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THE EPISTEMIC STATUS OF PROPOSITIONS OF FUTURE EVENTS

1. Introduction

This paper takes a look at the knowledge status of propositional statements about future events. It investigates the possibility of ascribing knowledge to future contingent statements. What one accepts as to what these concepts – knowledge and future – mean goes a long way in determining what one's position will be regarding the knowledge of propositions of future events.

An understanding of what knowledge is, therefore, is essential to the analysis of the epistemic status of propositions of future events. Closely related to the issue of propositions of future events is what it takes to have the knowledge of propositions about present events and whether the same holds for propositions stating future events.

It is often argued that propositions about future events are contingent statements, hence they cannot have the status of knowledge until they actually do take place as events. This view is based on a strict definition of knowledge which leaves little or no room for the possibility of knowledge of future contingent statements. It also conceives the future from the point of view of the principle of bivalence, the openness of the future, freewill and determinism, and foreknowledge.

In this paper, we shall argue for the possibility of ascribing the concept knowledge to propositions of future events. We shall begin with the analysis of what knowledge is, and propose a dynamic conception of knowledge based on the view that knowledge grows. This will be followed by a clarification of the concept “future”. Consequently, we shall argue that propositions stating future events can be ascribed the status of knowledge from the perspective of our planned and

determined-to-achieve future which to a large extent takes care of the peculiar problems listed by philosophers who argued against the possibility of ascribing the concept knowledge to propositions of future events.

2. What is knowledge?

The question “What is knowledge?” has puzzled humans since ancient times. Plato in his dialogue – Theaetetus, gave us an idea of what knowledge is. In the Theaetetus (201 c-d), as quoted by Dan O’Brien, we have the following passage: “I once heard someone suggesting that true belief accompanied by a rational account is knowledge, whereas true belief unaccompanied by a rational account is distinct from knowledge.”¹

From this passage the traditional definition of knowledge (also known as the tripartite definition of knowledge) as “justified true belief” emerged. This definition of knowledge gives the condition to be met by anyone who claims to have knowledge. Knowledge here refers to propositional knowledge – “knowledge that” or “knowing that” – as different from other forms of knowledge (knowing how – as in skill acquisition, and knowledge by acquaintance). Such “knowledge that” or “propositional knowledge” is “expressed in terms of the knowledge I have of certain true propositions or thoughts”.² The tripartite definition of knowledge insists that a propositional knowledge must be true, the person who possesses it must believe it, and be justified (have convincing evidence) in believing it.

A. J. Ayer has a similar formulation of the tripartite definition of knowledge. For him a person possesses propositional knowledge if and only if that propositional knowledge is true, the person is sure that it is true and has the right to be sure that it is true.³

However, A. Meinong (in his example of the Aeolian harp in an Austrian garden) and B. Russell (in his example of a clock that has stopped working) both pointed out some lapses in the traditional definition of knowledge that renders it insufficient. Similarly, R. N. Chisholm gave an example of a man who mistakes a dog for a sheep in the field, and coincidentally (unknown to the man) there is actually a sheep in another part of the field. So, the man’s proposition that there

¹ O’Brien, Dan, *An introduction to the theory of knowledge*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006), p. 11.

² O’Brien, Dan, *An introduction to the theory of knowledge*, p. 4.

³ Ayer, A. J., *The problem of knowledge*, (London: Macmillan, 1956), p. 34.

is a sheep in the field is true even though it is a product of the mistake of taking a dog for a sheep.⁴

In addition, it was E. L. Gettier's counter examples in his article, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge" (1963) that drew much attention to the insufficiency of the tripartite definition of knowledge. Gettier gave two examples of Smith and Jones who applied for a job and the issue of the ten coins in the pocket of the person who will eventually get the job; and that of Jones who owns a Ford and his friend, Brown, whose whereabouts he does not know but who he guesses rightly to be in Barcelona. In both cases, the conditions for knowledge (justified true belief) are present but knowledge cannot be said to have been attained. Gettier's aim was to show that 'justified true belief' "does not state a sufficient condition for someone's knowing a given proposition".⁵

Many responses to Gettier seem to retain the truth and belief condition of knowledge, and modify the justification aspect of knowledge in such a way as to take care of Gettier's counter examples. An early application of this strategy, T. Sorell states, involves "defining the kind of justification knowledge requires as justification that neither supports nor itself involves falsehood."⁶ This approach may take care of Gettier's counter examples but more counter examples have emerged. These counter examples have generated different proposals to what it takes to have a necessary and sufficient condition for knowledge.

These different proposals are classified by Sorell into two groups: (1) conservative reformulations which retain traditional meaning of truth and belief, but restrict the relevant sense of justification, and (2) the less conservative analysis which broadens the conditions of knowledge by adding to the tripartite definition of knowledge.⁷

Conservative reformulations will demand that the subject that claims to have knowledge should have conclusive reasons or undefeated justification. For example, Chisholm singled out a class of propositions which he called "non-defectively evident."⁸ He argued that "if a proposition is thus non-defectively evident for our subject S, then it has a self-presenting basis which makes no falsehood evident for S." Furthermore, for S to know a certain proposition, "it is also evident to S that there is no true proposition which could defeat or override the evidence he

⁴ Chisholm, R. N., *Theory of knowledge*, (Foundation of Philosophy Series), (Prentice Hall, Inc., 1977), pp. 104–105.

⁵ Gettier, E. L., *Is justified true belief knowledge?*, "Analysis", 23, June, 1963, p. 123.

⁶ Sorell, T., *The analysis of knowledge*, in G. H. R. Parkinson (Gen. Ed.), *An Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, (London: Routledge, 1988), p. 129.

⁷ Sorell, T., *The analysis of knowledge*, p. 130.

⁸ Chisholm, R. N., *Theory of knowledge*, p. 109.

has for that proposition.”⁹ In other words, for S to know P, S should not, at the same time, be aware of any proposition that could disturb his knowing P; and, in time to come, facts that may emerge concerning P should not render S not knowing P.

The conservative reformulation makes knowledge very difficult to attain. How can a subject of knowledge be very sure that his justification for believing a proposition to be true (and, therefore, knowledge) is conclusive or undefeatable? There may not be problems with mathematical and logical knowledge giving the strict rules that govern knowledge in these areas. But for knowledge in all other aspects of life, the conservative reformulation is problematic. This is so because it demands for a comprehensive availability of all the evidence pertaining to what is claimed to be known. It is difficult, if not impossible, to possess comprehensive evidence or facts about an object one claims to know. Even in the instance where one is convinced of having all the facts of a given object of knowledge (which should form the basis for justification) one may still not be absolutely sure that one has knowledge since there may still be some hidden facts not yet known. Knowledge now becomes unattainable.

In the case of the less conservative analysis of knowledge, we have externalism. This breaks away from the justified true belief analysis especially in relation to empirical knowledge. Alvin Goldman spoke of appropriately caused true belief. One knows a true belief that P, for example, if P caused the true belief and if this followed the right method.¹⁰ However, Goldman’s analysis does not seem to take into cognizance general beliefs which include in their scope future states. The example that white sugar when taken in excess causes diabetes is a statement that includes all white sugars to be manufactured in the future. Though the future is not yet present, it is already implied in the general statement which in itself is empirical.

Also associated with Goldman’s analysis of knowledge is the idea of a reliable method. Here knowledge becomes a true belief attained by a reliable means. However, when one tries to be precise about what a reliable means is, it tends to become a version of the causal or conclusive-reasons analysis. As summarized by Sorell, the externalist approach to knowledge stresses “an external relation between a belief and extra-mental state, a relation that can hold whether or not the believer is aware that it does.”¹¹ To be appropriately caused, in the case of Goldman, a belief has to fit into a given causal chain even without the

⁹ Chisholm, R. N., *Theory of knowledge*, p. 115.

¹⁰ Goldman, A., *A causal theory of knowledge*, “Journal of Philosophy”, 64, 1967, pp. 355–372.

¹¹ Sorell, T., *The analysis of knowledge*, p. 133.

believer knowing so. Knowledge becomes a by-product of one's activity in the environment. However, as earlier stated, externalism does not solve problems of future states, and does not state precisely what a reliable means of attaining knowledge is.

At this juncture, let's take a look at the view that the definition of knowledge should include the idea that knowledge grows. J. Teichman and K. C. Evans are of the view that philosophers are guilty of presenting us with definitions of knowledge that are idealistic, that is, "a static unchanging state of mind or state of affairs."¹² Real knowledge, they contend, should be more ambiguous. There are some issues in real life that have not been proven beyond doubt and are claimed to be known. In science, old theories give way to new theories in the spirit of progress being made in scientific knowledge. Knowledge is often temporal in character.

To further buttress the dynamic nature of knowledge, A. Nassehi argues that knowledge is not an intended, planned act but rather "the result of practical assumption and experiences, based on former knowledge and experience."¹³ Since knowledge is unplanned, it is not as rigid and water tight as it is often presented.

The task of epistemology, therefore, is not to create a rigid and static definition of what knowledge is. To state some necessary (not sufficient) conditions of knowledge should be allowed so as to accommodate the dynamic nature of knowledge. A rigid and static definition of knowledge which provides both the necessary and sufficient condition of knowledge may not survive the attack of skepticism. Knowledge should be seen from the angle of the dynamic nature of the subject of knowledge (humans) and the contingent nature of things claimed to be known (objects of knowledge). Whatever we say a thing is today is not the end of the story. Knowledge grows.

Given the above background of a dynamic concept of knowledge, let us now clarify the concept "future".

3. What is "future"?

We often look at the future as that which will be. This is one way of looking at the concept future. But we can also look at the concept future in two senses: (1) the future that is unknown to us as nature keeps unfolding, and (2) the future

¹² Teichman, J. and Evans, K. C., *Philosophy: a beginner's guide*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1991), p. 65.

¹³ Nassehi, A., *What do we know about knowledge? An essay on the knowledge society*, "Canadian Journal of Sociology/Cahiers Canadiens de sociologie", 29, no. 3, Summer, 2004, p. 443.

as we are planning it to be from our knowledge of the past and present. These two senses of the future are essential to understanding the difficulties surrounding ascribing knowledge to propositions of future events.

J. H. Randall classified these two ways of looking at the future. Our future, he said, is not what will be. This is because what 'will be' is determined by unpredictable nature that seems to keep evolving. Our future deals with what we can predict as far as it is humanly possible. "Our future is rather the determinate possibilities of the present, what is predictable on the basis of our analysis of it."¹⁴ Our present states contain some indeterminate and unpredictable factors and tendencies. The world in which we live seems to be evolving, and science is yet to say the final word concerning it. However, it is from our present experiences that we analyze and derive perspectives of our past and our future. Just as our present circumstances contain some determinate and unpredictable factors and tendencies, so also is the future (unpredictable nature, and our determinate possibilities of the present) taken as a whole. Only the future we can predict is our future. The future as a whole cannot be predicted by humans. Our future, which we can predict from our present situations, Randall calls "the envisaged future."

When we look at the possibility of knowledge of propositions of future events, we should not be carried away by the future taken as a whole. The future taken in totality contains the outcome of the complex working of nature that is currently unknown to humans. It also contains predictable human future which, Randall calls "the envisaged future".

Now, human advancement and development to date are based on the dreams and plans of yesterday. What we will be tomorrow is based on the machineries we put in place today to make sure that the dreams and plans of today for tomorrow are achieved. This planned future can be inferred from the present situations we find ourselves devoid of any reason, events or states of affairs to the contrary.

The question we can attempt to answer at this point is whether the propositions we make of our planned future events can be said to be knowledge. Let us now look at some arguments against ascribing knowledge to propositions of future events.

¹⁴ Randall, J. H. Jr., *On understanding the history of philosophy*, "The Journal of Philosophy", 36, no. 17, August, 1939, p. 463.

4. Propositions of future events

(a) Future statements and Correspondence Theory of Truth:

The correspondence theory of truth states that a proposition is true if it conforms with or if it is in agreement with facts or actual events, and false if it does not. Propositions of future events, as it were, are propositions of events that are yet to take place. So, propositions of future events will be true or false when that future becomes present and the event takes place or fails to take place. S. Knuuttila traced this view on proposition to Boethius who expressed the view that “A proposition is indeterminately true as long as the conditions that make it true are not yet fixed.”¹⁵ This view lingered on to Aquinas and to our present time.

Correspondence demands that for a statement to conform to an event, the event must exist. For instance, A. N. Prior explains G. E. Moore’s views on true belief to imply that a true belief corresponds to a fact or an event in the universe. Hence one can say there are no propositions, only facts or events. Consequently, a false belief will correspond to no fact or event.¹⁶ These assumptions of correspondence are problematic. D. Browning argued that correspondence “sets a condition of truth and not a means of verification.”¹⁷ He further argued that the demand of correspondence that a proposition must correspond to a currently existing fact or event (which implies co-presence) is guilty of two prejudices: (1) that correspondence or truth itself is a fact of some sort, and (2) “the assumption that the possibility of knowledge is a necessary condition of possibility of truth”.¹⁸ He proposed a doctrine of correspondence that cuts across time as opposed to that of co-presence. In this view, a statement P will be true if it corresponds to a certain fact or event F in the past, present or future. In other words, “statements which assert facts are true (or false) only if there is, was or will be (or neither is, was, nor will be) an appropriate fact to which it corresponds”.¹⁹

Browning’s view incorporates both the past and the future into correspondence theory of truth which is commendable. No matter how sure we are of the present, there may still be some grey areas, which when brought to our notice,

¹⁵ Knuuttila, S., *Future contingents*, in: Audi, R. (Gen. Ed.) *The Cambridge dictionary of philosophy*, 2nd ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 336.

¹⁶ Prior, A. N., *Correspondence theory of truth*, in: *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2006), vol 2, 2nd ed., Gate, 1967, p. 543.

¹⁷ Browning, D., *Creativity, correspondence, and statements about the future*, “Philosophy and Phenomenological Research”, 28, no. 4, June, 1968, p. 519.

¹⁸ Browning, D., *Creativity, correspondence, and statements about the future*, p. 535.

¹⁹ Browning, D., *Creativity, correspondence, and statements about the future*, p. 535.

we may not be sure of. Yet these grey areas do not deter us from claiming to know the present. There is also the problem of appearance and reality which bedevils the present. I sometimes wonder whether we can rightly say propositions ‘correspond to appearances’. To say ‘propositions correspond to appearance’ may imply that we have some reasons at our disposal to doubt our current experiences. And if there are no reasons to doubt our current experiences we presume that we are experiencing reality as it is undermining the problem of appearance facing us. Philosophers seem to be very sympathetic about knowledge of the present, and not so sympathetic about knowledge of the past and propositions of future events. To a reasonable extent, our planned and determined-to-achieve future is predictable from our present circumstances. We should expand correspondence to incorporate both the past and our planned and determined-to-achieve future undermining also the problem associated with these aspects of knowledge.

At this point, David Hume’s argument comes to mind. For Hume, we do not have enough grounds from experience to conclude that the future will resemble the present. Hume’s argument will certainly affect the future taken in totality. It will also affect some predictions of nature, as nature is still revealing itself. But will it affect our planned and determined-to-achieve future? Despite the problems associated with knowing the future, our present was our planned and determined-to-achieve future of yesterday and will generate our planned and determined-to-achieve future of tomorrow. With the progress made so far in knowledge, it will not be right to say the present (which was our planned and determined-to-achieve future of yesterday) does not reflect the collective and planned aspirations of the past. And our current collective and planned aspirations of today will create our planned and determined-to-achieve future. So, Hume’s argument should not be taken as all inclusive. It holds for that aspect of nature that is undetermined and mysterious to humans. It does not hold for our planned and determined-to-achieve future.

(b) The Problem of the Openness of the Future:

The openness of the future is a permanent threat to what will occur in the future especially as things are contingent. Let us examine two examples of propositions about the future – that of Aristotle’s tomorrow sea battle, and that “orange trees produce only orange fruits”. That there will be a sea battle tomorrow may be a prediction or a planned war as is common with our modern society. If it is merely a prediction based on the trend of things, it may come to pass or not come to pass. If it comes to pass it becomes merely a belief. But if it is planned as in the case of the Gulf war of the 1990s, then it will fall into our planned and determined-to-achieve future, and consequently may be accepted as knowledge

despite the openness of the future. As for the second example that “orange trees produce only orange fruits”, the proposition includes the future. We expect that in the future orange trees will produce only orange fruits. If this is falsified at any time in the future, then it was not true today that “orange trees produce only orange fruits”.

R. K. Scheer is of the view that some philosophers are biased when it comes to the openness of the future. His argument is that the agreement reached by some philosophers regarding the knowledge of the past and present contains the logical possibility that they may be in error. More facts or new events in the future may falsify the knowledge of the past or the present. But this possibility of error granted to the knowledge of the past and present is not extended to propositions of future events especially when such propositions of future events are not mere guesses or predictions.²⁰ He argues further thus:

More simply, why does anyone think it necessary that any remark about the future, though it is not a guess or a prediction, be possibly wrong? If one says the openness of the future lies in the facts of our ability to determine, in part, what the future will be, then it does not follow that there is a continuing possibility of being wrong about future matters. Nor is there such a possibility in the idea that the openness of the future is that something is possible.²¹

Furthermore, Scheer warns that philosophers should not introduce doubts where there are none just because of the openness of the future which is a permanent threat to what will occur due to contingency. Future planned events, for instance, a football match, are more likely to take place than not in spite of the openness of the future. Unless reasons are stated along with the planned football match that may prevent it from holding, we are not likely to drag our feet over going to the stadium to watch the match just because of the openness of the future. Also, when a woman describes how a soup is prepared, we are not expecting her to include the possibility of power failure (lack of electricity) that may prevent things to be blended from being blended. That humans could be wrong and are not in total control of all events does not allow us to introduce doubts where there are none. “Philosophers who speak of the openness of the future as introducing doubt into our consideration of what will occur make the same mistake”.²² The openness of the future is, therefore, not a problem for our planned and determined-to-achieve future unless we currently have reasons for doubt.

²⁰ Scheer, R. K., *Knowledge of the future*, “Mind”, New Series, 80, no. 318, April, 1971, p. 217.

²¹ Scheer, R. K., *Knowledge of the future*, p. 217.

²² Scheer, R. K., *Knowledge of the future*, p. 222.

(c) The Problem of the Principle of Bivalence:

The principle of bivalence states that “there are exactly two truth-values, true and false, and that, within a certain area of discourse, every statement has exactly one of them”.²³ From this principle, it is argued that propositions of future events (future contingents) are either true or false. The implication of this is that if propositions of future events, like the example of Aristotle’s sea battle tomorrow, is already true prior to their taking place tomorrow, then nothing we do today can stop it from being true tomorrow. And if they are false prior to their taking place tomorrow, then nothing we do today can make them come to pass tomorrow. This is fatalism – the doctrine that “all human actions and indeed all events are predetermined, so that all attempts to change the course of events are futile”.²⁴

To avoid fatalism, it is argued that we should see the prediction of a sea battle tomorrow to be neither true nor false. But today our prediction is true if there is eventually a sea battle tomorrow, and false if there is no sea battle tomorrow. However, a way out (as suggested by Aristotle down to some philosophers today) is to admit of the principle of excluded middle. This principle states that “every statement is either true or false”.²⁵ So, if there is a prediction that there is going to be a sea battle tomorrow, it should be explained using the principle of excluded middle. But if the statement “there is going to be a sea battle tomorrow” is not a prediction but a statement based on a planned and determined-to-achieve event (as in the case of the Golf war of the 1990s), then it can be credited with the status of knowledge.

(d) The Problem of Freewill and Determinism:

A statement about the future that has to do with choice and chance is tied to the problem of freewill and determinism. If we are yet to decide what to do in the future, we can only believe, guess or make a prediction of the future. Also, statements about the future in general (that is, statements containing indeterminate and unpredictable factors and tendencies) will be bedeviled with the problem of freedom and determinism. But statements of our planned and determined-to-achieve future events of which there are no reasons currently before us why such

²³ Mautner, T. (ed.) *The penguin dictionary of philosophy*, (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 2000), p. 70.

²⁴ Mautner, T. (ed.) *The penguin dictionary of philosophy*, p. 195.

²⁵ Copi, I. M. and Cohen, C., *Introduction to logic*, 11th ed., (Indian: Pearson Education, Inc, 2002), p. 344.

events should not take place, will escape the problem of freewill and determinism since we have freely chosen to carry them out. They are our collective decisions. Also we have put machineries in place to make sure they are actualized as far as it is within human capabilities. So, they are events that were planned and we are determined to actualize.

(e) The Problem of Foreknowledge:

Carnap refers to the knowledge of the future as foreknowledge. He sees it as the knowledge of the present or the past manifesting itself. As explained by Scheer, Carnap is of the view that the so-called future knowledge is merely “knowledge of such things as plans, schedules, intentions, and promises, all of which are phenomena of the present and past which, as such, can yield knowledge only of the present and past and belief about the future.”²⁶ In other words, we can only have knowledge of the past and present, and belief (not knowledge) of the future. However, Scheer’s response to Carnap is instructive. He likened Carnap’s position to the view that knowledge of the past is nothing more than “knowledge of present memories of present documents, histories, and monuments – and just as queer”.²⁷ If Carnap’s argument is taken seriously in the light of Scheer’s analogy, then we cannot even have knowledge of the past. We can only have knowledge of the present in which we remember the past, and plan for the future. But an appreciation of the problem of time will reveal that past, present and future are dynamic, fluid, and interwoven concepts. We use these concepts for easy communication in language. If we can have knowledge of the present, we can have knowledge of the past and knowledge of the future.

Furthermore, to have foreknowledge of certain class of events that involve “chance” and “choice” is beyond the range of knowledge (as shown by Gettier’s counter examples). We can call these beliefs or predictions. But all class of events in the future are not limited to these. The knowledge of our planned and determined-to-achieve future events is more than just beliefs.

5. Evaluation

Our definition of what knowledge is goes a long way in determining whether we can have knowledge of propositions of future events. There is currently no

²⁶ Scheer, R. K., *Knowledge of the future*, p. 223.

²⁷ Scheer, R. K., *Knowledge of the future*, p. 224.

generally accepted definition of knowledge. The traditional definition of knowledge as 'justified true belief' has undergone a series of attack in the last century, and efforts to savage it are still on. However, towing the same line of thought as Teichman and Evans, I am for a dynamic concept of knowledge which allows for some necessary (not sufficient) conditions for knowledge. Knowledge is temporal because it grows.

With a dynamic (not rigid) concept of knowledge, the right conception of future events, especially the aspect of our future that we plan and we are determined to achieve, there is the possibility of ascribing knowledge to propositions of future events. The past is with us because it forms part of the present. The present is clumsy to define especially as it is an ongoing phenomenon moving into the future. The current 'present' was the future of the recent past. This brings to mind the perennial problem of time. To be fair to issues relating to the future, especially as it concerns planned events, we have to appreciate the problem of time.

With a dynamic conception of knowledge and a definition of our future as that which we have planned and are determined to achieved based on our present experiences, one is in a better position to evaluate the epistemic status of propositions of future events. 'What will be' is beyond humans. It includes all that will emerge in the future, a future that we cannot predict since it incorporates the workings of unpredictable mysterious nature. But our future, understood as planned events accompanied by machineries put in place to realize them, can be said to be knowledge. This our planned and determined-to-achieve future events are capable of taking care of the problems of correspondence (where Browning's view of correspondence as cutting across time is accepted), bivalence, the openness of the future, freewill and determinism, and foreknowledge. Until humans have very good knowledge of the working of nature, have (at all times) an up to date information of things, and a perfect inferential judgment of things, the knowledge of 'what will be' will remain elusive.

Furthermore, each time we plan for the future, we include in our plan ways of overcoming circumstances within our view that may prevent us from realizing our plan. When we do this we are demonstrating our awareness of other factors that we do not control. In the same way, when we claim to have knowledge of the present, we make sure that we have taken care of other things that may count against our knowledge of the present. Just as we cannot be absolutely sure of the knowledge of the present, being humans that are prone to error, and yet we accept to a reasonable extent that we have knowledge of the present (until proven otherwise in the future), so also we should accept that we have knowledge of our planned and determined-to-achieve future if there are no reasonable doubts in our minds that what we now know of our future will not take place.

6. Conclusion

The advent of society with its built in idea of progress by collective effort has led to tremendous human growth and development. Our today is more of our planned yesterday rather than by accident of nature. In spite of the vast unknown future before us, our today is largely as planned yesterday. To this extent we can say we know tomorrow taken as our planned and determined-to-achieve future. We know when to guess and make predictions of the future. We also know what we want our future to be and how to work towards realizing it. As humans we keep learning and broadening our horizons. Though today is to a large extent as we planned of it yesterday, we will still find room for improvement. This should not be taken to mean that we did not know today as planned from yesterday. It is human to want something better. So we have knowledge of our planned and determined-to-achieve future events in so far as we do not have at the moment any reason to think otherwise.

Key words: future, truth, correspondence theory, idea of progress

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