

Theory of Knowledge (PHIL106)

Materials Used:

Course Package, Instructor: Murat Baç

My Apology (Woody Allen):

Funny shit, had a nice time reading it.

Euthyphro: *(Not included in the exam)*

Socrates comes across Euthyphro on the way to his trial. Euthyphro accuses his father of **impiety, which for ancient Athenians encompassed a lack of responsibility, trustworthiness, piety and loyalty**. This text apparently is about a discussion between Socrates and Euthyphro regarding the definition of piety.

Euthyphro at first argues that piety means persecuting the unjust individual who has committed a crime, and impiety means to not persecute him.

He then says that what is pious is what pleases the gods.

Socrates then pulls a Socrates and decimates Euthyphro by proving that gods themselves do not have a set of values that are universal and disagree on such things, thus explaining they are not good examples.

Euthyphro then says that he believes there are no difference in opinion among gods for this manner, murder, they all hold that if one man kills the other, he must be punished.

Socrates then brings up the question of just murder and tracks to justness. He says that the justness of an act is the defining factor regarding the perspective of an individual. They argue for if they committed a just act or not, not if they should be punished for acting unjustly.

He says that from gods' views on this act alone Euthyphro cannot define piety and impiety for him, hence beforehand they proved that gods were conflicted on this subject.

Euthyphro says that piety is what all gods love and impiety is what all gods hate.

Socrates asks if gods love piety because it is pious or is it pious because they love it?

And then he proceeds to mindfuck Euthyphro using basic logic.

Socrates says:

“If anything becomes or is affected, it does not become because it is in a state of becoming: it is in a state of becoming because it becomes; and it is not affected because it is in a state of being affected: it is in a state of being affected because it is affected.”

“A thing is not loved by those who love it because it is in a state of being loved; it is in a state of being loved because they love it.”

They fail to reach to a conclusion, and the time they have runs out. (Euthyphro bitches out)

10/10/2024
Thursday

Questions:

* Epistemology as a reflection of the Zeitgeist of philosophy.

*Is knowledge always valuable?

*The history of metaphysical thinking.

*First thoughts about “arche”

11/10/2024

Friday

*The age of information and the “subject”.

*Distinctive characteristics of human knowledge.

* Difference between **knowledge and information**.

***Can knowledge exist without cognitive beings?

[Included in exam apparently]

-Fact: Occurrence in reality, objectively (in the world)

Doesn't require human creation/recognition.

Not affected by mental power.

Timelessly the case.

(Ex: Snow is white; There is a cat on my table.)

-Truth: Is about statements/sentences.

It is a quality of language.

True statements are about facts.

(Ex: It is true that snow is white; It is true that there is a cat on my table.)

-Proposition: The semantic content of an assertive sentence.

(-Semantic: about meaning in a sentence.)

A proposition is about a fact, if the proposition is true.

A fact is in the world, proposition isn't.

An assertive sentence makes a claim. (Can be true or false.)

-Propositional knowledge vs. Know-how

-Human Knowledge:

-conceptualization

(> check out chimpanzee war rituals)

17/10/2024
Thursday

Euthyphro (*History of dealing with universals*)

***What is piety?**

*Prosecuting the unjust individual who committed a crime

*What is pleasing to gods?

*What is pleasing to all gods?

-x morally right because it pleases the gods

-x pleases gods because it is morally right

2 Issues:

-The problem of definition

-Moral realism

Logos

Arche → Beginning, principle,
Universals

(>Read Plato's Republic)

(>Freedom is only in inexistence. Once you are gone, you are free.)

18/10/2024

Friday

Important Distinctions:

**Fact-event-phenomenon ← Important*

**Sentence-statement-proposition ← Important*

Event: Needs human interest.

Examples:

There was a great party, it was a great ~~fact~~ [event].

It is ~~an event~~ [a fact] that Aristotle died in 322 BC.

It is ~~an event~~ [a fact] that in Andromeda there are 10^{48} stars.

Phenomenon is something close to human experience. May need a cognizer.

Proposition: Content of a sentence that is either true or false.

Sentences change between languages, propositions don't.

*Events are context sensitive.

*Facts are not context sensitive.

Value of Philosophy

**Doesn't seek certain knowledge*

Is this a disadvantage?

Guarding against dogmatism.

**In Φ , there are significant disagreements.*

It is different in other branches of science

**Non- Φ people enlarge their self "directly" by feeding into an already existing system.*

** Φ people do it "indirectly", with a broader interest.*

**This attitude relates to "freedom".*

**Moving beyond "here" and "now".*

**Doubt is one of the virtues acquired by Φ -people.*

24/10/2024

Thursday

Knowledge:

The **instrumental** (explain, control, predict) value of knowledge.

Knowledge being good in itself (Φ -al).

(>Knowledge is good in itself even if it causes great pain to those who acknowledge it, this, I am aware, is hugely debatable, yet my stand point regarding this issue would be to say that I'd rather suffer knowing the truth than be happy living a lie. There is no way for a human who seeks the truth and only the truth to exist as a being in comfort without achieving that truth to best of their abilities. {a shitty sentence, I know.})

Sorts of Knowledge:

Factual/empirical knowledge (*knowing that something is the case [a fact]*) {*Empirical: Something based on experience (sense)*}

Know-how (*any propositional knowledge?*) [*skills, imitation?*]

Knowledge by acquaintance (*any propositional knowledge?*) [*a melody, colour, people*]

25/10/2024

Friday

Justification:

A general term: Rationalization.

Ratio: account, reason judgement

rationalis: rational

animal rationale: Latin for "human"

Justification is generally taken as a concept used to assess our beliefs in terms of their goodness/quality.

Justification, justice, just → legal connotations

Latin: Justificare

-making something right, straight etc.

-OLD USAGE: Act of God to move a person from a state of sin.

*More justification → *it may lead to more true beliefs.*

Evidence increases justification?

Increases the probability of that belief being true

(>More than one cognizer is needed to wholly justify. [?])

-Is justification used only in epistemological contexts?

+No.

-Moral justification: Coup de Grace, stealing food to feed your family or some bullshit like that.

-Pragmatic justification: Torturing the innocent for the greater good. *(It is debatable to have psychological benefit here as pragmatism needs to have a direct easy to grasp benefit for the individual.)*

-Psychological Justification: Doing something because you wanted to do it.

→ **non-epistemic** ——— **epistemic** ←

*not about accuracy

*stick to facts

*use knowledge on that matter

-Ex post facto Justification: Future knowledge justifies the initial belief. *(Such bullshit, you either are right or wrong in the moment, do not try to stretch it. There is making an educated guess, and there is making some shit up in hopes that it might turn out to be true, as a fluke.)*

Internal vs external perspectives.

Justified → your belief/action is acceptable and is better than alternatives.

(>You are justified in your beliefs if your belief/actions are acceptable and/or better than the alternatives.)

Metaphysics:

About “being””: materialism – idealism

“matter” ← “this is not the case” (idealists can say)

Epistemology:

2 ways to describe → knowledge: empiricism – rationalism

→ justification: foundationalism – coherentism

Rationalism denies that knowledge comes only from sense experience, a priori.

(>For the course: What is epistemic justification and what is non-epistemic justification.) {This likely is exam material.}

31/10/2024
Thursday

A SHORT HISTORY OF ANALYTICAL THINKING

- *Analysis: Loosening up, dissolving.
- *Resolution to simpler elements
- *Roots: Plato looking for definitions
- *20th cent: A reaction to metaphysics, using logic for formalizing math etc.
- *Russel: Reacting to idealism (Brit, German) → *Bradley - Kant, Hegel*
- *Russel, Moore: Realism, common sense.
- *Moore: Against “**system building**” or “**grasping the whole**”, attending to isolated philosophy problems rather than construction.
- *Russel & Wittgenstein: Searching for “ideal” formal **language in conformity with logic**.
- *Logical Positivism & the Vienna Circle: Combining Comte’s positivism with analytical/scientific tools of reasoning, Describing actual knowledge, drawing limits, verification, cognitive significance (*ethical, aesthetical* ← These cannot be verified by such ways as opposed to scientific matters).

Sub Segments (things the tutor mentioned):

- ***Self Object.**
- ***La Pianiste**
- ***Spinoza - Pantheism**
- ***Method of Verification**
- ***Hermeneutic circles.**

Have a meaning of analytical thinking, do not memorize information, think and produce, memorization is not philosophy.

Materialism vs Idealism

(>***I love common sense***)

(>Let there be light.)

(>Check out Positivism)

01/11/2024

Friday

ANALYTIC THINKING:

- *How to handle metaphysics? (Logical positivists)
- *Reaction to system building
- *Relationship with empirical thinking
- *Move from formal/ideal language to ordinary language

*The idea of “analysis” (Ex: Water)

***Aims, focus, precision, clarity**

Analysis of Knowledge:

- *Establishing the connection between knowledge and other related concepts.

You want to maintain precision in analytical thinking.

--{

>What exactly is non-analytical thinking?? Think about this.

>Dogmatic thinking? Can you even think dogmatically? What exactly is Dogma?

Thought without justification.

Big boy Nietzsche

Intuition

Style: form/matter, not of reality but of discussion

}--

***What is an analysis?**

-Definition: Whatness of something (Essence of an object, applies to every instance of that kind)

-Description: Scope is different, more general.

-Analysis: Deeper understanding (goes beyond what is readily available).

(Ex: Love → Compassion, lust, etc.)

(Ex: Water → H₂O → analytical knowledge to make out a certain compound.)

{Special kind of language/inquiry/method}

One of the differences between Definition and Analysis is their comprehension value.

?? An analysis may not give a statement of a concept that a definition can.

(>Tutor says~: With analytical knowledge you can go beyond the regular knowledge and improve upon your thoughts.)

07/11/2024
Thursday

ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF KNOWLEDGE

History:

- *Theaetetus* (the parts of knowledge).
- The central epistemological piece of *Plato*.
- A treatment of the concept of knowledge involves its relationship with other concepts.
- How is knowledge related to another mental state: *Belief*.

*Difference between analysis and definition.

(>Have an idea of what you are engaged in before trying to take any steps. Don't go blind.)

>In case of analysis there usually is some kind of explanation involved.

→ **Knowledge** is a mental state and thus is *subjective*.

* Difference between *Knowledge* and *Belief*?

Beliefs can be in empirical context. → "I believe that snow is white" ← *Beliefs are essentially mental states.*

humanity will prevail ← doesn't have a truth value.

(>Knowledge can be falsified, beliefs can be changed.)

>**If everyone was colour blind, could've been there knowledge about colours?**

08/11/2024

Friday

ANALYSIS OF KNOWLEDGE

-Establishing the relationship between knowledge and certain related concepts.

-Belief: Seems to have a close connection by virtue of being another mental state about human cognition.

-The conceptual difference between **knowledge** and **belief**.

>Is knowledge a mental state?

Problem of Objectivity

For belief you need to successfully achieve something cognitive.

>**What is knowledge?**

>**Difference between Reality and Truth.**

Facts are not created by cognizers.

"I know that Earth is flat."

-**Conditions of knowledge.**

-Necessary and sufficient conditions

Ex: If it is raining, streets are wet.

-sufficient condition for this to happen

-yet isn't necessary since there are other ways

Sufficiency does not mean necessity.

Reality

Truth

Ontological

made by facts

Metaphysical

about objects/facts

>(Reality

Cognizer → Fact → Truth)

Q: Are Belief and Truth sufficient?

K ↔ **B** ∧ **T** ∧ **J** {*Necessary – Sufficient*}

Next Week: 1963 Gettier ← Check it out, cool shit.

14/11/2024
Thursday

GETTIER'S ATTACK (1963)

-Assuming 2 points:

1- *It is possible to be J-ed in B-ing a F proposition.*

2- If S has JB for p, and deduces q from p, and accepts q, then S is J-ed in B-ing that q.

Ex 1:

-Smith believes (with good reason) that p: "Jones will get the job and Jones has 10 coins in his pocket."

-This entails q(it is a J-ed B): The person who will get the job has 10 coins in their pocket.

-Smith doesn't know that he (not Jones) will get the job.

-Smith also doesn't know that he has 10 coins in pocket.

Ex 2:

-Smith believes with good evidence that p: "Jones owns a Ford"

-Smith doesn't know where his friend Brown is, but produces a series of statements:

q₁: Either John owns a Ford OR Brown is in Boston.

q₂: " " " OR " "
.
.
.

-All q's are entailed by p. and Smith believes them.

Those q's are JB for S

-Reality: John doesn't own a Ford and Brown is in Barcelona

-q₂ becomes T, and is also JB for Smith

Traditional analysis of knowledge:

-S knows that p ↔ -S believes that p,
-S is justified in believing that p
-p is true

OR

$K_s p \leftrightarrow B_s p \wedge J_s p \wedge p$

(>Natural necessity – logical necessity ← cool things)

15/11/2024

Friday

SUMMARY OF GETTIER'S Ex 1:

- S & N apply for a job
- S has JB that N will get the job
that N has 10 coins
- p entails q: "The one who gets the job has 10 coins"
- S was wrong: S is getting the job and he himself has 10 coins

Assumptions:

- False Bs can be J-ed
- If $p \vdash q$, J for p is transmitted to q
- The problem of sufficiency

-Possible solutions:

infallibility

*Base your J on conclusive
reasons which are beyond any doubt*

No false beliefs

*The reasoning which leads to JBs
should not contain any F*

Fallibilism: any proposition we believe may turn out to be F

R: One can produce similar issues without F

Example:

The Garden Sheep:

You look at the far side of a garden and see a rock that looks like a sheep, and there actually is a sheep behind the rock. Looking at the rock you "know" that there is a sheep on that side of the garden.

Is knowing that the sheep is there knowledge?

There are no false beliefs in this example, yet it is a Gettier case.

22/11/2024

Friday

A HIERARCHY OF THINKING STYLES (A. GRANT)

Learner → “I might be wrong”	<i>Getting surrounded by people who criticize</i>
Critical Thinker → “They might be wrong”	<i>Questioning all other views</i>
Contrarian → “You are wrong”	<i>Blind to one's own limits</i>
Politician → “They are wrong, we are right”	<i>Our side is gospel</i>
Cult Leader → “I am always right”	<i>My ideas are gospel</i>

—————CUT OFF POINT FOR THE MIDTERM EXAM, WHATEVER
COMES AFTER THIS IS INCLUDED IN THE FINAL—————
(The end of analysis of knowledge)

point of no return :)

APPEARANCE & REALITY

Reality
Truth
Fact

Q: When do we say something is not real?

(1) This is not real X

(2) “Neo saw the reality outside the Matrix for the first time”

05/12/2024

Thursday

B. RUSSEL

- Is what we perceive real?
- It seems that our perception of the world is “mediated”. What does this mean?
- Sense-data are the most immediate things we encounter in perceiving the world.
- Sensation vs. perception
- But what is the relationship between sense-data and physical objects?
- G. Berkeley’s idealism
- How do we know “matter” exists?
- A dialogue between Hylas and Philonous
- A problem about things existing independently of perception
- Esse est percipi
- Only an idea resembles an idea
- The infinite perceiver

Russel idealists agree that the object is existent

06/12/2024

Friday

THE MODERN MIND

Early: 1600-1800

Late: 1800-First half of the 20th century

- From Ancients to Descartes (losing teleology)
- From substantial divisions to the Newtonian unity
- The age of “representation”
- Rationalism, empiricism, dualism
- Kant’s Copernican revolution in ontology/epistemology
- After German Idealism: Questioning the autonomy of reason

19th cent:

- Historical materialism
 - Nietzsche
 - Kierkegaard
-

20th cent:

- Existential phenomenology
- Logical empiricism
- The Linguistic turn
- Pragmatism
- The Frankfurt School
- Overcoming binary oppositions
- Relating knowledge to power

for Aristotle “substance” are things that can be individually pointed out (not wrinkles on the skin but the skin itself etc.)

matter, mind/soul, god for Descartes were substances and thus were independent

19/12/2024

Thursday

G.E. Moore (*A defence of common sense*) -*epistemology*-

-Begin with a list of truisms

-Contra (to both) subjectivism and solipsism

-Problem of mind-independence of objects

-*"Things existing outside of us"*
=?

-Things external to our minds

-*"External to me"* may include different sorts of things

-Ex: The existence of a soap bubble → external, in space

-There are different ways of proving the existence of the (external) world.

MOORE'S PROOF:

Premise 1: Here is one hand (by making a certain gesture).

Premise 2: Here is another hand (by making a certain gesture).

Conclusion: Two human hands exist at this moment.

Why is the argument legitimate:

- (1) The premises are different from the conclusion
- (2) The premises contain judgments that are not only B, but also K.
- (3) The conclusion actually follows from premises.

20/12/2024

Friday

K. LEHRER (*Why not skepticism?*)

- Fallibilism, skepticism
- A theory of Agnoiology
- Theory of rational belief and action based on probability
- Lehrer: We know nothing
- (Do we know that?)
- The skeptic can believe many things with justification, distinguishing good-bad ones.

- How to distinguish adequately J. belief from K, in actuality.
- Is complete J possible?
- The role of “internalism” (as opposed to reliabilism)
- 2 strong points of dogmatism
- Kn of necessary truths (B+K)
- Kn of one’s own states (problem of transition: Sensation → B)
Can we go wrong?

- “Skepticism is innocent until proven guilty”
- An impartial view (as opposed to conservatism of dogmatism)

26/12/2024

Thursday

A PRIORI KNOWLEDGE

- Are there different sorts of human knowledge with regard to their relationship to experience
- Is all human knowledge experiential
- But we do not always do experiential checks / *ex*: $7+5=12$
- If all is experiential, is there no necessary knowledge?
- The relevant terminology: **a posteriori**^{experiential justification} (versus) **a priori**^{justification + other than experiential}
- ”Other than experiential” doesn’t mean zero experience.
- Think of math and definitions *ex*. “*All bachelors are unmarried*” how to check this?
- Empiricists naturally tend to minimize the importance of “*a priori*”

-**Analytic sentences**: true by virtue of structure, where the informative content is given in the subject term.

-**Synthetic sentences**: true by virtue of the “world”. The informative content of the sentence is not limited to the subject term.

Sentence Structure: X is Y

(1)

[a] White cats are white.

[b] Cats are four legged mammals.

(2) Cats add much colour to our lives

(1) is analytic, (2) is synthetic

When one gets any kind of knowledge from the world, it must be synthetic.

27/12/2024

Friday

SUMMARY:

a priori knowledge: no need for relevant (sense) experience

a posteriori knowledge: need for relevant (sense) experience

analytic sentence:

-true due to sentences

-no new world knowledge

synthetic sentence:

-true due to world facts

-some new knowledge

a priori knowledge: Math, definitions, metaphysics, morality

-One combination here seems more controversial

-Ex:

*If something is red all over, it cannot be green all over

* $5+7=12$

-The empiricist reaction "*only two combination can be possible*"

-J.S. Mill's radical approach

(1) Right now there are 3 rabbits in Murat's garden

(2) All black gavagais have black color

02/01/2025

Thursday

A PRIORI AND CERTAINTY & SELF EVIDENCE

Q: Is a priori transparent to human mind?
(a priori implies self-evidence & certainty)

Self-evidence:

- the case of complex calculations
- the Goldbach's Conjecture

Certainty:

- the case of philosophical analyses
- what if your reasoning conflicts AI?

- The case of innate knowledge
- J. Locke's empiricism
(tabula rasa)

"If we have it, why children, savages and uneducated people do not seem to have it?"
-Why assume innate moral knowledge?

Rationalists:

- We have innate ideas/dispositions

Empiricists:

- still no innate ideas
- Regardless, all Beliefs can only Justified empirically.

03/01/2025

Friday

Exam Shit: Common sense