Plato, "Innate Knowledge" (*Meno*) – pp. 3-12

1. Meno accuses Socrates of being a "torpedo-fish", one who stuns others into a state of numbness. He says it is good for Socrates to stay in Athens, otherwise he would be driven away from other cities for practicing sorcery? How does Socrates interpret this criticism?He criticizes the Assembly for its illegal actions and the Athenian courts for the ease with which matters of justice are distorted by emotional pleading. Socrates implies that the very nature of democracy makes it a corrupt political system.

2. Explain the paradox/problem (the "Learner's Paradox") that Meno and Socrates talk about on the second page, concerning enquiry and learning and interpreting what we know. Meno and Socrates discuss a paradox known as the Learner's Paradox. This paradox states that in order to learn something, one must already have knowledge of it. This creates a problem, as it is impossible to learn something without having any prior knowledge of it. To further explain this paradox, Meno and Socrates use the example of a man trying to find a way to a city he has never been to before. Without any prior knowledge, the man would not know how to get to the city, and thus would be unable to learn how to get there. This paradox is further complicated by the fact that in order to gain knowledge, one must first ask questions, but in order to ask questions, one must already have some knowledge. This creates an endless cycle that makes it impossible to learn something without any prior knowledge.

3. Explain Plato's theory of innate knowledge, and how Socrates's conversation with Meno's servant boy is an attempt to demonstrate its truth.Plato's theory of innate knowledge is the belief that knowledge is not acquired through experience, but rather is something that is already present within us. To demonstrate this idea, Socrates engages in a conversation with Meno's servant boy. Through

this conversation, Socrates attempts to prove that the boy already has an understanding of geometry, despite having never been taught the subject. By asking questions and leading the boy through a series of logical steps, Socrates demonstrates that the boy already has an innate knowledge of geometry, and that knowledge can be brought out through proper questioning. This conversation is an example of Plato's theory of innate knowledge, which suggests that knowledge is already present within us and can be uncovered through careful questioning.

Aristotle, "Demonstrative Knowledge", pp. 18-21:

1. In your own words, explain the deductive aspect of Aristotle's view of how we gain knowledge. What is a syllogism? What is a demonstration? A syllogism is a kind of logical argument that applies deductive reasoning to arrive at a conclusion based on two propositions that are asserted the subject is what the assertion is about, while the predicate is what the assertion asserts about the subject. Deduction: an argument whose premises, if true, provide conclusive evidence for the truth of its conclusion. Let's take the classic For example, every river contains water would serve as a demonstration. The Mississippi is a river. The Mississippi River contains water, therefore.

2. What point does Aristotle make about how deduction by itself doesn't lead to truth about the world? Aristotle, unlike Plato, believes that, although perception is not knowledge itself, it can help guide us to knowledge and we shouldn't cut it out of our lives. A syllogism uses deductive reasoning to arrive at a conclusion that is based on two or more propositions that are assumed to be true.

3. Present in your own words the inductive process of gaining knowledge according to Aristotle, including the role of the senses, memory and generalization. Aristotle thinks of induction (epagoge) as a form of reasoning that begins in the sense perception of particulars and ends in an

understanding that can be expressed in a universal proposition .He holds that we only have

scientific knowledge of what cannot be otherwise. This may seem to imply that we only have

scientific knowledge of changeless mathematical truths and other products of a priori reflection.

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