

The Influences of Philosophy on Other Fields

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Abstract: Many thinkers have regarded it as the philosopher's task to synthesize the results of all the sciences into one uncontradictory homogenous, total picture of the world. The scientists, they argued, studied various facets of the world such as the psychological, sociological, economic, physical, political and legal: The philosopher was to integrate, synthesize the fragmentary knowledge of the sciences into a whole.

Keywords: synthesize, sciences, total picture, integrate and fragmentary knowledge

I. Introduction

The philosopher's task is to integrate the results of all the sciences into one uncontradictory homogenous total picture of the world

Purpose of Article

The purpose of the article is to articulate the influence that philosophy has on other fields of study.

Influences Of Philosophy On Other Fields.

General Observations

In more recent times **Mach** (1838 - 1916) and the positivists including **Wundt** (1832 - 1920) and **Auguste Comte** (1798 - 1857), regarded it as the philosopher's task to synthesize the results of all the sciences into one uncontradictory homogenous, total picture of the world. The scientists, they maintained, studied various facets of the world such as the psychological, sociological, economic, physical and political: the philosopher was to integrate, synthesise the fragmentary knowledge of the sciences into a whole.

What Is The Definition Of Philosophy?

By definition philosophy is a rational attempt by man to pose, and determine the validity of, both problems and solutions pertaining to a world-view and a view of life. Philosophy is then a conceptual study. Philosophy, unlike the natural sciences that manipulate laboratory apparatus and do experiments on physical objects, is a manifestation of the rational activity of the human mind. Philosophy is always a purely mental theoretical reflection and its data are concepts and statements.

Philosophy therefore, is the rational analysis, appraisal and synthesis of concepts, or in general, of ways of orientating ourselves in this world by acknowledging the place of values in a world of facts. Knowledge of philosophy assists us to avoid the blind and uncritical acceptance of a conceptual framework and to develop a rational, coherent and systematic world view. It tends to both correct and to clarify our accepted outlook on the world.

The Sharpening Of Human Abilities

Philosophy is one of the fundamental subjects and practices, for in philosophizing it will sharpen our abilities and skills which are valuable in any field of activity. For example, philosophy sharpens our ability to clarify concepts, our ability to express, to think clearly and correctly, and sharpens our ability to express ourselves clearly correctly and purposefully concisely. Philosophy sharpens our ability to assess the logical worth of a theory or argument, and our skill in the detection and assessment of the presuppositions in a field of knowledge, a view or an argument. Philosophy assists us to view a matter objectively from several angles, to pick out key points in a situation, and our ability to effect intellectual operations systematically.

The Influences Of Philosophy In Other Fields (Areas Of Knowledge).

Let us assiduously consider philosophy more specifically in relation to a selection of areas of knowledge:

Physics

general nature of **Einstein's** theory of relativity is well known in scientific circles, but few people are aware that Einstein's point of entry into his theory was conceptual analysis. Einstein asked: What do we mean when we say that two events occur simultaneously? He then showed that, when two events occur at different places, their simultaneity is relative to a particular observer.

Mathematics

Important parts of mathematics and logic are very closely connected. The mathematical method is a deductive one, that is. One in which definite rules are used to make deductions from certain assumptions. Logicians study deductive procedure and the foundations of logical systems. Scholars like **Frege, Peano, Brouwer, Russell** and **Church** all contributed to both mathematics and logic for the simple reason that the two subjects are very intimately connected.

Sociology

A society is a group of people sharing a common view of life and a common world view. This is demonstrated in the way men organize their lives within the community and in the way they organise group relations. At the base of this attitude there is reasoned thought about views of life and the world and philosophy is profoundly concerned with such views.

Philosophy

Philosophers' have done important work, particularly during the last several decades, on questions such as these: What is language? What is a language sign? What is to be understood as the meaning of a term or linguistic expression? What rules determine the meaningfulness of linguistic expression? Semantics is a part of philosophy which investigates the question of the meaning, and the referential aspects, of the symbols.

Literature and fine arts

An important aspect of the study of these fields is the evaluation of literary and artistic works. In **axiology**, value concepts are analysed and the structure and conditions of value are investigated. What are the full implications of saying that a poem or a painting is artistically excellent? In what way do value statements differ from the expression of personal preference? In what way do such statements differ from other sorts of statements, for example about one or another state of affairs? What, if any, is the connection between these various groups of statements? In the artistic evaluation of an object of art, we may consider the justification for such evaluation. What is implied by the justification of a value statement and with what conditions must such justification comply?

The classics

A great many classical authors were also philosophers. We need only mention the works of Plato and Aristotle. It is absolutely essential to have knowledge of philosophy for the proper appreciation of their works. Indeed, the study of the history of philosophy combines excellently with the study of Greek and Latin.

Criminology

Two of the root concepts of criminology are **crime** and **punishment**. The philosopher contributes to criminology by determining the logical functions of these concepts. The following **three theories** of the punishment are current: the **retaliatory**, the **preventive** and the **reformatory theories**. Philosophers subject these theories to critical examinations. A question frequently posed in criminology and legal circles is this: What is the sense of capital punishment? The philosopher can be called in here to indicate the implications of the question by analysing the concept "**sense**" and by showing that the concept of capital punishment can be integrated with a system of morals.

Political Science

There is much use, in political science, of concepts like "**state, individual, the people, nation, government and ideology**". A study of various theories of State is usually made. It is essential to apply philosophical method to determine the content of the concepts and the merits and demerits of the theories. Plato, for example, uses the model of the person in the construction of his theory of state. What exactly is the function of such models and how are their efficacy and productiveness determined? The utilitarians based their theories on the concepts of "pleasure and pain". What do these concepts imply, and can they serve the functions imposed on them by the utilitarians? Can human conduct be adequately interpreted and explained in terms of a motivational theory of pleasure and pain.

Psychology

Psychology scientifically studies human behavioural patterns and, in an attempt to understand and explain these patterns, formulates comprehensive motivational theories. Within this framework, use is usually made of the cause-effect conceptual scheme: a certain stimulus is the cause of a certain reaction. The question of whether this is the only way of explaining things remain. If not, what other sorts of explanation are possible, and in what ways do they differ? Again, there occurs in psychology the interesting question of sensory perception. Perception is in explainable purely in terms of certain physiological and neurological processes: the physiologist and neurologist can, indeed bring certain bodily processes in relation to sensory perception, but they can never bridge the gap between these processes and the content of perception. A surgeon can easily observe certain brain processes in a person, but he can never see that person's experience of pain. The philosopher can assist considerably by accurately determining the logical function of the concept "perception" and, in so doing, he can rectify defects in theories by clearing up conceptual confusion.

Pedagogy

One of the central problems in pedagogy is to determine exactly what is meant by education. The philosopher demonstrates by conceptual analysis that certain elements of world-views and views of life occur in the phenomenon of education. What is a world –view and a view of life? With what logical and rational requirements must such views comply? Associated with this is the whole question of the meaning of life and of education in particular. The philosopher becomes a great asset in affecting much needed conceptual analysis. The philosopher is of great use in combating inconsistencies and unscientific attitudes.

Jurisprudence

The jurisconsult envisages the gathering of all rules of law into a systematic whole which is free from contradictions. He discovers these rules in laws, various sources of law and the statement of the jurists. A system of law is based upon a conceptual scheme. Such a conceptual scheme incorporates concepts like "cause, act, intention, guilt, will, default, design, illegality and motive" It is indispensable not only to determine the content of each of these concepts individually, but also to examine their mutual relations. As an example, it is held that responsibility presupposes the following condition: act cause, illegality, and guilt. In other words, a man is responsible only if intentionally or through neglect, he performs an act which results in a state of affairs prohibited by a law. In logical terminology, we say that the concept responsibility implies the concepts act, cause, illegality and guilt.

An interesting group of problems issues from the concept "intention" what do we mean when we say that a person A has the intention X? The usual answer is that A was in a certain state of mind that is. That during the commission of certain acts by A, certain ideas or mental processes occurred in his head. The following problems arise from the foregoing approach:

- (a) Are we justified in speaking of ideas as processes? Can we say that ideas take time?
- (b) If intention refers to a subjective mental process, how do we ever gain knowledge of the intentions of someone else, if events occurring in a person's consciousness are, by nature altogether private?
- (c) We remarked that the jurisconsult has to determine the mutual relations between concepts. He will say that intention and motive cohere in the sense that the motive is the cause of intention. Causality is a relation which occurs only between events. Since intention is regarded as a concept referring to a subjective mental process, it is, in accordance with this view, contended that motive also refers to a like process which is the cause of the first mentioned process. But suppose it is proposed that A committed murder from jealousy or in revenge. It does not seem that reference is here being made to subjective mental processes of A because a jealous or revengeful person is commonly speaking, someone who behaves in a certain ways in certain situation. Motive words like "revenge, jealousy, hate, miserliness,"etc refers not to mental processes but to behaviour patterns of behaviour dispositions. And, as behaviour dispositions, motives cannot be regarded as causes of intentions. The logical geography of the concept intention has to be determined a new.

History

One of the most interesting problems in this field is that of the objectivity of history. What are the historian's aims and how does he set about to attain them? The historian attempts to present a true picture of the reactions between past events. But how does the historian verify statements about the past when the past is not directly given? Are his statements generally valid, or must he perforce view the past through his own, private, subjective spectacles? In what way does history differ from the natural sciences? To what extent is it correct to bring out this distinction in terms of that freedom and causality? These questions indicate the possible usefulness of the philosopher in the study of the underlying theory of history.

Theology

The Christians view of life is in fact formulated by the theologian. But is it necessary for the theologian to have knowledge of other views of life which have played a significant role in the formulation of the western tradition. A study of the history of philosophy is of great value to the theologian. The philosopher does not only develop views of life: s/he asks questions about issues of life, e.g. what is a view of life? With what rational requirements must a view of life comply? What sorts of arguments can be advanced for and against any view of life? How does a view of life cohere with scientific knowledge? How does a view of life cohere with religion? And so on. Such questions belong to philosophy or to philosophy of religion and are not directly posed by the theologian, but knowledge of them is of great value to the theologian. This kind of question is considered in systematic philosophy.

II. Conclusion

Philosophy has gathered several sciences and most presumably will gather others. The above brief consideration therefore of various areas of knowledge should give a demonstratable clear idea of the universality and essentiality of philosophical thought.

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