

opposed to science—requires.⁵² So Descartes is a Classical Infallibilist about cognition. Seen in this light, Descartes’s two-tiered epistemology is remarkably close to that of the Stoics.

Locke (1975, IV, 1, §2) states that “knowledge is the perception of the agreement or disagreement of two ideas”. I suggest that “perception” is a truth-entailing and discernible state, so that Locke’s definition is an instance of Classical Infallibilism.⁵³ Evidence of this can be found in his discussion of sceptical worries. Locke held that we have “sensitive knowledge” of the existence of external things we currently perceive (Locke, 1975, IV, 2, §14, 3, §5, §21). He raised the sceptical objection that one could have the idea of something external without there being something external (Locke, 1975, IV, 2, §14). His first and main answer is that impressions originating from external things are discernible:

But yet here I think we are provided with an evidence that puts us past doubting. For I ask any one, Whether he be not invincibly conscious to himself of a different perception, when he looks on the sun by day, and thinks on it by night; when he actually tastes wormwood, or smells a rose, or only thinks on that savour or odour? We as plainly find the difference there is between any idea revived in our minds by our own memory, and actually coming into our minds by our senses, as we do between any two distinct ideas. (Locke, 1975, IV, 2, §14)

Thus Locke takes knowledge of the existence of external things to require that there is a discernible class of impressions that entail the existence of external things.⁵⁴

4.3 Open cases: Plato and Kant

The Legend takes Plato and Kant to hold the Justified True Belief view. But is it at least open whether they endorsed Classical Infallibilism instead. Plato may have endorsed the definition of knowledge as “true belief with an account”.⁵⁵

⁵²See AT VII:141 quoted above. While I am confident that Descartes took cognition to be a widespread achievement, I leave open whether he embraced a fairly sceptical view of it, denying e.g. that we had any cognition of things like colours.

⁵³Newman (2007, 319–321) finds it surprising that Locke appears not to have endorsed the “traditional” justified true belief view, and removes the supposed anomaly by arguing that Locke did endorse it. But he makes clear that Locke’s “justification” is truth-entailing.

⁵⁴Locke’s second answer is *ad hominem*: the Sceptic should give up arguing if he thinks that he is merely dreaming that he argues. His third answer, interestingly, hints at idealism. We return to it below.

⁵⁵See mainly *Theaetetus* 202d, but also *Meno* 98a2, *Phaedo* 76b5-6, *Symposium* 202a5-9, *Republic* 534b3-7 and *Timaeus* 51b6-e6. The definition is found unsatisfactory in the *Theaetetus* 201-210. However, since Plato uses it approvingly elsewhere, one may argue that it is only the account