

Faculty of Human and Social Sciences

Department of Sociology

Level: 2nd year LMD Sociology

Instructor: Ms. Saci Meriem

Module: English Language

Lesson n°7: Philosophy

I. What is Philosophy?

- Philosophy (from **Greek**: φιλοσοφία, philosophia, 'love of wisdom') is the systematized study of general and fundamental questions, such as those about *existence, reason, knowledge, values, mind, and language*. Such questions are often posed as problems to be studied or resolved.
- Quite literally, the term "philosophy" means, *"love of wisdom" or "love of knowledge"*. In a broad sense, philosophy is an activity people undertake when they seek to understand fundamental *truths about themselves, the world in which they live, and their relationships to the world and to each other*.

II. What are The Branches of Philosophy?

There are 7 branches of Philosophy, namely, *Metaphysics, Axiology, Logic, Aesthetics, Epistemology, Ethics and Political Philosophy*. Philosophy is the study of the search for the truth and equally an effort to know the hidden realities truths about ourselves. As an academic discipline, Philosophy is hardly any different. Students who are in Philosophy programs are engaged in a pursuit of asking, answering, and resolving problems

1. Metaphysics

Metaphysics has been a primary area of philosophical debate. It is mainly concerned with explaining the nature of being and the world. Traditionally, it has two different study areas, including Cosmology and Ontology. Cosmology is focused on understanding the origin, evolution, and the eventual fate of the universe, which include laws that keep it in perfect

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order. On the other hand, Ontology investigates various types of things that exist and their relationship with each other. Much before the discovery of modern science, all the science-related questions were asked as a part of Metaphysics

2. Axiology

Also referred to as the theory of value, Axiology explores the nature of value and its metaphysical aspects. Value Theory is often interchangeably used as Axiology and this branch of Philosophy peruses upon the value of goodness. To put it simply, Axiology looks at the concept of value in terms of its philosophical terms and argues questions about nature and what actually is valued.

3. Epistemology

Another major component of Philosophy is Epistemology. Going back into history, this term originated from the Greek word episteme which literally means knowledge, and the other half of the word 'logy means 'the study of'. Basically it is about the study of knowledge. What can we know? A fundamental question concerning Epistemology is, what is knowledge? It also asks questions like, can knowledge ever be absolute? Is there a limit for humans to know certain things? If we are living in a world of simulation, how can we know it? These are some of the essential questions Epistemology seeks answers for.

4. Ethics

Everyone in their day to day life tries to conduct themselves according to some established ethical norms. This philosophical concept has different applications in a person's real life. For instance, there are certain organizations that have ethical committees which lay down rules of

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behavior for its employees. Ethics is concerned with the definition of right and wrong. It elucidates schools of thought that instruct us how to act in a given situation, which has always been a matter of contention between philosophers. Every philosopher has defined it according to their own subjective understanding.

5. Political Philosophy

Combining the two fields of Politics and Philosophy, Political Philosophy studies political government, laws, liberty, justice, rights, authority, political states and systems, ethics, and more. It explores the concepts of why we need governments, the role of played by governments, what are its constituents, amongst others.

6. Aesthetics

Every person defines beauty as per his or her own perspectives. This philosophical subject is wholly devoted to defining the different aspects of beauty, even its contours. How do we find something beautiful? Is beauty always subjective or can it be objective too? Can everyone find a thing beautiful? It also examines individual taste and attempts to provide answers about these things in a scientific manner. Aesthetic Philosophy's primary topic of investigation is beauty and art. It is often debated inside its classrooms. It also talks about performing arts like music.

7. Logic

We use this word in our commonplace conversations, so we are all aptly familiar with it. People constantly ask each other, "Where is the logic behind this or that?" People even acknowledge a good thought or act by calling it logically correct. Hence, the question arises,

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what does Science of logic has to do with Philosophy? In logic, we usually construct two sentences which are called premises, and they are used to make a conclusion. This sort of logic is called a syllogism, pioneered by Aristotle.

III. What is The History of Philosophy?

The study of philosophy involves not only forming one own answers to such questions, but also seeking to understand the way in which people have answered such questions in the past. So, a significant part of philosophy is its history, a history of answers and arguments about these very questions. In studying the history of philosophy one explores the ideas of such historical figures as: **Plato Locke Marx, Aristotle Hume Mill, Aquinas Kant Wittgenstein, and Descartes Nietzsche Sartre.**

What often motivates the study of philosophy is not merely the answers or arguments themselves but whether or not the arguments are good and the answers are true. Moreover, many of the questions and issues in the various areas of philosophy overlap and in some cases even converge. Thus, philosophical questions arise in almost every discipline. This is why philosophy also encompasses such areas as:

Philosophy of Law, Philosophy of Feminism, Philosophy of Religion, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Mind, Philosophy of Literature, Political Philosophy, Philosophy of the Arts, Philosophy of History, and Philosophy of Language.