

Natural Theology II

Semester: I I

Title of the Course: Natural Theology – II

Course Code: PCT 113

ECTS – 4

Credits – 2

Lecturer — Fr. Joy Panamthanam svd. M.A.[Uni. Pune, India] & M.A. (KU Leuven, Belgium]

Class Room – 3

Consultation times: Fridays 11.00 – 12.00 noon.

Course Description.

Corollary to Natural theology I we follow in the same spirit to examine issues related to God that are of contemporary relevance. We shall examine I. Kant's criticism of the ontological argument of St. Anselm and subsequent developments of the same until the present formulation by Alvin Plantinga. We shall look at God' relation to Humans in two major dimensions: namely human destiny and moral autonomy. In trying to be relevant we shall look at how the concept of God and religion has been responded to under the heading God and Post-modernism. We shall try to look critically at the whole issue of religious consciousness and mystical experience/s. In our time again a burning issue is of fundamentalism. Hence we shall examine two related topics namely [1] religious fundamentalism, and [2] *which religion is true?*.

The objectives are:

- To examine the relevance of belief in God and practice of religion and their contemporary import especially in relation to human reality and the belief in after life.
- To examine the challenges of religious fundamentalism, its socio-political dimensions and suggest possible responses.
- To venture an answer as to the problem of veracity of the claims of religions in our present day context. There are a number of religions? How do we decide which one is true? Is there one true religion? Is one religion superior to another?
- To tease out, if any, the significance of belief in God in the context to post-modernism.

Learning outcomes.

By the end of the course the students must be able to:

- Make sense of different claims of different religions and religious sects and respond to them with a balanced and rational mind-set.
- Decipher the political statements, manipulations and the power struggle that goes on in the name of religion and religious truths by different actors in the international, religious, and socio-political scenario.
- Make a personal sense for themselves about the claims of immortality.

Content:

Refer to the detailed course calendar below.

Teaching methodology

- Lectures – [through power point presentation]

Course requirements and assessment method.

- Regular Attendance and active participation in class especially in the discussions. – 10 percent
- Assignment based on an article. Selected articles from: John Hick, [Ed], *Readings in Philosophy of Religion*; prentice Hall, New Jersey, [3rd edition, 1990.] & John Hick, *Philosophy of Religion*; prentice hall of India Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi 1991.
- Assignment question:
 - What is the main contention of the author in the article? What are the arguments presented by the Author to support his/her position/s? Do you – as a group/ individually – agree with it or do not agree with it. Give reasons for your opinion/s.
- Assignment total marks: 40 percent. [Two page personal write up – 30 %, - from each person from the group];
- Final examination – oral fifteen minutes. 50%. [There will be a discussion also of the assignment write up for five minutes during the oral examination. – 10 %]

Course calendar and Distribution and details of the Content.

Week	Dates	Content
1	8 th – 12 th Jan 2018	Introduction and explanations on course and syllabus & requirements..
2	15 th - 19 th Jan	<u>God and human destiny</u> : short review of the Christian view. Views from Zoroastrianism – the oldest religious sect; Hinduism/Buddhism – the karma theory
3	22 nd – 26 th Jan	<u>God and Human destiny – continued</u> : The theory of Karma <i>continued</i> , The view of person and religion in Yoruba culture - Nigeria – and drawing its implications for the understanding of human destiny in African cultures.
4	29 th Jan- 2 nd Feb.	Discussion on the view of human destiny from African as well as other perspectives in the class. – This will be part of internal assessment.
5	5 th – 9 th Feb.	<u>Moral autonomy and God</u> : Review of Christian view; Kant and Nietzsche in contrast;
6	12 th – 16 th Feb.	<u>Moral autonomy and God</u> : - <i>continued</i> - The Hindu view of voluntary actions; Atheistic stance; Post-modern postures- moral values akin to aesthetic values.
7	19 th – 23 rd Feb.	<u>God and post modernism</u> The legacy of Nietzsche and nihilism, incredulity of metanarratives; Disappearance of a centre and replacement by art and consumerism.
8	26 th Feb – 2 nd Mar.	<u>God and post modernism</u> . – <i>continued</i> Growth of hyper-reality and plurivocity; from Logos to Mythos and mythos all the way through...

9	5 th -9 th Mar.	<u>Which Religion is true</u> – Exclusivism of all religions especially theistic ones; The postmodern realization: “ <i>Truth is one, sages call it in different names</i> ”. A response.
10	13 th -16 th Mar	<u>Religious fundamentalism, & socio-political ideologies.</u> - The role exclusive claims and fundamentalism/s; Geo-politics and rise of fundamentalism/s;
11	19 th – 23 rd Mar.	<u>Religious fundamentalism, & socio-political ideologies.</u> – <i>continued:</i> globalized economics and rise of fundamentalism/s; fundamentalism as assertion of specific identities.
12	9 th – 13 th April	Oral examination.
13	16 th – 20 th April	Study week for comprehensive examinations.
14	23 rd – 27 th April	Comprehensive examinations

Recommended Readings.

DESMOND, William., EAGLETON Terry -----	<i>God and the Between</i> , [Blackwell Publishing U.K., 2008] <i>Reason, Religion and Revolution.</i> Yale University Press, 2010 The Illusions of Postmodernism, Blackwell publishers, London, 2013.
GELLNER, Ernest.	<i>Post-modernism, Reason and Religion.</i> Routledge publishers, London. 1992]
HICK, John H., -----.	<i>Classical and Contemporary Readings in Philosophy of Religion.</i> [Prentice, Hall of India, New Delhi, 1991] <i>Philosophy of Religion</i> , 4th Edn, Prentice, Hall of India New Delhi. 1991]
POWELL Jim	<i>Post-modernism for beginners</i> , orient Longman, Hyderabad, India, 2009.
SHARMA C.D.	<i>A Critical History of Indian Philosophy</i> ; Motilal Banarasidas Publishers, Dew Delhi,
TAYLOR, Charles WARD, Graham. [Ed]	<i>The secular Age</i> , Harvard university press, Massachusetts 2007. <i>The Blackwell Companion to Postmodern Theology</i> , Blackwell Publishing. 2001]
WESTPHAL, M.	God, Guilt, and Death: An Existential Phenomenology of Religion, [Indiana University Press. Bloomington, 1984)
WIREDU Kwasi [Ed]	<i>Companion to African Philosophy</i> , Blackwell publishing, Oxford, 2006.