

Question:

Ibn-i-Tamymiyya Criticism on Aristotle.

Answer:

Introduction:

Ibn-i-Taymiyya was a prominent Islamic scholar and thinker who is known for the rigorous defense of Islamic theology and his critique of Greek philosophy, particularly Aristotle.

While Aristotle had a major influence on Muslim philosophers like Al-Farabi, Avicenna and Averroes, Ibn Taymiyya was highly critical of the philosophical system derived from Greek logic and metaphysics. Ibn Taymiyya argued that they often conflict with Islamic teachings.

Ibn Taymiyya Criticism on Aristotle:

Ibn Taymiyya criticized Greek philosophers particularly Aristotle. He criticized the thinking of Aristotle on Logic, Metaphysics, causality, philosophical speculation and Human knowledge with conflict with the Islamic teachings.

1) Ibn Taymiyya on Logic and Revelation:

Aristotle's view of logic:

Aristotle developed logic as a neutral tool to analyze arguments. For him logic is the foundation of rational inquiry independent of religion or revelation. It aims to test validity regardless of truth of its content.

Ibn Taymiyya Criticism:

Ibn Taymiyya accept the value of Logic but he rejected the claim of neutrality. He argued that human reason cannot reach to the ultimate truth, specially in matter of God and creation.

Logic become dangerous when it challenge revelation, deny God's attributes and claim authority over divine truths.

Ibn Taymiyya placed revelation (Quran and Sunnah) above reason and said that logic is useful only if it support understanding of Shariah, does not contradict divine knowledge. He saw logic as a servant of revelation not an independent or superior.

2. Criticism of Aristotelian Metaphysics

According to Aristotle

Aristotle view about Matter:-

According to Aristotle matter and form are eternal. They were never created and were always being there in some form.

Ibn Taymiyya Criticism:

Ibn Taymiyya argued this view as it clashes with Islamic teachings. The Quran clearly says "Allah is the creator, and He brought the universe into existence when it does not exist before."

Aristotle logic was admired by many Muslim philosophers but Ibn Taymiyya warned them of accepting any idea contradicting with the Islamic belief. Taymiyya emphasized revelation over human philosophy meaning that reason must stay within the limits of faith.

3) Criticism on natural cause:

Aristotle's view:

Aristotle believed in the natural causality. which means that every effect has a natural

cause.

For example: Fire will burn cotton because burning is part of the fire nature.

Aristotle claimed that universe work on its own laws ^{causes} independent of any divine force.

Ibn Taymiyya criticism:

For Ibn Taymiyya causes do not act by themselves, they work only under Allah will.

He rejected the idea of Aristotle.

Fire does not burn cotton by its own nature, Allah allows it to burn at that moment. He emphasized nothing happens without Allah's will. No causality is independent it is always tied to Divine causation.

1) Criticism on Philosophical thought:

Aristotle's View:

Aristotle relied on abstract philosophical reasoning without relying on revelation. This method heavily influenced Muslim philosophers such as Avicenna and Al Farabi who blended Greek philosophy with Islamic thoughts.

Ibn Taymiyya Criticism:

Ibn Taymiyya opposed this complete dependence on rational speculation, he argued that such philosophy leads to theological mistakes, such as denying God's knowledge and misunderstanding creation.

Ibn Taymiyya highlighted literal and scriptural approach.

- Relying on Quran and Sunnah as the ultimate source of truth.
- Accepting God's attributes as revealed without twisting or over rationalizing them.
- Using reason only a supportive tool.

5) Emphasis on Divine Knowledge over Human Reason:

Approach of Aristotle:

Aristotle trust human reason as the highest tool for gaining of knowledge. According to him Philosophy could answer even ultimate questions about God, creation and morality through rational inquiry.

Ibn Taymiyya Criticism:

Ibn Taymiyya argued that Aristotle explanation of reason above revelation is dangerous for theology.

Taymiyya insisted that human intellect is limited, it can believe basic truth like God exists, but it cannot fully comprehend divine realities like God's attributes, creation and afterlife.

Ibn Taymiyya provided alternatives that

- True and ultimate knowledge comes only through Allah's revelation (The Quran & Sunnah).
- Reason must stay subordinate to revelation.

Conclusion:

Ibn Taymiyya criticism of Aristotle is rooted in his commitment to Islamic theology. He rejected the eternity of the world, independent cause, and excessive reliance on human reason in Aristotelian philosophy.

For him Aristotle's logic and metaphysics principles are useful only when they align

with Islamic teachings, but they can not
replace divine revelation as the ultimate
source of truth.

Ibn Taymiyya Critique represents a broader
Islamic response to Greek philosophy, emphasizing
faith, revelation over ^{abstract} rationalism.