




## An Analysis of Philosophy Questions and Knowledge

HÜSEYİN SUBHİ ERDEM   
*İnönü University*

MEHMET AYDIN   
*İnönü University*

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**Abstract:** The subject of this study is a philosophical question and an analysis of knowledge. Philosophical questions are questions that almost everyone deals with in daily life. Philosophy-making activity is a fundamental field of study that belongs to man and his essence. Those who are familiar with these questions have become philosophers. Philosophers are concept friends and have built knowledge by adhering to the use of language. Philosophical knowledge, above all, has a systematic, consistent and logical aspect. This discipline, in which questions are more important than answers, formed the basis of other fields. Philosophical thought laid the basic discipline's groundwork, such as science, religion, politics, and art. In this context, the study will include essential views on the philosophical question and the value of knowledge.

**Keywords:** Philosophical thought, philosophical knowledge, philosophical question, philosophical value, analysis.

HÜSEYİN SUBHİ ERDEM ✉  
İnönü University, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Department of Philosophy  
Malatya Elazığ Yolu, Battalgazi, Malatya, 44280, TR [huseyin.erdem@inonu.edu.tr]

MEHMET AYDIN ✉  
İnönü University, Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Philosophy  
Malatya Elazığ Yolu, Battalgazi, Malatya, 44280, TR [maydn7857@gmail.com.tr]

In reality it is God who is fully wise. That is, he knows the absolute truth about the truth of everything. But it can be said that people are more or less wise to the extent that they know more or less about the more important truths.<sup>1</sup>

Aristotle, one of the first masters of philosophical thought, says that people have to do philosophy. Philosophy is an activity that people cannot escape from. That's why philosophy is everyone's business. Every person who sees the world and has consciousness about the world perceives the world with the determination and direction of mind and consciousness. In the emergence of philosophy as a product, there is a free subject with intention and will. The action based on the will and will of the free individual naturally reveals the dimension of his being a moral being. In this respect, philosophy corresponds to a correct understanding when it is grasped with all these aspects. Philosophy is an essential activity of man and his essence. However, based on this statement, it should not be concluded that every human being has been or has been philosophizing throughout his existence. In other words, we have to limit the statement that philosophy is everybody's business by contingency, starting from reality. The fact that philosophy is everyone's business indicates that man, as a type of being, is equipped with the ability to philosophize.

The fact that philosophy is a mental act that corresponds to the questioning and realization of one's self, existence and life corresponds to the first step in understanding philosophical activity. In perceiving the world, cognition is realized through mental inferences that work with the material brought by the perception-sense faculty, as well as the process of reaching and grasping things directly, which Husserl calls internal experimentation.<sup>2</sup> That's why everyone sees the world from a certain point of view,

<sup>1</sup> René Descartes, *Felsefenin İlkeleri*, çev. Mesut Akın (İstanbul: Say Yayınları, 1992), 34.

<sup>2</sup> Edmund Husserl, *Kesin Bir Bilim Olarak Felsefe*, çev. Abdullah Kaygı (Ankara: Türkiye Felsefe Kurumu Yayınları, 2007), 43.

everyone has a certain and regular orientation towards life. We direct our actions in the light of a certain belief or principles, with the ability to think at the center of the orientation towards life. We begin to philosophize when we make claims about the right or wrong of something. Here, embodying mental understanding by verbalizing it is the second step of philosophical activity. In this context, the inquiries we make about almost every area of life correspond to the work of philosophizing. For example, the questioning we do because of the sadness we feel in the face of an event that contradicts our moral judgments is the work of philosophy. Similarly, the reasons given to support one political attitude against another correspond to the philosophy made by using everyday language in daily life. Therefore, having reason and understanding naturally necessitates being intertwined with philosophy.

This realization differs in terms of the person and the professional philosopher. However, when we look back at philosophy itself, it can be easily seen that philosophy as a business is not limited to the field of mental and cognitive existence. In philosophical action, it also creates a linguistic field of existence apart from the subject. Language is the most important concretization tool that enables philosophy to emerge as a product. Therefore, the expression patterns that emerge through language constitute one of the most important pillars that determine the nature and color of philosophy. The linguistic basis of philosophizing is the limits and conditions arising from language and action, which compel it to a limited manifestation. This determines the color of the philosopher or the philosophical school, that is, his opinion. As philosophy finds its manifestation in language and action, this state of visibility begins to find its manifestation in consciousness again. Thus, philosophical thought finds a parallel in the minds and guides similar and contradictory ideas.

In philosophizing, then, we can distinguish two different kinds of action. This distinction shows the quality difference in the approach of people who are not technically related to philosophy

in daily life and people who have taken philosophy as a profession. As a matter of fact, it is a fact that philosophy has a separate position in the eyes of professional philosophers and in this context, it corresponds to a more sophisticated situation.

In this context, philosophy today means one thing to general readers and another to professional practitioners of philosophy. Philosophy is to draw out some directives on how to live by thinking about the meaning of life in the general public or by seeking answers to some questions.<sup>3</sup> For the lay philosopher, it is an exploration of issues about the analysis and delimitation of concepts and knowledge bases, with highly technical and rigorous questions. The answers to these questions on the practical issues of life raise a philosophical issue before us.

The philosopher is concept-friendly. It carries the power of concept generation. This is to say that philosophy is not simply the art of forming, exploring, producing concepts, because concepts are not necessarily forms, products, or discoveries. In a more difficult definition, philosophy is a discipline that involves creating concepts. Always creating new concepts; This is the purpose of philosophy. Since the concept has to be created, it refers to the philosopher as the person who carries it in himself as a power, or the person who has the power and competence to create it. There can be no objection that creation is more specific to the realm of the sensible and the arts. To the extent that art creates mental unity, philosophical concepts are also "sensibilities". To put it more precisely, the sciences, art, and philosophies are all creative, even though it is only philosophy to create concepts in the strict sense. Concepts do not wait for us as pre-completed like celestial bodies. There is no separate sky for concepts. They must be discovered, produced, or originally created, and are nothing unless they bear the signature of their creator. Indeed, Nietzsche; "Philosophers should not be content with accepting the concepts given to them just to clean and polish them, but they should start by producing,

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<sup>3</sup> See Richard Peters, "Locke," *Western Political Philosophers*, ed. Maurice William Cranston (London: Fontana, 1964), 63.

creating and presenting them, and they should persuade people to apply to these concepts. As a result, until today, everyone has come from a miraculous realm, and he himself is a miraculous person. she was confident in her own concepts, as if it were a dowry," he wrote, determining the task of philosophy.<sup>4</sup> In this context, philosophy is the art of creating, exploring and producing concepts. But this answer not only needed to wrap up the question, but also to identify a time, an opportunity, coincidences, landscapes and personalities, circumstances and unknowns of the question.<sup>5</sup>

In philosophizing, everyone performs the act of philosophizing in proportion to the power of his language. Of course, the competence in the use of language and the ability to present argumentation will be decisive between the philosophy made by staying in the everyday language and the philosophy made by the philosopher. Therefore, while the language used by ordinary people to philosophize is simple everyday language, the language used by professional philosophers has a technical and abstract nature. While the professional philosopher clarifies the stages of thought by carefully constructing his proofs through the language he uses, the commoners express their philosophical attitudes on a subject with implications, actions and behaviors. There is also fragmentation and disorder in the philosophical attitudes of the commoners. The philosopher always acts within a certain system and systematic thought while questioning the world, life, existence and existence. However, it is not possible to find this integrity and systematicity in the questioning of a public person. Therefore, we see that the basic character of philosophical thought and knowledge based on it corresponds to questioning but remaining within a certain systematic.

When we turn to the problematic area that constitutes philosophical knowledge, we first encounter the fact that the questions

<sup>4</sup> Gilles Deleuze, *Felsefe Nedir?*, çev. Turhan Ilgaz (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2001), 18-19.

<sup>5</sup> Deleuze, *Felsefe Nedir?*, 15.

"what is philosophy" and "what should it be" are frequently discussed. Aside from the answers given to these questions, we should be able to see that philosophy is a research. Research is a form of work that can often renew itself. Like any research, philosophy is open to new questions. Where the questions have always remained the same, philosophy has ceased to be a research. The nature of philosophy makes it possible to face the problems brought by the present moment and to produce answers to questions.

However, people have formed a discourse that they will always remember, judge, evaluate about their cumulative successes and experiences, which they can easily read and own from behind. We can also call it making history and owning it. The ancient questions that man and humanity face in their history always appear in new colors and disguises. The fact that these questions have a structure that is ready for open-ended answers has left them in the position of being questions that always preserve the same essence. In fact, the universal reflections inherent in the reality-based essential structure, which is also related to the characteristics of the human species, ensure the continuity of the questions in some human problem areas. Yes, things are changing, change depending on time and place creates a flow in full speed. But man is essentially the same human being. Those who love, hate, have mercy, hold grudges, forgive or be in the will to punish, etc. Attitudes point to existential situations in the field of unchanging problems for human beings, who are ethical beings. In addition, the changing context of things-time and space creates innovations and new problem areas related to change and provides new questions based on this. It may not make the questions about the present directly related to the past, provided by the attitude of the research spirit, which points to the change-related aspect of philosophy and actually identifies with the philosophical attitude. Therefore, it is clear that philosophy has undergone some revolutions in terms of its questions, albeit at long intervals. Sometimes a fundamental question has been transferred from philosophy to

science, and that question has become one of the fundamental questions of scientific thought. Thinkers working around this question also evaluate them as scientists. Sometimes a set of questions that have kept some schools of philosophy alive for a while is made public, in the midst of great commotion, as wrong. These cases are mostly made on the material that is the subject of discussion in the context of the case.<sup>6</sup>

From this point of view, it is a fact that the problem area of *Philosophia perennis*<sup>7</sup>, which is perceived as the immutability of individual philosophical questions and causes interpretations, is actually updated and brought to the agenda. In that case, the judgment that "philosophy questions do not have an unchanging foundation" is closely related to the questioner's inability to form a constant. Since a person who is in a position to philosophize is not in a position to maintain his existence in the same pose in eternal identity, this situation makes it easier to see on what ontological ground the epistemological variability is observed.

Well, as a philosophical problem, "what can I know?" How can we define the sign of the question? The question of "what can I know", which gave way to the epistemology of philosophy, is quite famous. The answers given and to be given to this question allow to navigate within the boundaries of epistemology. However, the response to the act of "knowing" is not limited to staying within the interest of philosophy. In addition to the fact that philosophy is the subject of "knowing", it is important that the basic interest of sciences is "knowing" and on which ground both acts of knowing act. Products that correspond to knowing in the factual field of science and presented in the mind-phenomenon relationship connect knowing with the perception-phenomenon plane. However, as pointed out, knowing is not a problem limited to this orientation.

Questions about knowing bring together a gap, almost a copy,

<sup>6</sup> Nermi Uygur, *Felsefenin Çağrısı* (İstanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 1984), 23.

<sup>7</sup> Philosophical wisdom is also expressed as pre-eternal wisdom.

in the phrase we call question-phrase, which is the subject of an important part of daily questions. The person who is asked a question is called to fill this gap, to replace the broken thing. Daily questions have always taken a place in life in its own specific context, with the existence corresponding to the reasons for being asked and the answer bases found in life's potential. Therefore, if you take a look at the various tasks and functions of daily questions, it will be seen that these questions do not have only one-way functions. Each question and its success function in a different question situation. Each different question situation also shows in which context that entity or phenomenon is of interest. Therefore, the question and its success are different depending on the situation. This is where the air of incompleteness that permeates the questions comes from. As a matter of fact, in daily questions, how many, who, how much, etc. the lack of expressions is pressed. It is these words that cause the question to be asked, and for example, in the answer to the question "how many officers work in this office", the question is answered with the number of civil servants substituted for the word "how many". The questioner's ignorance of a certain world-situation is remedied by someone who knows the situation. "How many working officers are in this office", "how many desks and chairs are in this office" etc. questions contain a gap with the preposition question and this gap is filled with the data of perception, experience, action, observation in answering the question. In order to fill the gap in the place of the word "how many", the data obtained as a result of perception, experience and action is put into that gap and the gap is removed.<sup>8</sup>

However, philosophical questions are not like that. Philosophy questions are directly related to perception, experiences, observations, etc. does not require application. Because, first of all, there are no gaps in philosophy questions and these questions turn into answers as a result of the mental operation that necessitates a universal understanding. For example: What is matter? What is life? What is death? What is causality? Etc. There are no

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<sup>8</sup> Uygur, *Felsefenin Çağrısı*, 23.



spaces in the questions and “what is” does not correspond to a certain space. In these questions, no matter what is put in place of the word what, the blank cannot be filled. The answer given to the filling pattern questions in everyday language is perception, experiment, observation, etc. It is an action that is satisfying because it is the result of an action and that aims to fill the gap in the problem. The answer sought or given for the philosophy question is not exactly an answer. Since the answer to the philosophical question does not exactly correspond to a gap-filling, it leads to the action of meeting stronger resistance and generating an answer. For example, “What is matter?” “What is causation?” No sentence such as “this is the substance” or “this is the causality” can constitute a complete answer to the questions. In other words, this filling pattern, which is used for daily questions, cannot be applied to philosophy questions. In philosophy, every filling sentence, far from preventing the question that gave rise to that sentence from being asked again, causes the question to be asked more persistently than before.<sup>9</sup> However, the questioner who asks a daily question, does he/she definitely understand the answer given by the filling sentence, does not ask that question again as a pure question, since there is no gap left in his question; this is logically futile.

Philosophy questions, and especially philosophy questions asked with what is it, appear before us in a monotonous guise. What is beautiful? What is the item? What is soul? What is human? Etc. questions interrogate a certain concept in the question statement. In addition to this, there are also types of questions that come out of the question source with “what is” but come up with different question patterns. The question “How many types of reasoning are there” also aims to question the concept of reasoning. This type of question can easily lead us back to the question of what reasoning is. Thus, the mind of the philosophical question always determines what the concept in the question sentence is, its existence, existence, nature and reflections, etc. it leads to un-

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<sup>9</sup> Uygur, *Felsefenin Çağırısı*, 23.

derstanding. "What is" determines the establishment of philosophical questions and gives the criterion of the philosophical question. The "what" in the philosophical question is not a makeshift "what". In this question, what makes this question a question of philosophy is confusion. Asking the questioner and being surprised are inseparable. In addition, there is an objective structure that saves asking from personal relativity. The establishment of the philosophical question shows that the confusion in philosophy is intrinsically attached to the question. For example, what is the soul? His question is more than just a momentary stop for temporary surprise. Here, it is asked with great surprise what the soul is. How can this question be resolved? What the soul is amazes me and arouses a sense of wonder. "What is the soul?" When I ask the question, I am actually asking because I cannot help myself from being surprised and surprised by the word "spirit". With this question, I take it as my duty to research the concept of soul by wondering. Taking this questioning as a model, it can be thought that the mood of the person acts in the same way for similar inquiries.<sup>10</sup>

We can also see the effort to understand and comprehend in the question of "what is" in the question of "why". "Why is this so?" In a questioning style, time-space-perception-situation etc. a struggle of comprehension is seen accompanied by many determinants. In the why question, an attempt to question and understand existence, essence and relations (categories) is indicated. It is obvious that the question and questioning about why will also lead to open-ended answers. It is difficult to find entirely satisfactory answers in an inquiry into why. It is not possible to offer a complete explanation especially about singular entities and universal concepts. Why is there a soul? The question will expand questioning and answering by renewing and developing itself both as a question and as an answer.

Consequently, philosophical questions have a fundamental

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<sup>10</sup> See Uygur, *Felsefenin Çağrısı*, 28.

impact on the effort to philosophize. Every philosophical question, regardless of the field, initiates a human interest, orientation and therefore thinking about a dimension of what exists or should be. Therefore, philosophical questions play a central role in establishing the connection between the subject and the subject of the mind and perception outside the subject. Philosophical questions are important tools in the way of thinking and analysis. However, thinking creates a cyclical process that requires asking questions and asking questions requires thinking.<sup>11</sup> However, philosophy does not aim to ask only questions and produce questions, but to put forward this question, the problem and problematize it by thinking about the most fundamental question. Philosophical questions do not only point to the side of the subject that awaits an explanation and solution to a problem related to things. In addition, they also draw attention to the wrong, baseless and inadequate aspects of explanations, interpretations and interpretations that seem to be problem-free and sufficient. Thus, it leads to new answers beyond the given answers. In that case, philosophical questions not only reveal an awareness of the object, the outside world, but also reveal a certain explanation of the object and the awareness of the answer given, and constitute an important element of philosophical existence.

Philosophical knowledge examines the ability of the mind to know, the state of things to reveal itself to the mind, the nature of the relationship between mind and things, the ratio of the mind's revealing itself and its capacity, which is one of the elements that enable knowing, through language. It is obvious that philosophical knowledge will reveal this questioning, comprehension and analysis through language. In addition, the determination of reality and the problematic structures that arise in this field, etc. It allows to attempt to present analysis by questioning method. Then it is a fact that philosophy corresponds to the effort that makes it possible to comprehend and analyze on the basis of questioning. It is seen that asking questions is the result of interest, while interest

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<sup>11</sup> Ömer Mahir Alper, *Felsefenin Doğası* (İstanbul: Metropol Yayınları, 2006), 76.

requires knowledge to realize comprehension. Interest, question, knowledge are the basic concepts that formulate the effort put forward in philosophical thought. It is seen that the cycle that constitutes philosophical thought corresponds to curiosity, interest based on the feeling of surprise, knowledge based on interest, renewal based on the critique of knowledge, and continuous mental activity formed by renewed gaze.

If we want to try to value philosophy, we must first free our minds from the prejudices of men who are wrongly called realists. The "realistic" man, in the sense in which this word is usually used, is one who sees only material needs for the eye, who thinks that people need to be fed for their bodies, but forgets that they must also provide nourishment to the mind. If all people were well off, if poverty and sickness were reduced to the lowest possible level, there would still be much left to do to build a worthwhile society, and even in today's world the values of the mind are just as important as the value of the body. The value of philosophy must be sought only among the values of the mind, and only people who are not indifferent to the values of the mind can be persuaded that philosophy is not a waste of time.<sup>12</sup>

Then, the value of philosophy must be sought in its uncertainty in its broader form. The man who has never had a share in philosophy is a life-long prisoner of prejudices derived from common sense, from the customary thoughts of his age and nation, and from the decisions that lodged in his mind without the strictness or approval of his own free reason. In such a man the world tends to be definite, finite, and open, common objects pose no problem, unconventional possibilities are dismissed with contempt. On the contrary, as soon as you begin to deal with philosophy, even the most intricate things in daily life led to questions that lack answers. Although philosophy cannot convincingly tell us the correct answers to the doubts it raises, it can reveal many

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<sup>12</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Felsefe Sorunları*, çev. Vehbi Hacıkadıroğlu (İstanbul: Kabalcı Yayınevi, 1994), 123.

possibilities that expand our thinking and free them from the tyranny of habit. Thus, while weakening their firm belief in what things are, it greatly increases our knowledge of what they might be; The savior destroys the somewhat arrogant dogmatism of those who have never traveled in the realm of doubt, and keeps our curiosity alive by showing the familiar with their unconventional faces.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, to summarize the discussion on the value of philosophy, Philosophy is not meant to get definitive answers to its questions, because as a rule the accuracy of definite answers cannot be known. Your questions must be learned for themselves; because these questions broaden our understanding of what is possible, enrich our intellectual imagination, and reduce the dogmatic reliance that shuts the mind to fictions; but above all, because through the greatness of the universe before which philosophy contemplates, it grows in the mind and imparts the highest good, that is, the ability to integrate with the universe.<sup>14</sup>

Philosophical thinking or learning to think is not an easy task, because philosophy does not include a judgment that everyone agrees with like science. Despite thousands of years of efforts in philosophy, judgments that are valid for everyone have not been reached. What will be accepted for philosophy; it is the absence of a judgment in which everyone agrees. However, this does not mean that philosophy is a haphazard and accidental endeavor. It has some foundations based on sound logical reasoning and without contradictions in the epistemological sense. This basic philosopher determines the meaning and content in a certain cultural environment and is dealt with with a continuous dynamism. Although philosophical justifications seem to be an individual and relative approach, they have to embrace the general in terms of their purposes. The theories put forward by philosophers are valuable not for their content and consequences, but because they provide an example of thinking that tries to guide it in a coherent

<sup>13</sup> Russell, *Felsefe Sorunları*, 125-126.

<sup>14</sup> See Russell, *Felsefe Sorunları*, 122-129.

way. Orientation towards philosophical studies can be defined as deep reflection. Because, no matter how rich, scientific and technical the information we have gained through our experiences in life, none of them gives us the ability to think. Philosophy is the work of thinking, questioning and investigating this information.<sup>15</sup>

As a result, philosophy as a branch of knowledge tends to give general and holistic information on subjects such as the universe, God, human spirit and human destiny; We can say that he investigated the first causes and principles. We need to know that philosophy deals with general and deep questions that have been the subject of Metaphysics. We can state that the sciences have developed and provided much more robust and controllable information in their field than the explanations offered by philosophy once, and therefore philosophy has made the human mind the focus of researching knowledge and value judgments by turning to the human mind and its products. That philosophy has shifted - again to a critical reflection; We can say that it has entered into a new cooperation with the sciences and, based on the information given by them, still tends to draw a general picture of existence and make an inclusive explanation. Thus, we must draw attention to the fact that philosophy is an effort to reach a more critical, clear and conscious understanding of both knowledge and self in all ages.<sup>16</sup>

Indeed, the essence and immortal aspect of philosophy is not in the philosophical systems that have been established throughout history and destroyed over time and as conditions change, but in the effort and orientation that created these systems. Philosophy, open to new realities, examining and criticizing them; It is an effort of in-depth thought that wants to shed light on every issue by taking it from the root. In other words, just like the whole of existence, the findings and explanations of philosophy are things

<sup>15</sup> Müslim Akdemir, "Felsefi Düşünme ya da Düşünmeyi Öğrenme," *Kazım Karabekir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi* 10 (2004), 45.

<sup>16</sup> Selahattin Hilav, *Felsefe El Kitabı* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2010), 24.

that constantly appear, change, part disappear, and part survive in another form. But underneath all this change, there is something that continues and remains. What remains is human thought, which proceeds by creating various systems of philosophy that claim to have the last word, and which, through constant criticism, makes itself clearer and more conscious; It is the intellectual effort of human beings that constantly deepens on their knowledge, creations, hopes and aspirations.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Hilav, *Felsefe El Kitabı*, 24-25.

