

NOTES

- The fifth proposal attempts to offer the solution of problem posed by the fourth problem, but Socrates refutes it too. Socrates invites Theatetus to imagine mind as an aviary full of birds of different kinds, which are knowledge. To give a bird to someone is to teach, to catch the bird is to recall and know it, and to fill the aviary with birds is to learn. It is possible that a man enters this aviary to catch one bird and catches another, thus causing the possibility of false belief or judgement. But Socrates refutes this for it attempts to explain false beliefs as the interchange of the pieces of knowledge. Theatetus suggests stocking of ignorance in the aviary, and Socrates explains that it would still not explain false belief or judgement because the man catching the piece of ignorance would believe that he has caught knowledge, and would act accordingly.

After having refuted all the ways of explaining the false judgement, Socrates claims that they failed because they have not yet defined the nature of knowledge. Theatetus repeats his earlier proposition that true judgement is knowledge, and Socrates finally refutes it by offering following argument. Lets imagine that the member of jury justly acquit an accused based on the argument of a skilled lawyer, which means they made true judgement based on argument and not on knowledge, therefore true judgement cannot be same as knowledge.

4. Knowledge is not true judgement with an 'account'

After begin refuted once more, Theatetus proposes what he once heard that knowledge is true judgement with an 'account' i.e. 'logos', and then adds that only that can be known which has 'logos'. He does not remember any further and Socrates helps him by telling him Dream theory which has in his mind.

Dream theory proposes that complexes and their elements compose this world. Complexes are accompanied by Logos, while elements are not. Element do not have being and, therefore, cannot be known, but they can be perceived. Complexes, on the other hand, can be known and perceived.

Theatetus accepts that it is this theory that he had in his mind. And Socrates proceeds to examine the theory. By citing the example of letter and syllables he shows the problematic aspect of the theory. The 'logos' of syllable 'so' would be elements 's' and 'o', but similarly one cannot offer the 'logos' of 's' and 'o' for they are just sounds. There it is not possible for a complex of unknown elements to be knowledge, for if the sum of elements is complex, then the knowledge of complex depends on the knowledge of its elements, which is not possible according to the theory; and if the collocation of elements produces a complex as a single form, it still be undefinable.

In order to examine three-fourth definition offered by Theatetus, Socrates goes on to examine the meaning of 'logos', and offers three definitions of the term:

- To make 'one's thought apparent vocally by means of words and verbal expressions'. This definition is problematic, for it implies that everyone with true belief can do it and thus have knowledge.

- Finally, Socrates refutes the theory that knowledge is not perception by claiming that there is a range of concepts which the mind could not possibly have acquired through the senses, which means that there at least is a part of knowledge which has nothing to do with perception, and therefore knowledge cannot be perception.

3. Knowledge is not true judgement

Since judgement in the internal reasoning function of the soul, Theatetus introduces true judgement as knowledge. Socrates holds that one cannot know what 'true judgement' is without knowing about false judgement. Socrates offers five different ways in which false judgement can take place: misidentification, i.e. identification of one thing with another; believing what is not; other-judgement, i.e. 'when a man, in place of one of the things that are, has substituted in his thought another of the things that are and asserts that it is'; inappropriate connection between perception and memory—the mind functions as wax tablet; and finally the mind functions as aviary.

Socrates then shows how above mentioned ways cannot possibly induce false judgement:

- Misidentification, i.e. identification of one thing with another occurs only when an individual is able to have thoughts about both the things, say x and y, and the individual can have thoughts about x and y only when he is aware of x and y, and if he is aware then he knows x and y, and if he knows x and y, then he cannot possibly mistake x for y or vice versa.
- Believing what is not cannot be false belief because 'what is not' is nothing, and there cannot be any beliefs about nothing, but we know that there are false beliefs, and therefore false beliefs cannot be same as believing what is not.
- The third way is somewhat obscure. Socrates says: 'when a man, in place of one of the things that are, has substituted in his thought another of the things that are and asserts that it is. In this way, he is always judging something which is, but judges one thing in place of another; and having missed the thing which was the object of his consideration, he might fairly be called one who judges falsely'. The best way to understand this with the notion of inadvertency. But Socrates claims that it hardly helps us understand the false judgement, for thought is inner process whose objects we are fully conscious of, and if we are always and fully conscious of the objects of thought then inadvertency is simply not possible, and without the notion of inadvertency the third proposal shrinks back to the first, which has already been proven inadequate.
- In the mind as wax tablet theory, Socrates invites Theatetus to imagine mind as a wax tablet on which imprints are made of everything that we perceive or conceive. False judgement or belief happens when we equate wrong impression with perception, i.e. we relate what we perceive to the inappropriate memory. Theatetus accepts this proposal, but Socrates refutes it on the basis that it can lead to the confusion of unperceived concepts, such as that of the numbers.

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