succession of the principal lines of research (1) From Thales of Miletus to

[Socrates](#)

(seventh to fifth centuries B.C. — preoccupied with

[cosmology](#)



) (2)

[Socrates](#)

,  
[Plato](#)

, and  
[Aristotle](#)

(fifth to fourth centuries B.C. —

[psychology](#)

); (3) From the death of

[Aristotle](#)

to the rise of

[neo-Platonism](#)

(end of the fourth century B.C. to third century after

[Christ](#)

—  
[moral](#)

philosophy); (4)

[neo-Platonic School](#)

(from the third century after

[Christ](#)

, or, including the systems of the forerunners of

[neo-Platonism](#)

, from the first century after

[Christ](#)

, to the end of Greek philosophy in the seventh century — mysticism).

### *(1) The Pre-Socratic Period*

The pre-Socratic philosophers either seek for the stable basis of things — which is water, for Thales of Miletus; air, for Anaximenes of Miletus; air endowed with intelligence, for Diogenes of Apollonia; number, for [Pythagoras](#) (sixth century B.C.); abstract and immovable being, for the Eleatics — or they study that which changes: while Parmenides and the Eleatics assert that everything is, and nothing changes or becomes. Heraclitus (about 535-475) holds that everything becomes, and nothing is unchangeable. Democritus (fifth century) reduces all beings to groups of [atoms](#) in motion, and this movement, according to Anaxagoras, has for its cause an intelligent being.

### *(2) The Period of Apogee: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle.*

When the [Sophists](#) (Protagoras, Gorgias) had demonstrated the insufficiency of these [cosmologies](#)

,  
[Socrates](#)

(470-399) brought philosophical investigation to bear on [man](#)

himself, studying

[man](#)

chiefly from the

[moral](#)

point of view. From the presence in us of abstract

[ideas](#)

[Plato](#)

(427-347)

[deduced](#)

the

[existence](#)

of a world of supersensible realities or

[ideas](#)

, of which the visible world is but a pale reflection. These

[ideas](#)

, which the

[soul](#)

in an earlier

[life](#)

contemplated, are now, because of its union with the body, but faintly perceived.

[Aristotle](#)

(384-322), on the contrary, shows that the real dwells in the objects of sense. The theory of

[act and potentiality](#)

, of form and

[matter](#)

, is a new solution of the relations between the permanent and the changing. His

[psychology](#)

, founded upon the principle of the unity of

[man](#)

and the

[substantial](#)

union of

[soul](#)

and body, is a creation of genius. And as much may be said of his

[logic](#)

.

### *(3) The Moral Period*

After [Aristotle](#) (end of the fourth Century B.C.) four [schools](#) are in evidence: [Stoic](#) , [Epicurean](#) ,  
[Platonic](#)  
, and  
[Aristotelean](#)  
. The  
[Stoics](#)  
(Zeno of Citium, Cleanthes, Chrysippus), like the  
[Epicureans](#)  
, make speculation subordinate to the quest of  
[happiness](#)  
, and the two  
[schools](#)  
, in spite of their divergencies, both consider  
[happiness](#)  
to be  
*ataraxia*  
or absence of sorrow and preoccupation. The teachings of both on  
[nature](#)  
(Dynamistic  
[Monism](#)  
with the  
[Stoics](#)  
, and Pluralistic  
[Mechanism](#)  
with the  
[Epicureans](#)  
) are only a prologue to their  
[moral](#)  
philosophy. After the latter half of the second century B.C. we perceive reciprocal infiltrations  
between the various  
[schools](#)  
. This issues in  
[Eclecticism](#)  
. Seneca (first century B.C.) and Cicero (106-43 B.C.) are attached to  
[Eclecticism](#)  
with a  
[Stoic](#)  
basis; two great commentators of  
[Aristotle](#)  
, Andronicus of Rhodes (first century B.C.) and Alexander of Aphrodisia about 200), affect a  
Peripatetic  
[Eclecticism](#)  
. Parallel with

### [Eclecticism](#)

runs a current of

### [Scepticism](#)

(Ænesidemus, end of first century B.C., and Sextus Empiricus, second century A.D.).

### *(4) The Mystical Period*

In the first century B.C. Alexandria had become the capital of Greek [intellectual](#) life. [Mystic](#) and theurgic tendencies, born of a longing for the ideal and the beyond, began to appear in a current of Greek philosophy which originated in a restoration of

### [Pythagorism](#)

and its alliance with

### [Platonism](#)

(Plutarch of Chieronea, first century B.C.; Apuleius of Madaura; Numenius, about 160 and others), and still more in the Graeco-Judaic philosophy of

### [Philo the Jew](#)

(30 B.C. to A.D. 50). But the dominance of these tendencies is more apparent in

### [neo-Platonism](#)

. The most brilliant thinker of the

### [neo-Platonic](#)

series is Plotinus (A.D. 20-70). In his &quot;Enneads&quot; he traces the paths which lead the [soul](#)

to the One, and establishes, in keeping with his

### [mysticism](#)

, an

### [emanationist](#)

### [metaphysical](#)

system. Porphyry of Tyre (232-304), a

### [disciple](#)

of Plotinus, popularizes his teaching, emphasizes its religious bearing, and makes

### [Aristotle&#39;s](#)

&quot;Organon&quot; the introduction to

### [neo-Platonic](#)

philosophy. Later on,

### [neo-Platonism](#)

, emphasizing its religious features, placed itself, with Jamblichus, at the service of the

### [pagan](#)

pantheon which growing

### [Christianity](#)

was ruining on all sides, or again, as with Themistius at Constantinople (fourth century), Proclus and

[Simplicius](#)

at

[Athens](#)

(fifth century), and Ammonius at Alexandria, it took an Encyclopedic turn. With Ammonius and John Philoponus (sixth century) the

[neo-Platonic School](#)

of Alexandria developed in the direction of

[Christianity](#)

.

### Patristic philosophy

In the closing years of the second century and, still more, in the third century, the philosophy of the [Fathers of the Church](#) was developed. It was born in a civilization dominated by Greek [ideas](#)

, chiefly

[neo-Platonic](#)

, and on this side its mode of thought is still the ancient. Still, if some, like

[St. Augustine](#)

, attach the greatest value to the

[neo-Platonic](#)

teachings, it must not be forgotten that the

[Monist](#)

or

[Pantheistic](#)

and

[Emanationist](#)

[ideas](#)

, which have been accentuated by the successors of Plotinus, are carefully replaced by the theory of

[creation](#)

and the

[substantial](#)

distinction of beings; in this respect a new spirit animates Patristic philosophy. It was developed, too, as an auxiliary of the

[dogmatic](#)

system which the Fathers were to establish. In the third century the great representatives of the Christian School of Alexandria are

[Clement of Alexandria](#)

and

[Origen](#)

. After them

[Gregory of Nyssa](#)

,

[Gregory of Nazianzus](#)

,  
[St. Ambrose](#)  
, and, above all,  
[St. Augustine](#)  
(354-430) appear.  
[St. Augustine](#)  
gathers up the  
[intellectual](#)  
treasures of the ancient world, and is one of the principal intermediaries for their transmission to the modern world. In its definitive form Augustinism is a fusion of intellectualism and  
[mysticism](#)  
, with a study of  
[God](#)  
as the centre of interest. In the fifth century,  
[pseudo-Dionysius](#)  
perpetuates many a  
[neo-Platonic](#)  
[doctrine](#)  
adapted to  
[Christianity](#)  
, and his writings exercise a powerful influence in the  
[Middle Ages](#)  
.

### Medieval philosophy

The philosophy of the [Middle Ages](#) developed simultaneously in the West, at Byzantium, and in divers Eastern centres; but the Western philosophy is the most important. It built itself up with great effort on the ruins of barbarism: until the twelfth century, nothing was known of  
[Aristotle](#)  
, except some treatises on  
[logic](#)  
, or of  
[Plato](#)  
, except a few dialogues. Gradually, problems arose, and, foremost, in importance, the question of  
[universals](#)  
in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries (see NOMINALISM).  
[St. Anselm](#)  
(1033-1109) made a first attempt at systematizing  
[Scholastic philosophy](#)  
, and developed a  
[theodicy](#)  
. But as early as the ninth century an anti-Scholastic philosophy had arisen with Eriugena who revived the

[neo-Platonic  
Monism](#)

In the twelfth century [Scholasticism](#) formulated new anti-Realist doctrines with [Adelard of Bath](#),

Gauthier de Mortagne, and, above all,

[Abelard](#)

and

[Gilbert de la Porrée](#)

, whilst extreme

[Realism](#)

took shape in the

[schools](#)

of

[Chartres](#)

[John of Salisbury](#)

and

[Alain de Lille](#)

, in the twelfth century, are the co-ordinating minds that indicate the maturity of

[Scholastic](#)

thought. The latter of these waged a campaign against the

[Pantheism](#)

of

[David of Dinant](#)

and the

[Epicureanism](#)

of the

[Albigenses](#)

— the two most important forms of anti-Scholastic philosophy. At Byzantium, Greek philosophy held its ground throughout the

[Middle Ages](#)

, and kept apart from the movement of Western

[ideas](#)

. The same is

[true](#)

of the

[Syrians](#)

and

[Arabs](#)

But at the end of the twelfth century the Arabic and Byzantine movement entered into relation with Western thought, and effected, to the profit of the latter, the brilliant philosophical revival of the thirteenth century. This was due, in the first place, to the creation of the [University of Paris](#) ; next, to the foundation of the

[Dominican](#)

and

[Franciscan](#)

orders; lastly, to the introduction of Arabic and Latin translations of

[Aristotle](#)

and the ancient authors. At the same period the works of

[Avicenna](#)

and

[Averroes](#)

became known at

[Paris](#)

. A pleiad of brilliant names fills the thirteenth century —

[Alexander of Hales](#)

,

[St. Bonaventure](#)

, Bl.

[Albertus Magnus](#)

,

[St. Thomas Aquinas](#)

,

[Godfrey of Fontaines](#)

,

[Henry of Ghent](#)

, Giles of Rome, and

[Duns Scotus](#)

— bring

[Scholastic](#)

synthesis to perfection. They all wage

[war](#)

on Latin

[Averroism](#)

and anti-Scholasticism, defended in the

[schools of Paris](#)

by

[Siger of Brabant](#)

.

[Roger Bacon](#)

, Lully, and a group of

[neo-Platonists](#)

occupy a place apart in this century, which is completely filled by remarkable figures.



In the fourteenth century [Scholastic philosophy](#) betrays the first symptoms of decadence. In place of individualities we have schools, the chief being the [Thomist](#), the [Scotist](#), and the Terminist School of [William of Occam](#), which soon attracted numerous partisans. With John of Jandun, [Averroism](#) perpetuates its most audacious propositions; [Eckhart](#) and [Nicholas of Cusa](#) formulate philosophies which are symptomatic of the approaching revolution. The [Renaissance](#) was a troublous period for philosophy. Ancient systems were revived: the [Dialectic](#) of the [Humanistic](#) philologists (Laurentius Valla, Vivés), [Platonism](#), [Aristoteleanism](#), [Stoicism](#). Telesius, [Campanella](#), and [Giordano Bruno](#) follow a [naturalistic](#) philosophy. Natural and social [law](#) are renewed with [Thomas More](#) and Grotius. All these philosophies were leagued together against [Scholasticism](#), and very often against [Catholicism](#). On the other hand, the [Scholastic](#) philosophers grew weaker and weaker, and, excepting for the brilliant [Spanish](#) [Scholasticism](#) of the sixteenth century ([Ba&ntilde;ez](#)

, [Francisco Suarez](#)

, Vasquez, and so on), it may be said that

[ignorance](#)

of the fundamental doctrine became general. In the seventeenth century there was no one to support

[Scholasticism](#)

: it fell, not for lack of

[ideas](#)

, but for lack of defenders.

### Modern philosophy

The philosophies of the [Renaissance](#) are mainly negative: modern philosophy is, first and foremost, constructive. The latter is emancipated from all

[dogma](#)

; many of its syntheses are powerful; the definitive formation of the various nationalities and the diversity of languages favour the tendency to

[individualism](#)

.

The two great initiators of modern philosophy are [Descartes](#) and [Francis Bacon](#). The former inaugurates a

[spiritualistic philosophy](#)

based on the data of

[consciousness](#)

, and his influence may be traced in

[Malebranche](#)

,

[Spinoza](#)

, and

[Leibniz](#)

.

[Bacon](#)

heads a line of

[Empiricists](#)

, who regarded sensation as the only source of

[knowledge](#)

.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a Sensualist philosophy grew up in [England](#),

based on

[Baconian](#)

[Empiricism](#)

, and soon to develop in the direction of Subjectivism. Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, and David Hume mark the stages of this

[logical](#)

evolution. Simultaneously an Associationist

[psychology](#)

appeared also inspired by Sensualism, and, before long, it formed a special field of research. Brown, David Hartley, and Priestley developed the theory of

[association of ideas](#)

in various directions. At the outset Sensualism encountered vigorous opposition, even in

[England](#)

, from the

[Mystics](#)

and

[Platonists](#)

of the Cambridge School (Samuel Parker and, especially, Ralph Cudworth). The reaction was still more lively in the Scotch School, founded and chiefly represented by Thomas Reid, to which Adam Ferguson, Oswald, and Dugald Stewart belonged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and which had great influence over

[Eclectic](#)

[Spiritualism](#)

, chiefly in

[America](#)

and

[France](#)

. Hobbes's "selfish" system was developed into a morality by

[Bentham](#)

, a partisan of

[Egoistic Utilitarianism](#)

, and by Adam Smith, a defender of

[Altruism](#)

, but provoked a reaction among the advocates of the moral sentiment theory (Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Samuel Clarke). In

[England](#)

, also, Theism or

[Deism](#)

was chiefly developed, instituting a criticism of all positive religion, which it sought to supplant with a philosophical religion. English Sensualism spread in

[France](#)

during the eighteenth century: its influence is traceable in

[de Condillac](#)

, de la Mettrie, and the

[Encyclopedists](#)

; Voltaire popularized it in

### [France](#)

and with Jean-Jacques Rousseau it made its way among the masses, undermining their

### [Christianity](#)

and preparing the Revolution of 1789. In

### [Germany](#)

, the philosophy of the eighteenth century is, directly or indirectly, connected with

### [Leibniz](#)

— the School of Wolff, the Æsthetic School (Baumgarten), the philosophy of sentiment. But all the German philosophers of the eighteenth century were eclipsed by the great figure of

### [Kant](#)

.

With [Kant](#) (1724-1804) modern philosophy enters its second period and takes a critical orientation.

[Kant](#) bases his theory of [knowledge](#), his [moral](#) and [æsthetic](#) system, and his judgments of finality on the structure of the [mind](#)

. In the first half of the eighteenth century, German philosophy is replete with great names connected with

### [Kantianism](#)

— after it had been put through a

### [Monistic](#)

evolution, however — Fichte, Schelling, and

### [Hegel](#)

have been called the triumvirate of

### [Pantheism](#)

; then again, Schopenhauer, while

### [Herbart](#)

returned to

### [individualism](#)

. French philosophy in the nineteenth century is at first dominated by an

### [eclectic](#)

### [Spiritualistic](#)

movement with which the names of Maine de Biran and, especially, Victor Cousin are associated. Cousin had

### [disciples](#)

in

### [America](#)

(C. Henry), and in

### [France](#)

he gained favour with those whom the excesses of the

### [Revolution](#)

had alarmed. In the first half of the nineteenth century

### [French](#)

### [Catholics](#)

approved the  
[Traditionalism](#)  
inaugurated by de Bonald and  
[de Lamennais](#)  
, while another group took refuge in  
[Ontologism](#)  
. In the same period Auguste Comte founded  
[Positivism](#)  
, to which  
[Littré](#);  
and Taine adhered, though it rose to its greatest height in the English-speaking countries. In  
fact,  
[England](#)  
may be said to have been the second fatherland of  
[Positivism](#)  
; John Stuart Mill, Huxley, Alexander Bain and Herbert Spencer expanded its doctrines,  
combined them with Associationism and emphasized its critical aspect, or attempted  
(Spencer) to construct a vast synthesis of human  
[sciences](#)  
. The Associationist philosophy at this  
[time](#)  
was confronted by the Scotch philosophy which, in  
[Hamilton](#)  
, combined the teachings of Reid and of  
[Kant](#)  
and found an  
[American](#)  
champion in Noah Porter. Mansel spread the doctrines of Hamilton. Associationism regained  
favour with Thomas Brown and James Mill, but was soon enveloped in the large conception of  
[Positivism](#)  
, the dominant philosophy in  
[England](#)  
. Lastly, in  
[Italy](#)  
,  
[Hegel](#)  
was for a long  
[time](#)  
the leader of nineteenth-century philosophical thought (Vera and d'Ercole), whilst  
[Gioberti](#)  
, the  
[ontologist](#)  
and  
[Rosmini](#)  
occupy a distinct position. More recently,  
[Positivism](#)

has gained numerous adherents in

[Italy](#)

. In the middle of the century, a large Krausist School existed in

[Spain](#)

, represented chiefly by Sanz del Rio (d. 1869) and N. Salmeron.

[Balme](#)

(1810-48), the author of "Fundamental Philosophy" is an original thinker whose doctrines have many points of contact with

[Scholasticism](#)

.

## Contemporary orientations Favourite problems

Leaving aside social questions, the study of which belongs to philosophy in only some of their aspects, it may be said that in the philosophic interest of the present day [psychological](#) questions hold the first place, and that chief among them is the problem of certitude.

[Kant](#)

, indeed, is so important a factor in the destinies of contemporary philosophy not only because he is the initiator of critical formalism, but still more because he

[obliges](#)

his successors to deal with the preliminary and fundamental question of the limits of

[knowledge](#)

. On the other hand the experimental investigation of

[mental](#)

processes has become the object of a new study, psycho-physiology, in which men of

[science](#)

co-operate with philosophers, and which meets with increasing success. This study figures in the programme of most modern

[universities](#)

. Originating at Leipzig (the School of Wundt) and

[Wuerzburg](#)

, it has quickly become naturalized in

[Europe](#)

and

[America](#)

. In

[America](#)

, "The Psychological Review" has devoted many articles to this branch of philosophy.

[Psychological](#)

studies are the chosen field of the

[American](#)

(Ladd, William James, Hall).

The great success of [psychology](#) has emphasized the subjective character of [aesthetic](#), in which hardly anyone now recognizes the objective and [metaphysical](#) element. The solutions in vogue are the [Kantian](#), which represents the [aesthetic](#) judgment as formed in accordance with the subjective, structural function of the [mind](#), or other psychologic solutions which reduce the beautiful to a psychic impression (the "sympathy", or *Einfühlung*, of Lipps; the "concrete intuition" of Benedetto Croce). These explanations are insufficient, as they neglect the objective aspect of the beautiful — those elements which, on the part of the object, are the cause of the [aesthetic](#) impression and enjoyment. It may be said that the [neo-Scholastic philosophy](#) alone takes into account the objective [aesthetic](#) factor.

The absorbing influence of [psychology](#) also manifests itself to the detriment of other branches of philosophy; first of all, to the detriment of [metaphysics](#), which our contemporaries have [unjustly](#) ostracized — [unjustly](#), since, if the [existence](#) or possibility of a thing-in-itself is considered of importance, it behooves us to inquire under what aspects of reality it reveals itself. This ostracism of [metaphysics](#), moreover, is largely due to misconception and to a wrong understanding of the theories of [substance](#), of [faculties](#), of causes etc., which belong to the traditional [metaphysics](#). Then again, the invasion of

[psychology](#)

is manifest in

[logic](#)

: side by side with the ancient

[logic](#)

or

[dialectic](#)

, a mathematical or symbolic

[logic](#)

has developed (Peano, Russell, Peirce, Mitchell, and others) and, more recently, a genetic

[logic](#)

which would study, not the fixed laws of thought, but the changing process of

[mental](#)

life and its genesis (Baldwin).

We have seen above ( [section II, D](#) ) how the increasing cultivation of [psychology](#) has produced other

[scientific](#)

ramifications which find favour with the learned world.

[Moral](#)

philosophy, long neglected, enjoys a renewed vogue notably in America, where ethnography is devoted to its service (see, e.g., the publications of the Smithsonian Institution). "The International Journal of Ethics" is a review especially devoted to this line of work. In some quarters, where the atmosphere is

[Positivist](#)

, there is a desire to get rid of the old morality, with its notions of value and of

[duty](#)

, and to replace it with a collection of empiric rules subject to evolution (Sidgwick, Huxley, Leslie Stephen, Durkheim, Levy-Bruhl).

As to the history of philosophy, not only are very extended special studies devoted to it, but more and more room is given it in the study of every philosophic question. Among the causes of this exaggerated vogue are the impulse given by the Schools of Cousin and of [Hegel](#), the progress of historical studies in general, the confusion arising from the clash of rival doctrines, and the distrust engendered by that confusion. Remarkable works have been produced by Deussen, on Indian and Oriental philosophy; by Zeller, on Greek antiquity; by

[Denifle](#)

,  
[Hauréau](#)

, Bäumker, and Mandonnet, on the

[Middle Ages](#)

; by Windelband, Kuno Fischer, Boutroux and Höffding, on the modern period; and the list might



easily be considerably prolonged.

### The opposing systems

The rival systems of philosophy of the present [time](#) may be reduced to various groups: [Positivism](#), neo-Kantianism, [Monism](#), [neo-Scholasticism](#). Contemporary philosophy lives in an atmosphere of [Phenomenism](#), since [Positivism](#) and neo-Kantianism are at one on this important [doctrine](#): that [science](#) and certitude are possible only within the limits of the world of phenomena, which is the immediate object of experience. [Positivism](#), insisting on the exclusive [rights](#) of sensory experience, and [Kantian](#) criticism, reasoning from the structure of our [cognitive faculties](#), hold that [knowledge](#) extends only as far as appearances; that beyond this is the absolute, the dark depths, the [existence](#) of which there is less and less disposition to deny, but which no [human mind](#) can fathom. On the contrary, this element of the absolute forms an integral constituent in [neo-Scholasticism](#) which has revived, with sobriety and moderation, the fundamental notions of [Aristotelean](#) and [Medieval metaphysics](#), and has succeeded in vindicating them against attack and objection.

### Positivism

Positivism, under various forms, is defended in [England](#) by the followers of Spencer, by Huxley, Lewes, Tyndall, F. Harrison, Congreve, Beesby, J. Bridges, Grant Allen (James Martineau is a reactionary against

[Positivism](#)

); by Balfour, who at the same time propounds a characteristic theory of

[belief](#)

, and falls back on

[Fideism](#)

. From

[England](#)

[Positivism](#)

passed over to

[America](#)

, where it soon dethroned the

[Scottish](#)

doctrines (Carus). De Roberty, in

[Russia](#)

, and Ribot, in

[France](#)

, are among its most distinguished disciples. In

[Italy](#)

it is found in the writings of Ferrari, Ardigò, and Morselli; in

[Germany](#)

, in those of Laas, Riehl, Guyau, and Durkheim. Less brutal than

[Materialism](#)

, the radical

[vice](#)

of

[Positivism](#)

is its identification of the knowable with the sensible. It seeks in vain to reduce general

[ideas](#)

to collective images, and to deny the abstract and universal character of the

[mind's](#)

concepts. It vainly denies the super-experiential value of the first

[logical](#)

principles in which the

[scientific](#)

life of the

[mind](#)

is rooted; nor will it ever succeed in showing that the certitude of such a judgment as  $2 + 2 = 4$  increases with our repeated addition of numbers of oxen or of coins. In

[morals](#)

, where it would reduce

[precepts](#)

and judgments to

[sociological](#)

data formed in the collective  
[conscience](#)  
and varying with the period and the environment,  
[Positivism](#)  
stumbles against the judgments of value, and the supersensible  
[ideas](#)  
of  
[obligation](#)  
,  
[moral](#)  
[good](#)  
, and  
[law](#)  
, recorded in every human  
[conscience](#)  
and unvarying in their essential data.

### Kantianism

[Kantianism](#) had been forgotten in [Germany](#) for some thirty years (1830-60); Vogt, Büchner, and Moleschott had won for [Materialism](#) an ephemeral vogue; but [Materialism](#) was swept away by a strong [Kantian](#) reaction. This reversion towards [Kant](#) (*Rückkehr zu Kant*) begins to be traceable in 1860 (notably as a result of Lange's 'History of Materialism'), and the influence of [Kantian](#) doctrines may be said to permeate the whole contemporary German philosophy (Otto Liebmann, von Hartmann, Paulsen, Rehmke, Dilthey, Natorp, Fuenfschilling, the Immanentists, and the Empirico-critics). French neo-Criticism, represented by Renouvier, was connected chiefly with [Kant's](#) second 'Critique' and introduced a specific [Voluntarism](#). Vacherot, Secrétan, Lachelier, Boutroux, Fouillée, and Bergson are all more or less under tribute to [Kantianism](#). Ravaisson proclaims himself a follower of Maine de Biran. [Kantianism](#) has taken its place in the state programme of

[education](#)

and Paul Janet, who, with F. Bouillier and Caro, was among the last legatees of Cousin's

[Spiritualism](#)

, appears, in his "Testament philosophique", affecting a

[Monism](#)

with a

[Kantian](#)

inspiration. All those who, with

[Kant](#)

and the

[Positivists](#)

, proclaim the "bankruptcy of

[science](#)

" look for the basis of our certitude in an imperative demand of the will. This

[Voluntarism](#)

, also called

[Pragmatism](#)

(William James), and, quite recently,

[Humanism](#)

(Schiller at Oxford), is inadequate to the establishment of the theoretic

[moral](#)

and social

[sciences](#)

upon an unshakable base: sooner or later, reflection will ask what this need of living and of willing is worth, and then the intelligence will return to its position as the supreme arbiter of certitude.

From [Germany](#) and [France](#) [Kantianism](#) has spread everywhere. In [England](#) it has called into activity the Critical

[Idealism](#)

associated with T.H. Green and Bradley. Hodgson, on the contrary, returns to

[Realism](#)

. S. Laurie may be placed between Green and Martineau. Emerson, Harris, Everett, and Royce spread

[Idealistic](#)

Criticism in

[America](#)

; Shadworth Hodgson, on the other hand, and Adamson tend to return to

[Realism](#)

, whilst James Ward emphasizes the function of the will.

### Monism

With a great many [Kantians](#), a stratum of [Monistic ideas](#) is superimposed on Criticism, the thing in itself being considered numerically one. The same tendencies are observable among [Positivist](#) Evolutionists like Clifford and Romanes, or G.T. Ladd.

### Neo-Scholasticism

[Neo-Scholasticism](#), the revival of which dates from the last third of the nineteenth century ([Liberatore](#), [Taparelli](#), [Cornoldi](#), and others), and which received a powerful impulse under [Leo XIII](#), is tending more and more to become the philosophy of [Catholics](#). It replaces [Ontologism](#), [Traditionalism](#), Gunther's [Dualism](#), and [Cartesian Spiritualism](#), which had manifestly become insufficient. Its syntheses, renewed and completed, can be set up in opposition to [Positivism](#) and [Kantianism](#), and even its adversaries no longer dream of denying the worth of its doctrines. The bearings of [neo-Scholasticism](#) have been treated elsewhere (see [NEO-SCHOLASTICISM](#)).

### Is progress in philosophy indefinite, or is there a philosophia perennis?

Considering the historic succession of systems and the evolution of doctrines from the remotest ages of [India](#) down to our own times, and standing face to face with the progress

achieved by contemporary [scientific](#) philosophy, must we not infer the indefinite progress of philosophic thought? Many have allowed themselves to be led away by this ideal dream. Historic [Idealism](#) (Karl Marx) regards philosophy as a product fatally engendered by pre-existing causes in our physical and social environment. Auguste Comte's "law of the three states", Herbert Spencer's evolutionism, [Hegel's](#) "indefinite becoming of the [soul](#)" , sweep philosophy along in an ascending current toward an ideal perfection, the realization of which no one can foresee. For all these thinkers, philosophy is variable and relative: therein lies their serious [error](#) . Indefinite progress, condemned by history in many fields, is untenable in the history of philosophy. Such a notion is evidently refuted by the appearance of thinkers like [Aristotle](#) and [Plato](#) three centuries before [Christ](#) , for these men, who for ages have dominated, and still dominate, human thought, would be anachronisms, since they would be inferior to the thinkers of our own [time](#) . And no one would venture to assert this. History shows, indeed, that there are adaptations of a synthesis to its environment, and that every age has its own aspirations and its special way of looking at problems and their solutions; but it also presents unmistakable evidence of incessant new beginnings, of rhythmic oscillations from one pole of thought to the other. If [Kant](#) found an original formula of Subjectivism and the *reine Innerlichkeit* , it would be a mistake to think that [Kant](#) had no [intellectual](#) ancestors: he had them in the earliest historic ages of philosophy: M. Deussen has found in the [Vedic hymn](#) of the Upanishads the distinction between noumenon and phenomenon, and writes, on the theory of Mâyâ, "Kants Grunddogma, so alt wie die Philosophie" ("Die Philos. des Upanishad's", Leipzig, 1899, p. 204).

It is [false](#) to say that all [truth](#) is relative to a given [time](#) and latitude, and that philosophy is the product of [economic condition](#) [s](#) in a

ceaseless course of evolution, as historical

[Materialism](#)

holds. Side by side with these things, which are subject to change and belong to one particular [condition](#)

of the

[life](#)

of

[mankind](#)

, there is a

[soul](#)

of

[truth](#)

circulating in every system, a mere fragment of that complete and unchangeable

[truth](#)

which haunts the

[human](#)

[mind](#)

in its most disinterested investigations. Amid the oscillations of historic systems there is room for a

*philosophia perennis*

— as it were a purest atmosphere of

[truth](#)

, enveloping the ages, its clearness somehow felt in spite of cloud and mist.

“The [truth](#) [Pythagoras](#) sought after, and [Plato](#) , and [Aristotle](#) , is the same that [Augustine](#)

and

[Aquinas](#)

pursued. So far as it is developed in history,

[truth](#)

is the daughter of

[time](#)

; so far as it bears within itself a content independent of

[time](#)

, and therefore of history, it is the daughter of

[eternity](#)

“[Willmann, “Gesch. d Idealismus”, II (Brunswick, 1896), 550; cf. Commer “Die immerwährende Philosophie” (Vienna, 1899)].

This does not mean that essential and permanent [verities](#) do not adapt themselves to the [intellectual](#)

life of each epoch. Absolute immobility in philosophy, no less than absolute relativity, is contrary to

[nature](#)

and to history. It leads to decadence and death. It is in this sense that we must interpret the adage:

*Vita in motu*

.

## Philosophy and the sciences

[Aristotle](#) of old laid the foundation of a philosophy supported by observation and experience. We need only glance through the list of his works to see that [astronomy](#),

mineralogy,

[physics](#)

and chemistry,

[biology](#)

, zoology, furnished him with examples and bases for his theories on the constitution, of the heavenly and terrestrial bodies, the

[nature](#)

of the vital principle, etc. Besides, the whole

[Aristotelean](#)

classification of the branches of philosophy (see

[section II](#)

) is inspired by the same

[idea](#)

of making philosophy — general

[science](#)

— rest upon the particular

[sciences](#)

. The early

[Middle Ages](#)

, with a rudimentary

[scientific](#)

culture, regarded all its learning, built up on the Trivium (grammar, rhetoric,

[dialectic](#)

) and Quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry,

[astronomy](#)

, music), as preparation for philosophy. In the thirteenth century, when

[Scholasticism](#)

came under

[Aristotelean](#)

influences, it incorporated the

[sciences](#)

in the programme of philosophy itself. This may be seen in regulation issued by the



### [Faculty of Arts](#)

of  
[Paris](#)  
19 March, 1255, "De libris qui legendi essent" This order prescribes the study of commentaries or various  
[scientific](#)  
treatises of  
[Aristotle](#)  
, notably those on the first book of the "Meteorologica", on the treatises on Heaven and Earth, Generation, the Senses and Sensations, Sleeping and Waking, Memory, Plants, and Animals. Here are amply sufficient means for the  
*magistri*  
to familiarize the "artists" with  
[astronomy](#)  
, botany, physiology, and zoology to say nothing of  
[Aristotle's](#)  
"Physics", which was also prescribed as a classical text, and which afforded opportunities for numerous observations in chemistry and  
[physics](#)  
as then understood. Grammar and rhetoric served as preliminary studies to  
[logic](#)  
,  
[Bible](#)  
history, social science, and politics were introductory to  
[moral](#)  
philosophy. Such men as  
[Albertus Magnus](#)  
and  
[Roger Bacon](#)  
expressed their views on the  
[necessity](#)  
of linking the  
[sciences](#)  
with philosophy and preached it by example. So that both antiquity and the  
[Middle Ages](#)  
[knew](#)  
and appreciated  
[scientific](#)  
philosophy.

In the seventeenth century the question of the relation between the two enters upon a new phase: from this period modern [science](#) takes shape and begins that triumphal march which it is destined to continue through the twentieth century, and of which the  
[human](#)

[mind](#)

is justly proud. Modern

[scientific](#)

[knowledge](#)

differs from that of antiquity and the

[Middle Ages](#)

in three important respects: the multiplication of

[sciences](#)

; their independent value; the divergence between common

[knowledge](#)

and

[scientific](#)

[knowledge](#)

. In the

[Middle Ages](#)

[astronomy](#)

was closely akin to

[astrology](#)

, chemistry to

[alchemy](#)

,

[physics](#)

to

[divination](#)

; modern

[science](#)

has severely excluded all these fantastic connections. Considered now from one side and again from another, the physical world has revealed continually new aspects, and each specific point of view has become the focus of a new study. On the other hand, by defining their respective limits, the

[sciences](#)

have acquired autonomy; useful in the

[Middle Ages](#)

only as a preparation for rational

[physics](#)

and for

[metaphysics](#)

, they are nowadays of value for themselves, and no longer play the part of handmaids to philosophy. Indeed, the progress achieved within itself by each particular

[science](#)

brings one more revolution in

[knowledge](#)

. So long as instruments of observation were imperfect, and

[inductive](#)

methods restricted, it was practically impossible to rise above an elementary

[knowledge](#)

. People

[knew](#)

, in the

[Middle Ages](#)

, that wine, when left exposed to the air, became vinegar; but what do facts like this amount to in comparison with the complex formulae of modern chemistry? Hence it was that an

[Albertus Magnus](#)

or a

[Roger Bacon](#)

could flatter himself, in those days, with having acquired all the

[science](#)

of his

[time](#)

, a claim which would now only provoke a smile. In every department progress has drawn the line sharply between popular and

[scientific](#)

[knowledge](#)

; the former is ordinarily the starting-point of the latter, but the conclusions and teachings involved in the

[sciences](#)

are unintelligible to those who lack the requisite preparation.

Do not, then, these profound modifications in the [condition](#) of the [sciences](#) entail modifications in the relations which, until the seventeenth century, had been accepted as existing between the

[sciences](#)

and philosophy? Must not the separation of philosophy and

[science](#)

widen out to a complete divorce? Many have thought so, both

[scientists](#)

and philosophers, and it was for this that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries so many savants and philosophers turned their backs on one another. For the former, philosophy has become useless; the particular

[sciences](#)

, they say, multiplying and becoming perfect, must exhaust the whole field of the knowable, and a

[time](#)

will come when philosophy shall be no more. For the philosophers, philosophy has no need of the immeasurable mass of

[scientific](#)

notions which have been acquired, many of which possess only a precarious and provisional value. Wolff, who pronounced the divorce of

[science](#)

from philosophy, did most to accredit this view, and he has been followed by certain

### [Catholic](#)

philosophers who held that

### [scientific](#)

study may be excluded from philosophic culture.

What shall we say on this question? That the reasons which formerly existed for keeping touch with [science](#) are a thousand times more imperative in our day. If the profound synthetic view of things which justifies the [existence](#) of philosophy presupposes analytical researches, the multiplication and perfection of those researches is certainly reason for neglecting them. The horizon of detailed

### [knowledge](#)

widens incessantly; research of every kind is busy exploring the departments of the

### [universe](#)

which it has mapped out. And philosophy, whose mission is to explain the order of the

### [universe](#)

by general and ultimate reasons applicable, not only to a group of facts, but to the whole body of known phenomena, cannot be indifferent to the

### [matter](#)

which it has to explain. Philosophy is like a tower whence we obtain the panorama of a great city — its plan, its monuments, its great arteries, with the form and location of each — things which a visitor cannot discern while he goes through the streets and lanes, or visits

### [libraries](#)

,  
[churches](#)

, palaces, and museums, one after another. If the city grows and develops, there is all the more reason, if we would

### [know](#)

it as a whole, why we should hesitate to ascend the tower and study from that height the plan upon which its new quarters have been laid out.

It is, happily, evident that contemporary philosophy is inclined to be first and foremost a [scientific](#)

philosophy; it has found its way back from its wanderings of yore. This is noticeable in philosophers of the most opposite tendencies. There would be no end to the list if we had to enumerate every case where this orientation of

### [ideas](#)

has been adopted. "This union", says Boutroux, speaking of the

### [sciences](#)

and philosophy, "is in

### [truth](#)

the classic tradition of philosophy. But there had been established a

### [psychology](#)

and a [metaphysics](#) which aspired to set themselves up beyond the [sciences](#), by mere reflection of the [mind](#) upon itself. Nowadays all philosophers are agreed to make [scientific](#) data their starting-point" (Address at the International Congress of Philosophy in 1900; *Revue de Métaph. et de Morale*, 1900, p. 697). Boutroux and many others spoke similarly at the International Congress of Bologna (April, 1911). Wundt introduces this union into the very definition of philosophy, which, he says, is "the general [science](#) whose function it is to unite in a system free of all contradictions the [knowledge](#) acquired through the particular [sciences](#), and to reduce to their principles the general methods of [science](#) and the [conditions](#) of [knowledge](#) supposed by them" ("Einleitung in die Philosophie", Leipzig, 1901, p. 19). And R. Eucken says: "The farther back the limits of the observable world recede, the more [conscious](#) are we of the lack of an adequately comprehensive explanation" — "Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Philos. u. Lebensanschauung" (Leipzig, 1903), p. 157]. This same thought inspired [Leo XIII](#) when he placed the parallel and harmonious teaching of philosophy and of the [sciences](#) on the programme of the Institute of Philosophy created by him in the [University of Louvain](#) (see [NEO-SCHOLASTICISM](#)).

On their side, the [scientists](#) have been coming to the same conclusions ever since they rose to a synthetic view of that [matter](#) which is the object of their study. So it was with [Pasteur](#), so with Newton. Ostwald, professor of chemistry at [Leipzig](#)

, has undertaken to publish the "Annalen der Naturphilosophie", a review devoted to the cultivation of the territory which is common to philosophy and the

[sciences](#)

A great many men of

[science](#)

, too, are engaged in philosophy without knowing it: in their constant discussions of "Mechanism", "Evolutionism", "Transformism", they are using terms which imply a philosophical theory of

[matter](#)

.

If philosophy is the explanation as a whole of that world which the particular [sciences](#) investigate in detail, it follows that the latter find their culmination in the former, and that as the

[sciences](#)

are so will philosophy be. It is

[true](#)

that objections are put forward against this way of uniting philosophy and the

[sciences](#)

. Common observation, it is said, is enough support for philosophy. This is a mistake: philosophy cannot ignore whole departments of

[knowledge](#)

which are inaccessible to ordinary experience

[biology](#)

, for example, has shed a new light on the philosophic study of

[man](#)

. Others again adduce the extent and the growth of the

[sciences](#)

to show that

[scientific](#)

philosophy must ever remain an unattainable ideal; the practical solution of this difficulty concerns the teaching of philosophy (see

[section XI](#)

).

## Philosophy and religion

Religion presents to [man](#), with authority, the solution of [man's](#) problems which also concern philosophy. Such are the questions of the

[nature of God](#)

, of

[His relation with the visible world](#)

, of

[man's](#)

origin and destiny. Now religion, which precedes philosophy in the social life, naturally

[obliges](#)

it to take into consideration the points of religious

[doctrine](#)

. Hence the close connection of philosophy with religion in the early stages of civilization, a fact strikingly apparent in Indian philosophy, which, not only at its beginning but throughout its development, was intimately bound up with the

[doctrine](#)

of the sacred books (see above). The Greeks, at least during the most important periods of their history, were much less subject to the influences of

[pagan](#)

[religions](#)

; in fact, they combined with extreme scrupulosity in what concerned ceremonial usage a wide liberty in regard to

[dogma](#)

. Greek thought soon took its independent flight;

[Socrates](#)

ridicules the gods in whom the common people

[believed](#)

;

[Plato](#)

does not banish religious

[ideas](#)

from his philosophy; but

[Aristotle](#)

keeps them entirely apart, his

[God](#)

is the

*Actus purus*

, with a meaning exclusively philosophic, the prime mover of the universal

[mechanism](#)

. The

[Stoics](#)

point out that all things obey an irresistible fatality and that the wise man

[fears](#)

no gods. And if

[Epicurus](#)

teaches cosmic

[determinism](#)

and denies all finality, it is only to conclude that

[man](#)

can lay aside all

[fear](#)

of divine intervention in mundane affairs. The question takes a new aspect when the influences of the Oriental and Jewish

[religions](#)

are brought to bear on Greek philosophy by

[neo-Pythagorism](#)

, the Jewish

[theology](#)

(end of the first century), and, above all,

[neo-Platonism](#)

(third century B.C.). A yearning for religion was stirring in the world, and philosophy became enamoured of every religious doctrine Plotinus (third century after

[Christ](#)

), who must always remain the most perfect type of the

[neo-Platonic](#)

mentality, makes philosophy identical with religion, assigning as its highest aim the union of the

[soul](#)

with

[God](#)

by

[mystical](#)

ways. This

[mystical](#)

need of the

[supernatural](#)

issues in the most bizarre lucubrations from Plotinus's successors, e.g. Jamblicus (d. about A.D. 330), who, on a foundation of

[neo-Platonism](#)

, erected an international pantheon for all the divinities whose names are

[known](#)

.

It has often been remarked that [Christianity](#), with its [monotheistic](#) [dogma](#) and its serene, purifying morality, came in the fulness of

[time](#)

and appeased the inward unrest with which

[souls](#)

were afflicted at the end of the Roman world. Though

[Christ](#)

did not make Himself the head of a philosophical school, the

[religion which He founded](#)

supplies solutions for a group of problems which philosophy solves by other methods (e.g. the

[immortality](#)

of the

[soul](#)

). The first

[Christian](#)



philosophers, the

[Fathers of the Church](#)

, were imbued with Greek

[ideas](#)

and took over from the circumambient

[neo-Platonism](#)

the commingling of philosophy and religion. With them philosophy is incidental and secondary, employed only to meet polemic needs, and to support

[dogma](#)

; their philosophy is religious. In this

[Clement of Alexandria](#)

and

[Origen](#)

are one with

[St. Augustine](#)

and

[Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite](#)

. The early

[Middle Ages](#)

continued the same traditions, and the first philosophers may be said to have received

[neo-Platonic](#)

influences through the channel of the

[Fathers](#)

.

[John Scotus Eriugena](#)

(ninth century), the most remarkable

[mind](#)

of this first period, writes that "true religion is

[true](#)

philosophy and, conversely,

[true](#)

philosophy is

[true](#)

religion" (De div. praed., I, I). But as the era advances a process of dissociation sets in, to end in the complete separation between the two

[sciences](#)

of

[Scholastic theology](#)

or the study of

[dogma](#)

, based fundamentally on

[Holy Scripture](#)

, and

[Scholastic philosophy](#)

, based on purely rational investigation. To understand the successive stages of this

differentiation, which was not completed until the middle of the thirteenth century, we must draw

attention to certain historical facts of capital importance.

(1) The origin of several philosophical problems, in the early [Middle Ages](#), must be sought within the domain of [theology](#), in the sense that the philosophical discussions arose in reference to [theological](#) questions. The discussion, e.g. of [transubstantiation](#) ([Berengarius of Tours](#)), raised the problem of [substance](#) and of change, or becoming.

(2) Theology being regarded as a superior and [sacred science](#), the whole pedagogic and didactic organization of the period tended to confirm this superiority (see [section XI](#)).

(3) The enthusiasm for dialectics, which reached its maximum in the eleventh century, brought into fashion certain purely verbal methods of reasoning bordering on the sophistical. Anselm of Besata (Anselmus Peripateticus) is the type of this kind of reasoner. Now the dialecticians, in discussing [theological](#) subjects, claimed absolute validity for their methods, and they ended in such [heresies](#) as [Gottschalk's](#) [predestination](#), [Berengarius's](#) [transubstantiation](#), and [Roscelin's](#) [Tritheism](#). [Berengarius's](#) motto was: "Per omnia ad dialecticam confugere". There followed an excessive reaction on the part of timorous [theologians](#), practical men before all things, who charged dialectics with the

[sins](#)

of the dialecticians. This antagonistic movement coincided with an attempt to reform

[religious life](#)

. At the head of the group was

[Peter Damian](#)

(1007-72), the adversary of the

[liberal arts](#)

; he was the author of the saying that philosophy is the handmaid of

[theology](#)

. From this saying it has been concluded that the

[Middle Ages](#)

in general put philosophy under tutelage, whereas the maxim was current only among a narrow circle of reactionary

[theologians](#)

. Side by side with

[Peter Damian](#)

in

[Italy](#)

, were Manegold of Lautenbach and

[Othloh of St. Emmeram](#)

, in

[Germany](#)

.

(4) At the same time a new tendency becomes discernible in the eleventh century, in [Lanfranc](#), [William of Hirschau](#)

, Rodulfus Ardens, and particularly

[St. Anselm of Canterbury](#)

; the

[theologian](#)

calls in the aid of philosophy to demonstrate certain

[dogmas](#)

or to show their rational side.

[St. Anselm](#)

, in an Augustinian spirit, attempted this justification of

[dogma](#)

, without perhaps invariably applying to the demonstrative value of his arguments the requisite limitations. In the thirteenth century these efforts resulted in a new

[theological](#)

method, the

[dialectic](#)

.

(5) While these disputes as to the relations of philosophy and [theology](#) went on, many philosophical questions were nevertheless treated on their own account, as we have seen above ( [universals](#) , St. Anselm's [theodicy](#) , [Abelard's](#) philosophy, etc.).

(6) The [dialectic](#) method, developed fully in the twelfth century, just when [Scholastic theology](#) received a powerful impetus, is a [theological](#) , not a philosophical, method. The principal method in [theology](#) is the interpretation of [Scripture](#) and of authority; the [dialectic](#) method is secondary and consists in first establishing a [dogma](#) and then showing its reasonableness, confirming the argument from authority by the argument from [reason](#) . It is a process of [apologetics](#) . From the twelfth century onward, these two [theological](#) methods are fairly distinguished by the words *auctoritates*, *rationes* . [Scholastic theology](#) , condensed in the *summae* and *books of sentences*, is henceforward regarded as distinct from philosophy. The attitude of [theologians](#) towards philosophy is threefold: one group, the least influential, still opposes its introduction into [theology](#) , and carries on the reactionary traditions of the preceding period (e.g. Gauthier de Saint-Victor); another accepts philosophy, but takes a utilitarian view of it, regarding it merely as a prop of [dogma](#) (

### [Peter Lombard](#)

); a third group, the most influential, since it includes the three

[theological](#)

schools of

[St. Victor](#)

,  
[Abelard](#)

, and

[Gilbert de la Porrée](#)

, grants to philosophy, in addition to this

[apologetic](#)

role, an independent value which entitles it to be cultivated and studied for its own sake. The

members of this group are at once both

[theologians](#)

and philosophers.

(7) At the opening of the thirteenth century one section of Augustinian [theologians](#) continued to emphasize the utilitarian and

[apologetic](#)

office of philosophy. But

[St. Thomas Aquinas](#)

created new

[Scholastic](#)

traditions, and wrote a chapter on

[scientific](#)

methodology in which the distinctness and independence of the two

[sciences](#)

is thoroughly established.

[Duns Scotus](#)

, again, and the Terminists exaggerated this independence. Latin

[Averroism](#)

, which had a brilliant but ephemeral vogue in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, accepted whole and entire in philosophy

[Averroistic](#)

Peripateticism, and, to safeguard

[Catholic](#)

[orthodoxy](#)

, took refuge behind the sophism that what is

[true](#)

in philosophy may be

[false](#)

in

[theology](#)

, and conversely — wherein they were more reserved than

[Averroes](#)

and the

[Arab](#)

philosophers, who regarded religion as something inferior, good enough for the masses, and who did not trouble themselves about

[Moslem](#)

orthodoxy. Lully, going to extremes, maintained that all

[dogma](#)

is susceptible of demonstration, and that philosophy and

[theology](#)

coalesce. Taken as a whole, the

[Middle Ages](#)

, profoundly religious, constantly sought to reconcile its philosophy with the

[Catholic](#)

[Faith](#)

. This bond the

[Renaissance](#)

philosophy severed. In the

[Reformation](#)

period a group of publicists, in view of the prevailing strife, formed projects of reconciliation among the numerous religious bodies. They convinced themselves that all

[religions](#)

possess a common fund of essential

[truths](#)

relating to

[God](#)

, and that their content is identical, in spite of divergent

[dogmas](#)

. Besides, Theism, being only a form of

[Naturism](#)

applied to religion, suited the independent ways of the

[Renaissance](#)

. As in building up

[natural law](#)

,

[human](#)

[nature](#)

was taken into consideration, so

[reason](#)

was interrogated to discover religious

[ideas](#)

. And hence the wide acceptance of Theism, not among

[Protestants](#)

only, but generally among

[minds](#)

that had been carried away with the

### Renaissance

movement (Erasmus, Coornheert).

For this tolerance or religious indifferentism modern philosophy in more than one instance substituted a disdain of positive religions. The English Theism or

### Deism

of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries criticizes all positive religion and, in the name of an innate religious sense, builds up a natural religion which is reducible to a collection of theses on the

### existence of God

and the

### immortality

of the

### soul

. The initiator of this movement was Herbert of Cherbury (1581-1648); J. Toland (1670-1722), Tindal (1656-1733), and Lord Bolingbroke took part in it. This criticizing movement inaugurated in

### England

was taken up in

### France

, where it combined with an outright

### hatred

of

### Catholicism

. Pierre Bayle (1646-1706) propounded the thesis that all religion is anti-rational and absurd, and that a state composed of

### Atheists

is possible. Voltaire wished to substitute for

### Catholicism

an incoherent mass of doctrines about

### God

. The religious philosophy of the eighteenth century in

### France

led to

### Atheism

and paved the way for the

### Revolution

. In

### justice

to contemporary philosophy it must be credited with teaching the amplest

### tolerance

towards the various

### religions

; and in its programme of research it has included religious [psychology](#), or the study of the religious sentiment.

For [Catholic](#) philosophy the relations between philosophy and [theology](#), between [reason](#) and [faith](#), were fixed, in a chapter of [scientific](#) methodology, by the great [Scholastic](#) thinkers of the thirteenth century. Its principles, which still retain their vitality, are as follows:

*(a) Distinctness of the two sciences.*

The independence of philosophy in regard to [theology](#), as in regard to any other [science](#) whatsoever, is only an interpretation of this undeniable principle of [scientific](#) progress, as applicable in the twentieth century as it was in the thirteenth, that a rightly constituted [science](#) derives its formal object, its principles, and its constructive method from its own resources, and that, this being so, it cannot borrow from any other [science](#) without compromising its own [right](#) to exist.

*(b) Negative, not positive, material, not formal, subordination of philosophy in regard to theology.*

This means that, while the two [sciences](#) keep their formal independence (the independence of the principles by which their investigations are guided), there are certain matters where philosophy cannot contradict the solutions afforded by [theology](#). The



### Scholastics

of the

### Middle Ages

justified this subordination, being profoundly convinced that

### Catholic

### dogma

contains the

### infallible

### word of God

, the expression of

### truth

. Once a proposition, e.g. that two and two make four, has been accepted as

### certain

,

### logic

forbids any other

### science

to form any conclusion subversive of that proposition. The material mutual subordination of the

### sciences

is one of those

### laws

out of which

### logic

makes the indispensable guarantee of the unity of

### knowledge

. "The

### truth

duly demonstrated by one

### science

serves as a beacon in another

### science

. "The

### certainty

of a theory in chemistry imposes its acceptance on

### physics

, and the

### physicist

who should go contrary to it would be out of his course. Similarly, the philosopher cannot contradict the

### certain

data of

### theology

, any more than he can contradict the

### certain

conclusions of the individual

### sciences

. To deny this would be to deny the conformity of [truth](#) with [truth](#), to contest the principle of contradiction, to surrender to a [relativism](#) which is destructive of all certitude. "It being supposed that nothing but what is [true](#) is included in this [science](#) ([sacred theology](#)) . . . it being supposed that whatever is [true](#) by the decision and authority of this [science](#) can nowise be [false](#) by the decision of right [reason](#) : these things, I say, being supposed, as it is manifest from them that the authority of this [science](#) and [reason](#) alike rest upon [truth](#), and one [verity](#) cannot be contrary to another, it must be said absolutely that [reason](#) can in no way be contrary to the authority of this [Scripture](#), nay, all right [reason](#) is in accord with it" ( [Henry of Ghent](#), "Summa Theologica", X, iii, n.4).

But when is a theory [certain](#) ? This is a question of fact, and [error](#) is easy. In proportion as the principle is simple and absolute, so are its applications complex and variable. It is not for philosophy to establish the certitude of [theological](#) data, any more than to fix the conclusions of chemistry or of physiology. The [certainty](#)

of those data and those conclusions must proceed from another source. "The preconceived [idea](#) is entertained that a [Catholic](#) savant is a soldier in the service of his religious [faith](#), and that, in his hands, [science](#) is but a weapon to defend his Credo. In the eyes of a great many people, the [Catholic](#) savant seems to be always under the menace of [excommunication](#), or entangled in [dogmas](#) which hamper him, and compelled, for the sake of loyalty to his [Faith](#), to renounce the disinterested love of [science](#) and its free cultivation" (Mercier, "Rapport sur les études supér. de philos.", 1891, p. 9). Nothing could be more [untrue](#).

## The Catholic Church and philosophy

The principles which govern the [doctrinal](#) relations of philosophy and [theology](#) have moved the [Catholic Church](#) to intervene on various occasions in the history of philosophy. As to the [Church's](#) [right](#) and [duty](#) to intervene for the purpose of maintaining the integrity of [theological dogma](#) and the deposit of [faith](#), there is no need of discussion in this place. It is interesting, however, to note the attitude taken by the [Church](#) towards philosophy throughout the ages, and particularly in the [Middle Ages](#)

, when a civilization saturated with [Christianity](#) had established extremely intimate relations between [theology](#) and philosophy.

A. The censures of the [Church](#) have never fallen upon philosophy as such, but upon [theological](#) applications, judged [false](#), which were based upon philosophical reasonings. [John Scotus Eriugena](#)

,  
[Roscelin](#)

,  
[Berengarius](#)

,  
[Abelard](#)

,  
[Gilbert de la Porrée](#)

were condemned because their teachings tended to subvert [theological dogmas](#)

. Eriugena denied the substantial distinction between [God and created things](#)

;  
[Roscelin](#)

held that there are three [Gods](#)

;  
[Berengarius](#)

, that there is no real [transubstantiation](#) in the Eucharist;

[Abelard](#)

and

[Gilbert de la Porrée](#)

essentially modified the [dogma](#)

of the Trinity. The

[Church](#)

, through her councils, condemned their [theological errors](#)

; with their philosophy as such she does not concern herself. "Nominalism", says [Haur'eacute;au](#), "is the old enemy. It is, in fact, the [doctrine](#) which, because it best accords with [reason](#), is most remote from axioms of [faith](#). Denounced before council after council, [Nominalism](#) was condemned in the person of [Abelard](#) as it had been in the person of [Roscelin](#)" ( *Hist. philos. scol.*, I, 292).

No assertion could be more inaccurate. What the [Church](#) has condemned is neither the so-called [Nominalism](#), nor [Realism](#), nor philosophy in general, nor the method of arguing in [theology](#), but certain applications of that method which are judged dangerous, i.e. matters which are not philosophical. In the thirteenth century a host of teachers adopted the philosophical theories of [Roscelin](#) and [Abelard](#), and no councils were convoked to condemn them. The same may be said of the condemnation of [David of Dinant](#) (thirteenth century), who denied the distinction between [God and matter](#), and of various doctrines condemned in the fourteenth century as tending to the negation of morality. It has been the same in modern times. To mention only the condemnation of Gunther, of [Rosmini](#), and of [Ontologism](#) in the nineteenth century, what alarmed the [Church](#) was the fact that the theses in question had a theological bearing.

B. The [Church](#) has never imposed any philosophical system, though she has [anathematize](#)  
[d](#) many  
doctrines, or branded them as suspect.

This corresponds with the prohibitive, but not imperative attitude of

[theology](#)

in regard to philosophy. To take one example,

[faith](#)

teaches that the world was

[created](#)

in

[time](#)

; and yet

[St. Thomas](#)

maintains that the concept of

[eternal](#)

[creation](#)

(

*ab aeterno*

) involves no contradiction. He did not think himself

[obliged](#)

to demonstrate

[creation](#)

in

[time](#)

: his teaching would have been heterodox only if, with the

[Averroists](#)

his day, he had maintained the

[necessary](#)

[eternity](#)

of the world. It may, perhaps, be objected that many

[Thomistic](#)

doctrines were condemned in 1277 by Etienne Tempier,

[Bishop](#)

of

[Paris](#)

. But it is well to note, and recent works on the subject have abundantly

[proved](#)

this, that Tempier's condemnation, in so far as it applied to

[Thomas Aquinas](#)

, was the issue of intrigues and personal animosity, and that, in canon law, it had no force outside of the

[Diocese of Paris](#)

. Moreover, it was annulled by one of Tempier's successors, Etienne de Borrière, in 1325.

C. The [Church](#) has encouraged philosophy. To say nothing of the fact that all those who applied themselves to [science](#) and philosophy in the [Middle Ages](#) were [churchmen](#), and that the [liberal arts](#) found an asylum in capitular and [monastic schools](#) until the twelfth century, it is important to remark that the principal [universities](#) of the [Middle Ages](#) were pontifical foundations. This was the case with [Paris](#). To be sure, in the first years of the [university's](#) acquaintance with the [Aristotelean](#) encyclopaedia (late twelfth century) there were prohibitions against reading the "Physics", the "Metaphysics", and the treatise "On the Soul". But these restrictions were of a temporary character and arose out of particular circumstances. In 1231, [Gregory IX](#) laid upon a commission of three consultors the charge to prepare an amended edition of [Aristotle](#) "ne utile per inutile vitietur" (lest what is useful suffer damage through what is useless). The work of expurgatio was done, in point of fact, by the Albertine-Thomist School, and, beginning from the year 1255, the [Faculty of Arts](#), with the [knowledge](#) of the ecclesiastical authority, ordered the teaching of all the books previously prohibited (see Mandonnet, "Siger de Brabant et l'averroïsme latin au XIIIe s.", Louvain, 1910). It might also be shown how in modern times and in our own day the [popes](#) have encouraged philosophic studies. [Leo XIII](#), as is well known, considered the restoration of philosophic [Thomism](#) on of the chief tasks of his pontificate.

## The teaching of philosophy

The methods of teaching philosophy have varied in various ages. [Socrates](#) used to interview his auditors, and hold symposia in the market-place, on the porticoes and in the public gardens. His method was interrogation; he whetted the curiosity of the audience and practised what had become known as

[Socratic](#)

irony and the maieutic art (

*maieutikê technê*

), the art of delivering

[minds](#)

of their conceptions. His

[successor](#)

opened

[schools](#)

properly so called, and from the place occupied by these

[schools](#)

several systems took their names (the

[Stoic](#)

School, the Academy, the Lyceum). In the

[Middle Ages](#)

and down to the seventeenth century, the learned language was Latin. The German discourses of

[Eckhart](#)

are mentioned as merely sporadic examples. From the ninth to the twelfth century teaching was confined to the

[monastic](#)

and

[cathedral](#)

[schools](#)

. It was the golden age of

[schools](#)

. Masters and students went from one

[school](#)

to another:

[Lanfranc](#)

travelled over

[Europe](#)

;

[John of Salisbury](#)

(twelfth century) heard at

[Paris](#)

all the then famous professors of philosophy;

[Abelard](#)

gathered crowds about his rostrum. Moreover, as the same subjects were taught everywhere, and from the same text-books,



### scholastic

wanderings were attended with few disadvantages. The books took the form of commentaries or monographs. From the

### time

of

### Abelard

a method came into use which met with great success, that of setting forth the pros and cons of a question, which was later perfected by the addition of a

*solutio*

. The application of this method was extended in the thirteenth century (e.g. in the

### &quot;Summa theologiae&quot;

of

### St. Thomas

). Lastly, philosophy being an

### educational

preparation for

### theology

, the &quot;Queen of the Sciences&quot;, philosophical and

### theological

topics were combined in one and the same book, or even in the same lecture.

At the end of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth, the University of Paris was organized, and philosophical teaching was concentrated in the

### Faculty of Arts

. Teaching was dominated by two principles:

*internationalism*

and

*freedom*

. The student was an apprentice-professor: after receiving the various degrees, he obtained from the chancellor of the

### university

a licence to teach (

*licentia docendi*

). Many of the courses of this period have been preserved, the abbreviated script of the

### Middle Ages

being virtually a stenographic system. The programme of courses drawn up in 1255 is well known: it comprises the

### exegesis

of all the books of

### Aristotle

. The commentary, or

*lectio*

(from

*legere*

, to read), is the ordinary form of instruction (whence the German *Vorlesungen* and the English *lecture*

). There were also disputations, in which questions were treated by means of objections and answers; the exercise took a lively character, each one being invited to contribute his thoughts on the subject. The

[University of Paris](#)

was the model for all the others, notably those of Oxford and Cambridge. These forms of instruction in the

[universities](#)

lasted as long as

[Aristoteleanism](#)

, i.e. until the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century — the *siècle des lumières* (*Erklärung*)

— philosophy took a popular and encyclopedic form, and was circulated in the literary productions of the period. In the nineteenth century it resumed its didactic attitude in the

[universities](#)

and in the

[seminaries](#)

, where, indeed its teaching had long continued. The advance of philological and historical studies had a great influence on the character of philosophical teaching: critical methods were welcomed, and little by little the professors adopted the practice of specializing in this or that branch of philosophy — a practice which is still in vogue. Without attempting to touch on all the questions involved in modern methods of teaching philosophy, we shall here indicate some of the principal features.

### The language of philosophy

The earliest of the moderns — as [Descartes](#) or [Leibniz](#) — used both Latin and the vernacular, but in the nineteenth century (except in

[ecclesiastical seminaries](#)

and in certain academical exercises mainly ceremonial in character) the living languages supplanted Latin; the result has been a gain in clearness of thought and interest and vitality of teaching. Teaching in Latin too often contents itself with formulae: the living language effects a better comprehension of things which must in any case be difficult. Personal experience, writes Fr. Hogan, formerly superior of the Boston Seminary, in his “Clerical Studies” (Philadelphia, 1895-1901), has shown that among students who have learned philosophy, particularly

[Scholastic](#)

, only in Latin, very few have acquired anything more than a mass of formulae, which they hardly understand; though this does not always prevent their adhering to their formulae through thick and thin. Those who continue to write in Latin — as many

[Catholic](#)

philosophers, often of the highest worth, still do — have the sad experience of seeing their

books confined to a very narrow circle of readers.

### Didactic processes

[Aristotle's](#) advice, followed by the [Scholastics](#), still retains its value and its force: before giving the solution of a problem, expound the reasons for and against. This explains, in particular, the great part played by the history of philosophy or the critical examination of the solutions proposed by the great thinkers. Commentary on a treatise still figures in some special higher courses; but contemporary philosophical teaching is principally divided according to the numerous branches of philosophy (see

[section II](#)

). The introduction of laboratories and practical

[seminaries](#)

(séminaires pratiques) in philosophical teaching has been of the greatest advantage. Side by side with

[libraries](#)

and shelves full of periodicals there is room for laboratories and museums, once the

[necessity](#)

of vivifying philosophy by contact with the

[sciences](#)

is admitted (see

[section VIII](#)

). As for the practical

[seminary](#)

, in which a group of students, with the aid of a teacher, investigate to some special problem, it may be applied to any branch of philosophy with remarkable results. The work in common, where each directs his

[individual](#)

efforts towards one general aim, makes each the beneficiary of the researches of all; it accustoms them to handling the instruments of research, facilitates the detection of facts, teaches the pupil how to discover for himself the reasons for what he observes, affords a real experience in the constructive methods of discovery proper to each subject, and very often decides the

[scientific](#)

vocation of those whose efforts have been crowned with a first success.

### The order of philosophical teaching

One of the most complex questions is: With what branch ought philosophical teaching to begin, and what order should it follow? In conformity with an immemorial tradition, the beginning is often made with [logic](#). Now [logic](#), the [science](#) of [science](#), is difficult to understand and unattractive in the earliest stages of teaching. It is better to begin with the

[sciences](#)

which take the real for their object:

[psychology](#)

,  
[cosmology](#)

,  
[metaphysics](#)

, and  
[theodicy](#)

·  
[Scientific  
logic](#)

will be better understood later on;

[moral](#)

philosophy presupposes

[psychology](#)

; systematic history of philosophy requires a preliminary acquaintance with all the branches of philosophy (see Mercier, &quot;Manuel de philosophie&quot;, Introduction, third edition, Louvain, 1911).

Connected with this question of the order of teaching is another: viz. What should be the [scientific](#)

teaching preliminary to philosophy? Only a course in the

[sciences](#)

specially appropriate to philosophy can meet the manifold exigencies of the problem. The general

[scientific](#)

courses of our modern

[universities](#)

include too much or too little: &quot;too much in the sense that professional teaching must go into numerous technical facts and details with which philosophy has nothing to do; too little, because professional teaching often makes the observation of facts its ultimate aim, whilst, from our standpoint, facts are, and can be, only a means, a starting-point, towards acquiring a

[knowledge](#)

of the most general causes and

[laws](#)

&quot; (Mercier, &quot;Rapport sur les études supérieures de philosophie&quot;, Louvain, 1891, p. 25). M. Boutroux, a professor at the

[Sorbonne](#)

, solves the problem of philosophical teaching at the

[university](#)

in the same sense, and, according to him, the flexible and very liberal organization of the faculty of philosophy should include &quot;the whole assemblage of the

[sciences](#)

, whether theoretic, mathematico-physical, or philologico-historical&quot; (&quot;Revue

internationale de l'enseignement", Paris, 1901, p. 510). The programme of courses of the Institute of Philosophy of

[Louvain](#)

is drawn up in conformity with this spirit.

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