

Combination of Mythological, Religious and Philosophical Worldviews

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Article Information

Received: March 13, 2023

Accepted: April 22, 2023

Published: May 06, 2023

Keywords: *philosophical skills, computer programming, management consultancy, philosophical thinking, conceptualization, environmental-climatic conditions, communicative factor.*

Abstract: The article covers significant point about philosophy, its historical background and general view. Moreover, this article deals with the importance of world views and characteristic features of combination of mythological, religious and philosophical worldviews.

Philosophy is an activity, a way of thinking about certain sorts of question. Its most distinctive feature is its use of logical argument. Philosophy teaches to think, thus not only to know, but to be able to apply this knowledge when solving everyday questions. Philosophy is a study of universal (most common) laws of nature, society and thinking. Normally the course of philosophy is divided into the theory of philosophy and the history of philosophy. During our course we will try to think about philosophical issues ourselves and at the same time analyze what certain great figures have thought about them. The course will involve a mixture of historical and topic-based study, since if we don't know about the arguments and errors of earlier philosophers, we cannot hope to make a substantial contribution to the subject. Without some knowledge of history philosophers would never progress: they would keep making the same mistakes, unaware that they had been made before[1]. And many philosophers develop their own theories by seeing what is wrong with the work of earlier philosophers. One important reason for studying philosophy is that it deals with fundamental questions about the meaning of our existence. Most of us at some times in our lives ask ourselves basic philosophical questions. Why are we here? Is there any proof that God exists? Is there any purpose to any lives? What makes anything right or wrong? Could we ever be justified in breaking the law? Is mind different

from body, or are we simply physical beings who only sleep and eat? How does science progress? Most people who study philosophy believe that it is important that each of us examines such questions.

Some even argue that an unexamined life is not worth living. To carry on a routine existence without ever examining the principles on which it is based maybe like driving a car which has never been serviced. You may be justified in trusting the brakes, the steering, the engine, since they have always worked well enough up until now; but you may be completely unjustified in this trust: the brake pads may fail you when you most need them. Similarly the principles on which your life is based may be entirely sound, but until you've examined them, you can't be certain of this. Another reason for studying philosophy is that it provides a good way of learning to think more clearly about a wide range of issues. The methods of philosophical thought can be useful in a variety of situations, since by analyzing the arguments for and against any position we learn skills which can be transferred to other areas of life. Many people who study philosophy go on to apply their philosophical skills in jobs as diverse as the law, computer programming, management consultancy, the civil service, and journalism – all areas in which clarity of thought is a great asset.

The first attempts to understand the world around the man began when the man, probably in 5000 – 4000 BC, in the process of evolution started to differentiate nature as his habitat which is something different and opposed to the man. The fathers of philosophical thinking were in Ancient Egypt, Sumeria, Babylon, which can be proved by numerous, however indirect, historical monuments. Unfortunately, we do not have any written evidence of their philosophical thinking[2]. Ancient philosophical works, which are known to us, appeared in 2000 BC in Ancient India, Ancient China, and later in Ancient Greece. Those were mostly works of literature (myths), which described primitive ideas about the world around the man and contained attempts of its conceptualization. Philosophy reached its greatest success in Ancient Greece. The first Greek philosophers were Thales, Anaximander, Pythagoras, Xenophanes, Heraclitus (6th century BC). In Western philosophy the following stages can be singled out: Ancient philosophy, Medieval philosophy (5 – 16th century), philosophy of Renaissance (16 – 17th century), Modern philosophy (17 – 18th century), Classical German philosophy (end of 18th – beginning of 19th century), Non-classical philosophy (19 – 20th century), Contemporary philosophy. The first to use the term 'philosophy' was Pythagoras (around 500–580 BC). Originally the term 'philosophy' denoted striving for knowledge in general, that's why it embraced all fields of knowledge: from life and existence to moral standards and rules. Gradually particular spheres of knowledge arose from philosophy and became sciences, so philosophy was understood as a system of views on the world and man's relation to it.

The study of philosophy is closely connected with the concept of 'worldview'. Worldview (from German 'Weltanschauung') is a system of views on the world as a whole and an individual's attitude to this world. The subject of the worldview is an individual, or a social group, class, society. Each subject contributes something new, inimitable to the worldview thus making it unique and original[3]. As we know there can't be two people absolutely alike in their temperament, life experience, therefore with the same world-perception. Worldview is common experiences of a people from a geographical region, environmental-climatic conditions, the economic resources available, socio-cultural systems, and the linguistic family. However we shouldn't forget that an individual is part of the world (is in the world), and since there is no worldview without an individual, and an individual needs this view on the world to live, he/she

is relatively autonomous. Thus worldview consists of two subsystems – ‘individual’ and ‘world’. The main, central issue of any worldview is relations between individual and world. According to the essential role they played in individual’s spiritual development, the following forms of worldview can be singled out: mythological, everyday, religious, artistic, natural and philosophic. They all arose from individual’s need in perception of the world and self-perception. Mythological worldview was formed in the primitive society, its background being inherent thinking and feeling, striving to speculate on what is going on around. Communicative factor in families and tribes, and especially first graphic and sensible images, handed down from one generation to another in the form of pictures, sculptures etc, widened people’s scope and lead to attempts to somehow explain natural phenomena.

Religious form of worldview arose on the basis of convergent development of ideas about the system of gods of mythological worldview, and gradual realization of the fact that apart from subjective and natural worlds there is a supernatural world. Like mythology, religion is based on sensible images, develops ability to imagine and fantasize[4]. But unlike mythology, religion concentrates imagination and fantasy on the supernatural, spiritual. Religion is based on personal experiences (faith). It is focused on belief in God, on achievement of true moral (godlike) values and eternity. Religion is connected not only with faith, but also with prayers and sacramentals. Religion was formed in the Old Stone Age (40-50 thousand years ago). The most widespread, or as they are also called ‘world’ religions are Buddhism (6-5th century BC), Christianity (1st century) and Islam (7th century). What unites them is belief in the supernatural. Philosophical worldview arose at a more advanced level of social, economic and cultural development, showing its first characteristics in the 12-8th hundreds BC in Ancient India, Ancient China, Ancient Egypt. However the official rise of philosophical worldview as a specific form of mental activity is related to the great Cultural Revolution in Ancient Greece (8-5th centuries BC), when democracy revealed opportunities for free thinking. One of the reasons why philosophical worldview arose was the contradiction between scientific knowledge, which was gaining power at that time and thus seeking to be autonomous in its strive to explain nature and natural phenomena, and mythological and religious worldviews. We all know that science is driven by evidence gathered in experiments, and by the falsification of extant theories and their replacement with newer, asymptotically truer, ones.

Scientific knowledge led to new relations between individual and world – not only cognitive, but also theoretic. It is worth mentioning that during a number of centuries philosophy developed together with natural sciences. Philosophers were at the same time scientists. Scientific questions were addressed as “natural philosophy”. The term “science” itself meant “knowledge” of epistemological origin. The scientific method, however, made natural philosophy an empirical and experimental activity unlike the rest of philosophy, and by the end of the eighteenth century it had begun to be called “science” in order to distinguish it from philosophy[5]. As distinct from natural sciences, philosophy as a form of worldview generalized observations made by all sciences plus all man’s experiences of perceiving the world around, including everyday observations. It united natural sciences, religious and everyday worldviews. Thus philosophy differs from science in its universal (overall) concepts and categories, its versatile or many-sided relation to reality. Philosophy, and especially ontology and epistemology, has features of scientific knowledge: objectivity, logic, dependence on ‘sufficient grounds’ principle, testability in practice etc. In this respect philosophy and natural science interact. Here philosophy performs constructive function on the one hand, and natural sciences

serve the source for developing philosophy (sometimes scientific concepts become philosophic, like 'system', 'element', 'structure') on the other hand. Philosophy also interacts with religion, everyday life, and art.

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