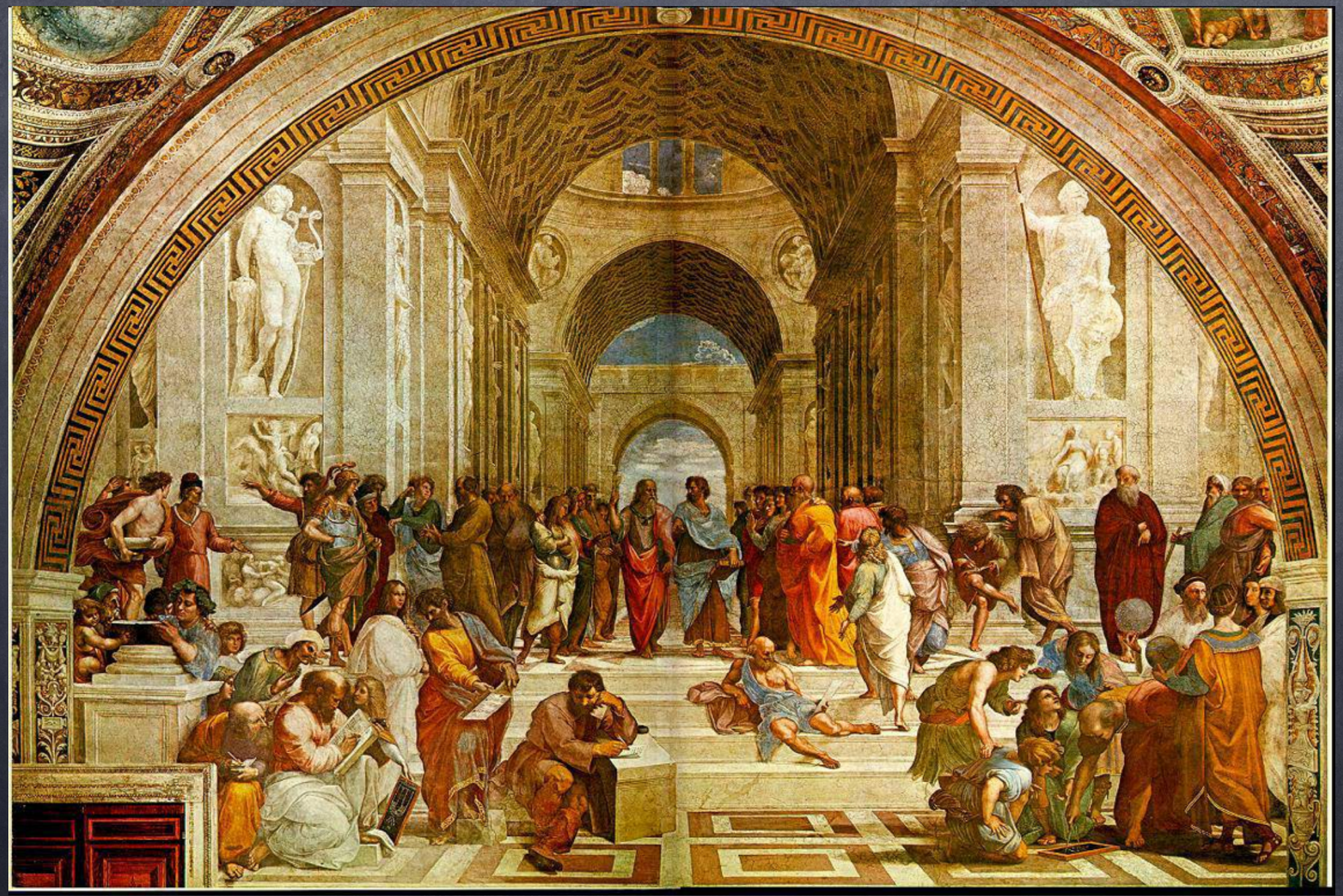
Nature of Philosophy

HZT4U1 - Mr. A. Wittmann - Unit 1 - Lecture 2



The Big Questions

- We all have views about big ultimate questions, regardless of how much we think about them.
- In philosophy we **attempt** to answer these questions, but usually without coming to a final answer.
- Every question we answer leads to more questions, thus we never make a final conclusion.
- Unlike science, in philosophy, the focus in on how we ask the question not on finding the ultimate answer.

Definition of Philosophy

- **philo** "love" & **sophia** "wisdom"
- To objectively, critically, logically question & analyze all fundamental assumptions or beliefs about the world & life, using rational/mathematical methods.
- Investigation of the fundamental nature, causes, principles of reality, knowledge and values, based on mathematical & logical reasoning, rather than empirical or psychological methods.
- Objectively (transcending bias), mathematically & rationally analyze social, emotional, artistic, spiritual, moral, cultural phenomena & behaviour.

3 Traditional Schools

1. **Metaphysics**
   - Study of reality & being
2. **Epistemology**
   - Study of knowledge & truth
3. **Ethics**
   - Study of morality

Reason

- Key to philosophy is reason.
- In general, the uniquely human capacity for resolving a question through objective reflection and logical analysis.

Logic is reasoning conducted or assessed according to strict principles of validity

Formal logic is the study of correct reasoning.

Reason (continued)

1. **Rational Thinking** is based on valid reasoning, argumentation and logic.

2. **Irrational Thinking** is based on a fallacy or invalid reasoning, argumentation and logic.

3. **Non-rational Thinking** is based on emotion, sense, intuition, instinct (biological & genetic), desire, assumption, custom, tradition, culture, or belief.

- 90% of all human thinking is non-rational.

Reason (continued)

Fallacy is an argument using incorrect reasoning, or tries to persuade psychologically.

Law of Non-contradiction (Consistency) is nothing can be and not be at the same time and in the same respect.

Valid is having a conclusion that follows from the premises by logical necessity.

Example of valid/correct reasoning

Premise a)

If you get 95% on the exam, then you will get an A in the course.

Premise b)

You get 95% on the exam.

Conclusion:

Therefore you will get an A in the course.

Example of fallacy/invalid reasoning

Premise a)

If you get 95% on the exam, then you will get an A in the course.

Premise b)

You do not get 95% on the exam.

Conclusion:

Therefore you will not get an A in the course.

Example of Non-Rational

Premise a)

If you get 95% on the exam, then you will get an A in the course.

Premise b)

John got 95% on the exam but did not get an A in the course.

Conclusion:

Therefore you will not get an A in the course.

Arguments

Argument: A group of statements consisting of premises intended to prove a conclusion.

We may conclude that a good God certainly does not exist. Because it is clear that there is evil in the world. And if a good God exists, there would be no evil.

Premise a)

If a good God exists, then there is no evil in the world.

Premise b)

But there is evil in the world.

Conclusion:

Therefore a good God does not exist.

Arguments (continued)

Deductive Arguments: When premises show that the conclusion must be true.

Premise a) All men are mortal.
Premise b) Socrates is a man.
Conclusion: Therefore Socrates is mortal.

Inductive Arguments: When premises show that the conclusion is probably true.

A sociologist interviews 800 Canadians. All profess to believe in God. The sociologist then concludes that all Canadians believe in God. (This conclusion may be false.)

Abductive Arguments: When observations lead to a theory which provides the simplest conclusion.

To sum up!

Remember!!!

- Philosophical thinking tries to answer questions by using reason and eliminating cultural, social, psychological, supernatural or emotional assumptions.
- All the philosophers we will be learning about were mathematicians first.
- There is a tight relationship between the 2.

> "anyone who does not understand mathematics may not enter."
>
> -Plato, motto of the Academy

Philosophy & Science

THE END