

KBNS A priori knowledge Seminar 5/11/19

Attending: Paul, Giovanni, Xintong, Peter, Indrek, Carrie, Jonathan, Crispin, Alan, Sonia, Asgeir, Frederico, Jose

Presenting: Crispin

Reading: The adoption problem Boghossian & Wright draft

Carrie asked what it is for a transition from concept to be a rational one.

Crispin: Rationality is a coherence notion. bad practice, transition from understanding of that

Jonathan: w.r.t, logic being freely adopted, how to understand the notion of freedom? Is it psychological—having the ability to do it, hard-wired; Or is it normative—rationality requires so and so but you could violate the rule.

Crispin: you are free, if nothing in the prior understanding require— no constraint of rationality of content.

Jonathan: facts about rationality mandate or permit the adoption of other logics; but it doesn't put you in a disposition to recognize what you ought to do given your other commitments.

Crispin: you might be realistic about logic.

Jonathan: the question is whether we can reason the way to logical change; the problem is whether there can be such a situation that is not mandated by the prior understanding of the relevant notions.

Crispin: there may be principles which we don't recognize but are committed by our inferential practices. The adoption problem is to say we are always constraint by this kind, so we are not free to adopt things that are in conflict with the inferential practices that we are committed to.

Jonathan: the content of the rule you give are permissive, what is it to infer according to a permissive rule? If I never infer according to it, is my practice coherent to the permissive rule?

Crispin: some situations may never arise. Accepting there is a permission of which one never avails to oneself.

Jonathan: legal rights I have I do not exercise; I adopt rule to declare bankruptcy but I do not avail myself to declare it under that circumstances. It is a rule I never exercise. It is consistent with not-following that rule.

Peter: the rule changes the reasons by which the adopter does certain things.

Peter: what is the trigger condition for UI?

Crispin: the premise

Peter: wouldn't that involve recognizing something as an instance of a rule I endorse; this is an instance

Crispin: any conditional rule will collapse; an issue for rule in general.

Giovanni: The trigger condition seems to be the recognition of the worldly thing.

Jonathan: if not explicitly adopted before; that is consistent with already being committed to follow it. Simply explicitly adopting you previous have no committed practice. Is empirical observation being among the things that constrain our logical practice? There isn't enough to support AA.

Crispin: if the reasoner already does, he won't have that light-bolting moment, if he doesn't how come? He has something triggered in his head in some miraculous way

Carrie: There can be other rational options for the change that are not miraculous such as exercise of imaginative capacity triggered by the statement.

Crispin: The reasoner doesn't have a concept of generalization; anything rational has to be in virtue of the concept he has.

Peter: what he has been told would be understood in terms of his understanding of that thought.

Carrie: It is the Williamsonian idea of imagination; it need not be a telling or teaching.

Crispin: Quine defends the idea that in response to empirical prompting we can freely change our logic; the proponent of free adoption needs to argue there is a rational extension of the practice.

Carrie: imagination is constraint by empirical input; it can be synthetic, non-conservative but rational, off-line honed ability. I think the dialectic opponent is Williamson not Quine.

Crispin: the notion of 'all' has little phenomenological input; I do not see how imagination can play a role.

Peter: information about how to operate with the concept would involve the employment of that very concept in the basic cases.

Crispin: transition to new understanding of lambda cannot to be understood in rational terms.

Peter: you've shown the opposite is impossible, you've not yet shown an alternative story. It is a *reductio*; the proof is not explanatory or informative

Crispin: it shows that the new principle has to be grounded in your concept; Paul Boghossian has an intuitionist model.

Jonathan: why the only choices available are either you get it from old concept or it is from the new concept? It precludes the possibility of non-conceptual things making it rational to adopt lambda.

Crispin: you can talk about logic at the level of use. A great deal of logic can be revisable.

Jonathan: Why epistemic analyticity? What has been shown is that adoption can't have rationality explained in one specific way. It does not follow that it must be epistemic analyticity. The relevant pressure may be empirical.

Crispin: to freely adopt a logic, you need to understand it. How am I going to understand the new principle? Practice comes first. It is extrication rather than free adoption. You can restrict the rule as McGee suggests. I don't have the material to understand the principle in response to experience, because we only have old concepts.

Peter: Putnam's idea of provisional a priori may be relevant here. Newton-Einstein transformation is to enable us to use a new conceptual framework. The empirical cannot overthrow the old concept until the new empirical framework comes.