

15 Minute Philosophy

From Thought to Thinking



Amassed By Stephen Kirsch

15 Minute Philosophy: From Thought to Thinking

Edited, Compiled, and Written 2008-2011 by Stephen Kirsch

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As for that, those parts which may be considered new or not as belonging to the author and appropriated from others, belong to them as should be noted by citation (*mea culpa* if not) and should not be considered a part of this work except by guilt through association.

¹ Or in the words of Qoheleth “There is nothing new under the sun.” *Ecclesiastes 1:9*

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Thanks

This book relies on the impetus of two people and a series of lunchtime ‘lectures’, but it is founded in the gift of so many. So first to Julien and Allison, thanks for the *Food For Thought* challenge. To my parents and everyone else, thanks for giving me the love of critical thinking and later of philosophy. Thanks especially to my wife, Alice, who married me even though I had a degree in philosophy. Finally an apology to my kids, as they had no choice in the matter.²

As for philosophy itself, I also owe a debt of gratitude to the Monks of St. Joseph Abbey and Monty Python’s Flying Circus and to the many others who spent their time giving us such a rich history of thinking; what more can I say?

By Way of Introduction...

If one agrees with Hegel on this matter³, then this preface will be short.

So what is philosophy and why write another book about it?

Despite the moniker, there is no promise that it will only take 15 minutes to understand all of philosophy! The idea of these lectures was to take about 15 minutes of reading and a lifetime of understanding. Not too much to ask or expect? I have tried to translate the spirit of these weekly lunchtime lectures into this printed format.

As for this work, it will pretend to be at first no more than an historical survey of philosophers and philosophy but may end up with some survey of overall concepts through time. The philosophers discussed here in fact thought of more things than we discuss, and to a much deeper degree than is shown in the book. The pericopes included in this work show the limited nature of the limited nature of this discussion.

As for myself, I hold but a mere undergraduate degree in this field. Why do I feel qualified to produce such a work? Well, I hold a mere undergraduate degree in this field.

Dedication

I dedicate this book to everyone who has struggled with the idea of thinking, and especially to those who struggled to teach me this fine art.

² THE appearance of this volume demands more than the usual amount of apology. Introduction to *Humanism*, by F.C.S. Schiller

³ And one should; c.f. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 1, Georg W. Hegel

Philosophical Terms and Catch Phrases

This section is designed to alleviate the need for deep thought on subjects which require it.

A

- **AD:** *Anno Domini* – the year of our Lord (Jesus). A means of demarking eras; see *CE*.
- **Accident:** traits or characteristics of a thing incidental to what it is, like facts to this work.
- **Allegory:** using imagery to explain ideas, like, well, like.
- **Apophatic:** the art of negative thinking.
- **A posteriori:** a) analytical reasoning based in experience. Thinking based on evidence and rational from a conclusion. b) something that is known from external sources
- **A priori:** a) deductive reasoning based on syllogisms consisting of theses and a conclusion; a kind of the turducken of thinking. b) something that is pre-known, is the basis for knowledge or is a ‘given’
- **Argument:** not merely a series of contradictory statements.
- **Aristotelian:** of or applying to the philosophy of the Greek Aristotle.
- **Asceticism:** the doctrine that through renunciation of worldly pleasures it is possible to achieve a high spiritual or intellectual state.

B

- **BC:** *Before Christ* – a means of demarking eras.
- **BCE:** *Before Common Era* – a more politically correct means of demarking eras.
- **Boolean:** of or applying to the mathematical constructs of Boole and ways of demonstrating and formulating arguments (most often called *Truth Tables*).

C

- **Cartesian:** of or applying to the philosophy/mathematics of Renee Descartes.
- **Catastrophic:** the power of positive thinking.
- **Cause:** action or thought which is the basis for another action or thought.
- **CE:** *Common Era* – a means of demarking eras; see *AD*.
- **Change:** the observation that one thing becomes another or moves from one point to another. c.f. *movement*
- **Conclusion:** the logical end to an argument. May or may not be correct but in a properly constructed argument should be considered ‘true’.
- **Consciousness:** a debatable aspect of human existence or essence.
- **Copernican Revolution:** the radical rethinking of held beliefs and ideas, especially as illustrated by Nicholas Copernicus’ (1473 –1543) theory that the Earth orbited the Sun as opposed to the long held *a posteriori* belief of the opposite.

D

- **Dialectic:** a teaching method between two or more people who hold different ideas and wish to persuade each other, aka. The Socratic method. Contrasted with didactic and rhetoric.
- **Didactic:** a teaching method that follows a consistent scientific approach or educational style. Contrasted with dialectic.

- **Doubt:** often the impetus of inquiry, but not of answers if you happen to be a Skeptic.

E

- **Eastern:** an arbitrary designation for division of philosophical thought and systems.
- **Empiricism:** the system by which all knowledge is sense based and there are no abstract universal: *see Locke*.
- **Epicurean:** the system which extols the quaint jungle-Jamaican-Bobby McFarin-*hacuna matata-don't worry, be happy* mantras.
- **Exegesis:** the *critical* discussion or interpretation of text, usually applied to sacred texts.
- **Ex nihilo:** the idea of creation from or out of nothing, kind of like most of the author's discussions.
- **Evil:** a quality which for various groups has various manifestations. Suffice it to say that it is an absence of moral action.

F

- **Faith:** (*Noun*) the immutable sum and total of truths contained within a religious system; not to be confused with the action of 'having faith' or the act of believing.
- **Fallacy:** incorrect or faulty thinking pattern.
- **Formal:** having to do with structure (the thing's *form*).

G

- **Greeks:** a body of thinkers who owe their citizenship to various Greek powers, whether they be on the Greek homeland or scattered about the Greek empire; not to be confused with campus student associations.

H

- **Hypothesis:** not to be confused with its root *thesis*.
- **Hedonism:** from the Greek word meaning 'delight'; finding happiness

through pure pleasure; often associated with Epicurus.

- **Hellenism:** the 'Greek-ifying' of thought. Mainly through the influence of Plato and Aristotle.

I

- **Informal:** having to do with thinking.
- **Imperative:** a thing which must be; for Kant, it also elicits a necessary response.
- **Idealism:** a system in which reality is dependent upon the mind rather than independent of it.
- **Identity:** a word of various meanings;

J

- **Justice:** the achievement of balanced results for the individual or the group.
- **Justification:** the rational used in and for an argument; in a salvific sense, the yardstick of righteousness.

K

- **Kantian:** of or applying to the philosophy of the German Immanuel Kant.

L

- **Legal:** something which follows the rules but may not be valid.
- **Licit:** something which is permissible but not necessarily fully following the rules.
- **Logic:** the 'science' of thinking; the means by which one comes to intellectual consensus.

M

- **Matrix, The:** *see Skepticism*.
- **Methods:** ways of demonstrating and formulating ($A^2 + B^2 = C^2$).
- **Modal/Non Modal:** Methods of logical proof either unqualified (*assertoric*) or qualified by *possible* and *necessary*.
- **Monastery:** a collection of individuals into a community bound together by a shared desire; for Christians, to live Gospel values in an early Church community style; for Buddhists, .

- **Movement:** a word used to denote many aspects of knowledge and being.

N

- **Nonsense:** a charge often leveled by and at philosophers.
- **Neo-Platonism:** the re-introduction of Platonic ideas into ‘modern’ systems.

O

- **Ontology:** the study of being, that is what is being what does it mean to be.
- **Operation:** a logical relationship between statements.
- **Orders:** the classification of a monastic group bound together by a rule: example – Benedictines and Franciscans.

P

- **Pericopes:** a fragment or section of a larger work.
- **Philosophy:** Come on...you’re kidding, right?
- **Platonic:** of or applying to the philosophy of the Greek Plato.
- **Predicate Logic:** the system of logic based on subjects and predicates as proposed by Aristotle and different than the propositional one proposed by the Stoics.
- **Premise:** one assertion in a deductive argument.
- **Prime Mover:** designation of the beginning principle or cause.
- **Propositional Logic:** the logic system proposed by the Stoics which focuses on the relationship between propositions as opposed to Aristotle’s Logic.

Q

- **Query:** the asking of questions.

R

- **Rationalism:** knowledge is based in the mind and relies on innate,

abstract universal ideas: see Descartes.

- **Rhetoric:** teaching method which is discourse conducted by a single person. Often confused with meaningless blather which has usurped the word.
- **Reality:** one of the myriad ways of organizing perceptions. For empiricists, reality is the sum of sensory perceptions; for rationalists it is the sum of the constructs of the mind.

S

- **Sign:** something which contains within itself its meaning; for example, an eight-sided figure on a street corner. Symbol would be its antonym.
- **Sin:** that thing which is probably best defined in non-religious/moralistic terms as that which if it feels *really* good while you feel *really* bad as you are doing it must be wrong.
- **Sine Qua Non:** *without which none*. A pretty basic (though fancy sounding) principle of existence.
- **Skepticism:** the idea that no truth can be determined, *believe it or not!*
- **Socratic:** of or applying to the philosophy of the Greek Socrates.
- **Socratic Method:** the activity of asking questions in order to teach by drawing out answers; used by the philosopher Socrates and many fine teachers after him. See dialectic.
- **Square Of Opposition:** an illustration proposed by the Greek Aristotle of possible thesis operations placed in opposition for clarity’s sake.
- **Stoicism:** the system which extols the rational over the emotional as culturally expressed in the *Star Trek* character Spock.
- **Substance:** that which makes up a thing, which makes it what it is.

- **Syllogism:** the basic form of deductive Aristotelian logic in the form of thesis, thesis, conclusion.
- **Symbol:** something which points to a meaning *beyond* itself; for example, an owl symbolizing *wisdom*. Sign would be its antonym.
- **Systems:** classes from which logical premises may be derived (Trigonometry – think axioms).
- **Synthetic:** not polyester but a synthesis of ideas.

T

- **Teleology:** understanding things by their 'end purpose'.
- **Thesis:** a basic statement in an argument.
- **Truths:** basics by which other methods, systems or arguments may be measured ('humans think').
- **Truth Table:** a tool of logic comprised of a grid showing possible outcomes for various combinations of premises.

U

- **Übermensch:** German for the super- or over- man.

- **Unconditional:** the classifying of a statement as in and of itself (all whales are mammals).

V

- **Validity:** the assertion that an argument has structural merit.
- **Vulcan:** see *Stoicism*.

W

- **Western:** an arbitrary designation for division of philosophical thought and systems.
- **Will:** Various meanings depending upon the philosophy; Natural Law; the idea of human thought or action.
- **Word:** .

X

- **Xylophone:** because there always has to be an 'X' entry.

Y

- **Yo-Yo:** the perfect example of Aristotle understanding of *kinēsis*.

Z

- **ZZZZ:** what can happen while reading philosophy.

Philosophical Timeline

By no means complete, this is a compilation of all of the tables in this book in one place, with a few supplemental aids.

Approx. Dates	Philosophers	Works	Notables	Events
<i>Pre-History to History B.C.E.</i>				
			Homer	
<i>6TH CENTURY B.C.E.</i>				
-625-547	Thales			
-610-545	Anaximander			
<i>5TH CENTURY B.C.E.</i>				
-560-478	Xenophanes		Persian War (Darius)	Redaction of Hebrew Canon: (~580)
~545-?	Anaximenes			
-540-480	Heraclitus			
-563-483	Buddha			
~581-507	Pythagora			
551-479	Confucius			
?	Lao Tse	Tao Te Ching		
<i>5TH CENTURY B.C.E.</i>				
515-450	Parminedes		Development of Bhagavad Gita(~400) The Peloponnesian War	Development of Bhagavad Gita(~400) The Peloponnesian War
500-428	Anaxagoras			
490-430	Empedocles			
490-420	Protagoras			
490-430	Zeno of Elea			
483-376	Gorgias			
470-391	Mo-tzu			
470-399	Socrates			
<i>4TH CENTURY B.C.E.</i>				
460-370	Democratus		Alexander	Fall of Athens
460-377	Hippocrates			
428-348	Plato	Apology, Symposium, Republic		
369-289	Chuang-Tzu	Zhuangzi		
384-322	Aristotle	Physics, Metaphysics, Poetics, Politics, Nicomachean Ethics		
412?-320?	Diogenes			
<i>3RD CENTURY B.C.E.</i>				
341-270	Epicurus			
335-263	Zeno			
298-230	Hsun-tzu			
<i>1ST CENTURY B.C.E.</i>				
214-129	Carneades			
106-43	Cicero			

100-55	<i>Lucretius</i>	<i>The Way of Nature</i>		
1ST CENTURY C.E.				
20-40	<i>Philo of Alexandria</i>		<i>Jesus (~6 BCE - 30 CE.)</i>	
2ND CENTURY				
55-135	<i>Epictetus</i>		<i>Fixing of Hebrew Canon</i>	
?-165	<i>Justin Martyr</i>	<i>Adverse Heresy</i>		
121-180	<i>Marcus Aurelius</i>	<i>Stoic Lectures</i>		
160-240	<i>Tertullian</i>			
150-213	<i>Clement Alexandria</i>			
185-255	<i>Origen</i>			
3RD CENTURY				
204-270	<i>Plotinus</i>		<i>Fixing of the Christian Canon</i>	
4TH CENTURY				
354-430	<i>St. Augustine</i>	<i>Confessions, City of God</i>		
5-6TH CENTURY				
480-525	<i>Boethius</i>	<i>Consolation of Philosophy</i>	<i>Muhammad (570-632)</i>	
7-9TH CENTURY				
801-873	<i>Alkindus</i>			
810-877	<i>John Scotus Eriugena</i>	<i>On the Division of Nature</i>		
872-951	<i>Alpharabius</i>			
10TH CENTURY				
980-1037	<i>Avicenna</i>			
11TH CENTURY				
1020-1070	<i>Avicebron</i>			
1033-1109	<i>St. Anselm</i>	<i>Proslogium</i>		
1058-1111	<i>Algazali</i>	<i>The Incoherence of the Philosophers</i>		
1079-1144	<i>Peter Abelard</i>			
12TH CENTURY				
1126-1198	<i>Averroes</i>	<i>The Incoherence of Incoherence</i>		
1135-1204	<i>Moses Maimonides</i>	<i>Guide For The Perplexed</i>		
13TH-14TH CENTURY				
1206-1280	<i>Albert the Great (Magnus)</i>		<i>Genghis Khan</i> <i>Marco Polo</i>	<i>The Renaissance (1304-1576)</i> <i>Canterbury Tales(~1380-</i>
1225-1274	<i>Thomas Aquinas</i>	<i>Summa Theologia, Summa Contra Gentiles</i>		
1260-1327	<i>Meister Eckart</i>			
1266-1308	<i>John Duns Scotus</i>			

1285-1349	William of Ockham			1400)
15TH CENTURY				
1466-1536	Erasmus	In Praise of Folly	Christopher Columbus Martin Luther (1483-1546)	Printing Press America
1469-1527	Niccolo Machiavelli	The Prince		
1472-1529	Wang Yang-Ming			
1478-1535	Thomas More	Utopia		
16TH CENTURY				
1561-1626	Frances Bacon		John Calvin (1509-1564)	
1588-1679	Thomas Hobbes	Leviathan		
1596-1650	Rene Descartes	Meditations		
17TH CENTURY				
1623-1662	Blaise Pascal	Pensees	William Shakespeare (1564-1616)	
1634-1677	Baruch Spinoza	Ethics		
1632-1677	John Locke	Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Two Treatise on Government		
1646-1716	Gottfried Leibniz	Monadology		
1668-1744	Giambattista Vico			
1685-1753	Bishop Georg Berkeley	Principles of Human Knowledge		
18TH CENTURY				
1689-1755	Montesquieu		Jonathan Edwards (1703- 1758), Candide (Voltaire 1693- 1778)	The American Revolution, The French Revolution
1706-1790	Benjamin Franklin			
1711-1776	David Hume	An Enquiry Concerning the Human Understanding, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion		
1712-1778	Jean-Jacques Rousseau	Discourse on Inequality, The Social Contract, Confessions, Reveries of a Solitary Walker		
1723-1790	Adam Smith	Wealth of Nations		
1724-1804	Immanuel Kant	Critique of Pure Reason, Critique of Practical Reason, Critique of Judgment		
1743-1826	Thomas Jefferson	Declaration of Independence, Virginia Act for Establishing Religious Freedom		
1744-1803	Johann Herder	Storm and Drag		
1748-1832	Jeremy Bentham			
1762-1814	Johann Fichte	Attempt at a		

		<i>Critique of All Revelation</i>		
1770-1831	Georg Wilhelm Hegel	<i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i>		
19TH CENTURY				
1788 -1860	Arthur Schopenhauer	<i>The World As Will and Representation; On the Freedom of the Human Will</i>		
1803-1882	Ralph Waldo Emerson			
1806-1873	John Stuart Mill	<i>Utilitarianism, On Liberty, The Subjection of Women, On Representative Government</i>		
1813-1855	Soren Kierkegaard	<i>Fear and Trembling, The Concept of Anxiety, Sickness Unto Death, Philosophical Fragments</i>		
1817-1862	Henry David Thoreau	<i>Walden</i>		
1818-1883	Karl Marx	<i>Communist Manifesto, Das Capital</i>	Frederick Douglas (1817-1895)	Jane Austen (1775-1817), The American Civil War
1821-1881	Fyodor Dostoyevsky	<i>Notes From Underground</i>		
1828-1910	Leo Tolstoy			
1839-1914	Charles Sanders Peirce	<i>The Fixation of Belief</i>		
1842-1910	William James	<i>Pragmatism: A New Name for an Old way of Thinking, Pragmatism, Varieties of Religious Experience</i>		
1844-1900	Frederick Nietzsche	<i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Beyond Good and Evil, Genealogy of Morals</i>		
1848-1925	Gottlob Frege			
1859-1938	Edmund Husserl			
1856-1939	Sigmund Freud	<i>Civilization and Its Discontents</i>		
20TH-21ST CENTURY				
1859-1952	John Dewey	<i>Democracy and Education, Experience and</i>	<i>Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr.,</i>	<i>Kafka (1883-1924); The Russian</i>

		<i>Nature, The Quest For Certainty, Liberalism and Social Action</i>		<i>Revolution, Powered Carriage, Powered Flight, WWI, WWII, Cold War, Space Flight</i>
1861-1947	Alfred North Whitehead	<i>Process and Reality, Adventures of Ideas</i>		
1864-1920	Max Weber	<i>Protestant Ethic and the Rise of Capitalism</i>		
1864-1936	Miquel de Unamuno			
1866-1952	Benedetto Croce			
1868-1963	W.E.B. Du Bois	<i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>		
1872-1970	Bertrand Russell	<i>Principia Mathematica, Why I am Not a Christian</i>		
1889-1951	Ludwig Wittgenstein	<i>Tractatus, On Certainty, Philosophical Investigations</i>		
1889-1976	Martin Heidegger	<i>Being and Time, Basic Writings</i>		
1897-2000	Charles Hartshorne			
1905-1980	Jean-Paul Sartre	<i>Being and Nothingness, No Exit</i>		
1908-1986	Simon de Beauvoir	<i>The Second Sex</i>		
1913-1960	Albert Camus	<i>The Myth of Sisyphus, The Stranger</i>		
1926-1984	Michel Foucault	<i>Order of Things</i>		
1905-1982	Ayn Rand	<i>The Fountainhead, Atlas Shrugged</i>		

Answers?

This section takes on some of the questions posed herein and provides some possible answers or at least a stab at them. Some are only one of many possible answers. It may also be like your old math book which only gave you every other answer, and then only to the *odd* ones.

Chapter 3

1. When asked about a particular point within a candidate's speech a commentator stated "I don't think he really had anything to say." Here the problem is merely that no argument is made. It merely attacks the individual through an unreasoned dismissal of the source of the arguments (i.e. the person), not reasoned arguments against the statements themselves.
2. The Bible says: "There is no God." The Bible is literally true. Therefore there is no God. The problem here is that the quote is removed from its context. Religious arguments aside, premise one is in error because it purposely leaves out information (the full text being "the fool in his heart says 'there is no God'"), and while premise two may or may not be correct, the error in one leads to a false conclusion *within the scope of this argument*.

Chapter 4

Chapter 12

- **Xenophon** – Socratic contemporary and chronicling soldier who preserved many Socratic quotes. The *Memorabilia of Socrates*, is a series of four books, was written to defend Socrates, a famous general (most likely of Xenophon), against the charges which were brought against him at trial and in the end, his death (irreligion and of corrupting the Athenian youth). Xenophon claims that he shows Socrates as he taught, not in some other light, which is part of the reason he felt the need to write. The *Apology of Socrates* (not to be confused with Plato's) is a short speech, containing the reasons which induced Socrates to prefer death to life. The *Symposium* (also not to be confused with Plato's), really gives us the character of Socrates. It is possible that Plato wrote his *Symposium* to correct what he felt were errors introduced by Xenophon. Still, in the end it does give us another source by which to compare and speculate, something which did not happen often.

Chapter 13

- **Digging Deep** – these might be some of the main ideas

PASSAGE	IDEA
Gorgias 468b; Meno 77e-78b	All wrongdoing is done in ignorance, for everyone desires only what is good
Republic I. 354	Goodness is to be understood in terms of conduciveness to human happiness, well-being, or flourishing, which may also be understood as "living well," or "doing well"
Protagoras 352a-c; Gorgias 468b	All wrongdoing is done in ignorance, for everyone desires only what is good
Republic I.335	A rejection of retaliation, or the return of harm for harm or evil for evil
Euthydemus 281d-e	Virtue is good just by itself; anything else that is good is good only insofar as it serves or is used for or by virtue
Protagoras 329b-333b, 361a-b	There is a 'unity' among the virtues: In some sense, all of the virtues are the same

PASSAGE	IDEA
Gorgias 472b, 475e-476a	Natural Law: in some sense, everyone actually believes certain moral principles, even though some may think they do not have such beliefs, and may disavow them in argument
Phaedo 72e-76a ; Symposium 211	Forms

Chapter 25

- Philologus Ludi – these might be some of the main ideas

Thought	Possible Philosopher(y)
"Life comes at you pretty fast; if you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."	Epicurus by way of Ferris Bueller
"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."	Trick question: Aristotle by way of Aristotle
"You know freedom's just a stupid superstition, 'cause life's a highway that you travel blind."	Skeptics by way of Jim White
"Hey, hey, hey, hey-now. Don't be mean; we don't have to be mean, 'cuz, remember, no matter where you go, there you are."	Buddha by way of Buckaroo Bonsai
"Quite simply captain, I examined the problem from all angles, and it was plainly hopeless. Logic informed me that under the circumstances, the only logical action would have to be one of desperation. Logical decision logically arrived at."	Stoics by way of Spock
"Everything I needed to know, I learned in Kindergarten."	Plato by way of Robert Fulghum

Chapter 33

- So, What Are The Main Points – these might be some of the main points

Thought	Thoughts
What were the Greeks mainly concerned with?	
What were the Romans mainly concerned with?	
What were the Apologists mainly concerned with?	
What were the Medievals mainly concerned with?	
What were the Scholastics mainly concerned with?	

What is the reason philosophies develop?	
What effect did the previous era have on the next?	
What did each group develop in terms of a system in order to support and explain their philosophies?	

Chapter 39

- Past Champions

Thinker	Camp
Pythagoras	
Plato	
Aristotle	
Epicurus	
Stoics	
Augustine	
Aquinas	

Chapter 42a

- Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*

Thought Point	Points of Thought
What is Hegel talking about?	Aside from the included jabs at philosophical tomes, Hegel is trying to get to how we know, using the dialectical method.
What is Sense-Certainty?	The immediate and the receptive types are a description of the way that empirical knowledge works, except that it is not really so immediate and involves two movements.
What is the object of Sense-Certainty?	The thing, perceived; the universal.
What is the subject of Sense-Certainty?	The perception of the thing.
How does the dialectic figure in all of this?	The dialectic is the method for discovering the truth about perception, and through it we come to the greater understanding of just how wrong Hume is.
What is knowledge?	In this case, what we are talking about is sense-certainty.
What is truth?	There are truths and then there is the truth. The absolute is the 'true' of sense-certainty.
What is the Absolute?	Truth is beauty and beauty is truth and that is all you have to know. No really, the absolute and the absolute truth are the same thing. This is what thinking is all about and is the goal of knowing.
Compare and Contrast Hume and Hegel based on these passages	

Chapter 46

Thought Exercise: Idealist Or Realist?

Philosopher	Idealist or Realist?
Plato	I
Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz	I
Rene Descartes	I
Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel	I
David Hume	R
Thomas Aquinas	I
George Berkeley	I
Aristotle	R
Immanuel Kant	I

Bibliography

Here are some helpful tomes to put you to sleep.

LOGIC

- *Being Logical: A Guide To Good Thinking*: 2003, Random House
 - *A succinct and inexpensive exploration of and guide to Logic*

PHILOSOPHY

- *The Philosopher's Toolkit*: 2003, Blackwell Publishing
 - *A wonderful compendium of philosophy and philosophical notions* (now, as of this writing, in a second edition, 2010)
- *Medieval Philosophy*
 - *A well written introduction to the great thinkers.*

PHILOSOPHICAL RUMINATIONS

- *A Confederacy of Dunces* by John K. Toole, 1980, Louisiana State University Press
 - *A deceptively simple tale of theology and geometry*
- *Lost In The Cosmos: The Last Self-Help Book*: Walker Percy 1983, Picador
 - *A delightful and thought-provoking exploration of modern thinking*
- *The Lord Of The Rings And Philosophy: One Book To Rule Them All*: 2003, Carus Publishing
 - *A somewhat philosophic and philosophical examination of different ideas as embodied in the JRR Tolkien classic trilogy. Some essays are of dubious value but fun. This volume is only one of a series examining philosophy and popular culture, all of which are at least worth a look.*

Logic Reference

This is a quick reference to logical concepts.

Ways Of Thinking

A priori justification has thus far been defined, negatively, as justification that is independent of experience and, positively, as justification that depends on pure thought or reason.

Empirical

- **Empirical (*a posteriori*) Propositions:** their truth depends on perception
 - Example: “My car is white”
- **Rational (*a priori*) Propositions:** their truth does not depend on perception
 - Example: “God exists”
- **Analytic Propositions:** the predicate is *logically* contained in the subject (its negation would be meaningless)
 - Examples: “Everything has a size”, “Americans are people”
 - Truth is *self-evident* once the concept is analyzed (that something as a size is dependent upon a category is in relation only to the object itself and does not tell us anything which is not already a part of the object, which analysis alone will discover)
 - Ergo it does not produce new Knowledge
- **Synthetic Propositions:** their truth is not self-evident
 - Examples: “This room is large”, “The sun is approximately 93 million miles from the earth”
 - Truth is based on experience of the world (it is synthetic because the concept of being located within space, that is, that the sun is a certain distance from the earth goes beyond or adds to the concept of the sun itself)
 - Ergo it produces new Knowledge

Metaphysical

- **Necessary Propositions:** the truth value of which remains constant across all possible worlds (must be true)
- **Contingent Propositions:** not fixed across all possible worlds: for any contingent proposition, there is at least one possible world in which it is true and at least one possible world in which it is false (can be true given the right situation)

Kant

- **Synthetic *a priori* Propositions:** *their truth is not dependent on reality, but only on intuition; they could be denied without logical absurdity although we consider them “true”*
 - **Examples:** “ $2+2=4$ ”, “A straight line is the shortest distance between two points”, “Every event has a cause”, non-Euclidean geometry
 - Nothing forces these propositions to be true, but their truth depends upon us

Chinese Anglicization And Other Conventions

- A. Not to single out one group, since in a sense many of the not Latin-based alphabets are approximations, most are at least close. And since the author of this text is inconsistent, this is a quick reference to pronouncing Chinese names. The Wade-Giles was in vogue until the 1950's when the PINYIN, developed in the Peoples Republic, began to be accepted (Think *Beijing* instead of *Peking*).

PINYIN	WADE-GILES	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
Dao	Tao	Way, path
de	te	virtue, moral force, power
jing	ching	classic, scripture
junzi	chün-tzu	gentleman, profound person
ren	jen	benevolence, humaneness
Tian	T'ien	Heaven, nature
ziran	tzu-jan	spontaneity, naturalness

PINYIN	WADE-GILES	PRONOUNCE AS
b	p	b as in "be", aspirated
c	ts', ts'	ts as in "its"
ch	ch'	as in "church"
d	t	d as in "do"
g	k	g as in "go"
ian	ien	
j	ch	j as in "jeep"
k	k'	k as in "kind", aspirated
ong	ung	
p	p'	p as in "par", aspirated
q	ch'	ch as in "cheek"
r	j	approx like the "j" in French "je"
s	s, ss, sz	s as in "sister"
sh	sh	sh as in "shore"
Si	szu	
T	t'	t as in top
X	hs	sh as in "she" - thinly sounded
Yi	i	
you	yu	
z	ts	z as in "zero"
Zh	ch	j as in "jump"
Zi	zu	

- B. As with the capitalization and use of the term God, an effort has been made to avoid titles such as *Saint* (St.) before or *Blest be his name* afterwards in an attempt to keep the flow of the discussion consistent; it is in no way meant to be disrespectful or denigrating.

Nota Bene: Because of the nature of the names of philosophers which change in form over time, all main entries for names will be in the form of first-last, not last, first. Socrates will be under 'S' and William James and William of Occam will be under 'W' for consistency sake. References by last name will point to first name entries.

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