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Classical Western Philosophy Democritus Philosophy YouTube Lecture Handouts

[Democritus: Materialism, Logical Atomism, Theory of Knowledge, Aesthetics, Classical Western Philosophy \[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zixEdDILQUs\]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zixEdDILQUs)

Title: Classical Western Philosophy Democritus

About Democritus

- Belonged to pre-Socratic philosophy.
- The Greek meaning of Democritus is “chosen by people.”
- Disciple of Leucippus.
- Philosophy of Atoms and void.
- Branches of Philosophy- Ethics, Aesthetics, Epistemology and Metaphysics.
- Against Sophism.
- Nature of Knowledge- Mechanism and materialism.

Materialism

- Materialism = Matter is the sole reality.
- **Nothing except matter exists.**
- Everything is composed of Atoms.
- Nature of Atoms - physically indivisible and are imperishable.
- Therefore, atoms are always in motion.

Logical Atomism

- Nature consists of two Fundamental components; **Atom and Void**.
- Atoms are of different shape and size, indestructible, and surrounded by a void.
- They come together, they collide with each other and form clusters which give rise to various organisms in the world.



Theory of Knowledge

- Difference between perception and rational thought.
- Perception gives us knowledge of the sensible world
- Thought gives us the knowledge of Being.
- So, difference between permanent knowledge and transitory knowledge.
- Difference between subjective and objective knowledge.

Perception

- Subjective
- Temporary
- Changes
- Particular

Rational Thinking

- Objective
- Permanent
- Fixed
- Universal

Aesthetics and Ethics

- Democritus established Aesthetics as a branch of philosophy in the Western study.
- He wrote a number of literary works, for example; On Poetry, On the beauty of Verses, On Rhythm and Harmony, On Songs, etc.
- Soul is an aggregate of fiery atoms.
- Essence of atoms is fire.
- Present in us all, in everything around us.
- But most number of fiery atoms present in men.
- Happiness = gentle movement of Fiery atoms in us.
- True happiness = True friendship
- Note: True Happiness concept also discussed on similar lines in **Bhagvad Gita**.

Questions

According to Democritus, the nature of atoms is

- A. Physically Indivisible and Imperishable
- B. Physically Divisible and Imperishable
- C. Always in Motion
- D. Both A and C

Answer: D

Explanation: Nature of Atoms - They are physically indivisible and are imperishable. Everything around us, even we are composed of atoms. Therefore, atoms are always in motion.

 Manishika