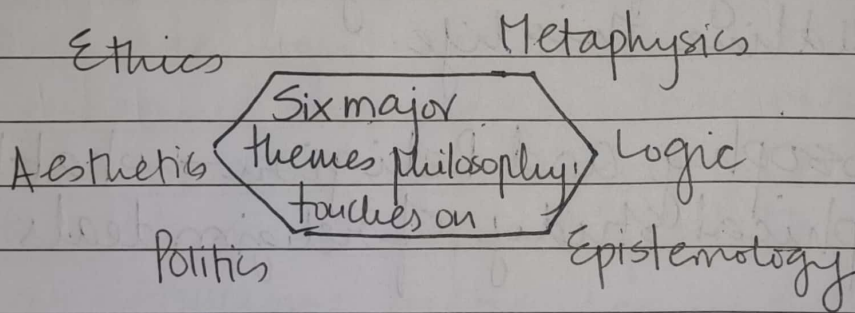


Q. Define Philosophy. What is its relationship with religion.

“A little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion”

(Sir Francis Bacon)

The word philosophy means love of wisdom. Indeed, it is a love of wisdom that guides philosophers to explore the fundamental questions about who we are and why we are here. Through philosophy, we are able to explore concepts like the meaning of life, knowledge, the existence of God, consciousness, morality, reality and so forth.



In a very broad sense, there are six major themes philosophy touches on!

I Metaphysics

The study of the universe and reality.

II. Logic

The art of correct reasoning and how to create a valid argument

III. Epistemology

The study of knowledge and how we acquire knowledge

IV. Aesthetics

The study of art and beauty

V. Politics

The study of political rights, government, and the role of citizens

VI. Ethics

The study of morality and how one should live this life

I. Philosophy and Religion - what the philosophical study of religion deals with

The philosophical study of religion deals with the notions of miracles, prayer, the nature and existence of God; how religion and other value-systems relate to one another and the problem of evil. It looks at themes and concepts found

in religious traditions.

II. ^{Religion} Philosophy and logical positivism - how philosophers began to challenge the standard religious language and reject nonempirical claims

Religious language can often be viewed as mysterious, imprecise and vague. In the twentieth century, philosophers began to challenge the traditional religious language and attempted to reject any claims that were non-empirical in a school of thought known as logical positivism.

i. Claims containing empirical inferences

in religion - difficulty in reconciling religion with philosophy

According to logical positivism, only those claims that contained empirical inferences or were from mathematics and logic could be deemed meaningful. This meant that many religious statements such as those that described 'abstract' qualities of God as 'gracious' were deemed meaningless as they could not be verified.

ii. Proof of God through logic and the work of language

In the second half of the twentieth century, many philosophers began to find the claims of logical positivism

to be problematic and the work of language by Wittgenstein and work in naturalism by Quine became increasingly popular. By 1970s, new theories and interpretations of religious language and its philosophical exploration came forth.

iii. Descartes' proof for the existence of God and Spinoza's views on naturalist explanations of God later, Descartes' came up with an entirely rationalist explanation for the proof that God exists within innate reality and human reason, whereas Spinoza extended the thought that God is present in all forms of reality.

III The Empirical Problem of Evil by Hume - religious convictions and existence of morality created by David Hume, the empirical problems of evil claim that if one were not exposed to prior commitments such as religious knowledge and convictions, the experience of evil in the world would lead one to atheism and the notion of a God that is good and omnipotent would not exist.

IV. Theodicy - branch of philosophy that attempts to reconcile religion and philosophy

Theodicy is a branch of philosophy that attempts to reconcile the belief in a God that is benevolent, omniscient and omnipotent with the existence of evil and suffering.

Theodicy accepts that God is able to end evil and that evil exists, and tries to understand why God has not stopped it.

i. Leibniz's claim of an optimal world due to a perfect God

Leibniz claims that this world is the most optimal among other possible worlds and that because it was created by a God that is perfect, it must be the most balanced and best possible world there can be.

V. Aristotle's cosmological argument ^{proof of} the existence of God as an "Unmoved Mover"

Aristotle's cosmological argument claims that since the world and universe exist, this implies that they were brought into existence, and are kept in existence, by a being. There must be a "first mover" which is God, because an infinite regress is simply not possible.

Date:

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i. Modal cosmological argument for God's existence

It is stated that the universe might not have existed and therefore, ^{there} needs to be an explanation for why it does

ii Temporal cosmological argument for God's Being

There must have been a point in time when the universe began to exist and this existence must have been caused by something outside of the universe, that is God.

iii The Teleological Argument

The argument also referred to as "intelligent design" claims that because there is order in the world and universe, the world must have been created by a being that had the specific purpose of creating life in mind.

It was propounded by medieval Christian philosophers, especially St. Thomas Aquinas and was developed in great detail in the 17th and 18th centuries by thinkers such as Samuel Clarke and William Paley.