

Jada Hamilton

Professor Sanchez

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Reading Questions Week 1: Plato & Aristotle

Plato

1.

Meno taunts Socrates for attacking people's mind when they're confused and their beliefs aren't concrete. Meno accuses Socrates of making others doubt themselves like she does herself. He said that she was casting a spell on him and making him and others torpid so they aren't clear on how to answer the questions. Socrates interprets this as a compliment and assumes Meno was begging her to make a simile about him too. She was very honest and acknowledging the fact that she causes puzzling emotions for others, but not from a 'know it all' mindset

2.

The problem that Meno mentions is that how can someone question someone else about what they do not know? He stresses that how can you even form a main topic of discussion when it's something you don't know or how do you know that the conclusion you came to is genuine if you didn't know in the first place. Socrates argues with a thought provoking statement- how someone can know something and still not question it because there's 'no need'. On the other hand they also can't question things they have no knowledge about because they're unaware of the subject in question.

3.

Innate knowledge is a field of epistemology, which is basically a study of how a human can know something. This plays a huge role in the development of philosophy of knowledge. They mention that a soul experiences all things and knows all things because

it doesn't die or can be destroyed. Socrates' conversation proves that when she repeatedly asks questions to prove the point of recollection and true opinions. An opinion isn't concrete enough to really stay with us, but getting to the point of 'why' is very important because it'll become knowledge, which is concrete. She uses careful and systematic questioning to draw out the truth which is all philosophy is all about. She told Meno to observe and watch closely so that she doesn't give any clues to the boy, but stick to the certain procedure of questioning.

Aristotle

1.

The deductive aspect of Aristotle's view of how we gain knowledge is that a conclusion follows a true premise which was logically found reason to. Syllogism is to test someone's validity in their argument. It is the formal standard pattern of a valid argument. Demonstration is something that produces scientific knowledge. It has to be true, primary, and immediate premises or it can be syllogism but not a demonstration. They're also eternal truths.

2.

Deduction can not lead to truth on its own without the premises and starting points being primary and immediate. If the starting points don't lead to the truth and are not based on the required stances then it's not able to fulfill its purpose and it's useless.

3.

Aristotle thought that humans gained knowledge naturally by their senses. While humans have sensory experiences they're noticing and remembering similar details. It's like piecing together the pieces of the puzzle. Humans have intuition (ability to grasp the universal in particular) which is the only thought that is correct besides scientific knowledge. It is intuition that Aristotle believes can grasp the starting points based on memory built on repeated sensory experiences.