

Epiphenomenalism and the Causal Theory of Knowing

Epifenomenalizm ve Nedensel Bilme Kuramı

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Received: 01.10.2020 | Accepted: 23.12.2020

Abstract: Frank Jackson's knowledge argument, which is based on a thought experiment about Mary, a brilliant neuroscientist, living in a black and white surrounding, is one of the most important challenges for physicalistic conceptions of the mind. The argument roughly aims at indicating that a complete physical knowledge of the world, would not include the knowledge of phenomenal properties of experience, therefore physicalism is false. In addition to his anti-physicalist thesis, Jackson further claims that phenomenal qualities of experiences are epiphenomenal. However, according to the inconsistency objection that is based upon a causal theory of knowledge, the knowledge argument undermines epiphenomenalism, because gaining the knowledge of phenomenal experience requires that phenomenal states are causally potent. However, the criticism can be challenged by developing a causal account of phenomenal knowledge without attributing a causal function of phenomenal properties. In this paper, it will be claimed that such a causal account is possible based on the notions of "reliability" and of "common causal origin" phenomenal experience and phenomenal knowledge, hence that epiphenomenalism and the knowledge argument are not necessarily inconsistent.

Keywords: Knowledge argument, phenomenal knowledge, epiphenomenalism, theory of knowing, reliability.



Giriş

The mind- body problem, one of the most challenging philosophical problem, mainly derives its inextricability from the difficulty in locating the mind into a physicalistic conception of the universe. Dualism clearly violates one of our most central assumption about the universe, that is, the causal closure of the physical. This principle states that the universe is causally closed and nothing that is not itself physical can have a causal influence on the physical. On the other hand, although it is one of the most dominant philosophical position about the ontology of the mind, physicalism faces problems in explaining phenomenal consciousness that seems to be radically different from physical states. Most of the arguments that are given against physicalism are based upon epistemological considerations. For instance, it is claimed that the mind and the body are known in different ways. While we have a privileged, immediate and private access to our minds, our access to the body is mediated and our bodies are publicly accessible. Therefore, physicalistic terms that are used to explain the material world do not seem to be suitable to understand the nature of the mind. One of the most remarkable epistemological argument that is given against physicalism is “The Knowledge Argument” that is proposed by Frank Jackson (1982) in his seminal paper “Epiphenomenal Qualia”. In this paper, Jackson introduces a thought experiment that is designed to show that the complete physical knowledge of the universe will leave phenomenal knowledge out. Given that physical knowledge does not capture every phenomenon, Jackson concludes that physicalism must be false. Jackson further argues that phenomenal properties (qualia) of certain mental states are purely epiphenomenal, that is, their presence or absence makes no difference to the physical world since they are causally inefficacious (Jackson 1982: 133).

Arguments raised against Jackson’s position usually attack either his knowledge argument, or his epiphenomenalism independently. However, the argument that will be the subject matter of this paper, targets the consistency of the knowledge argument and epiphenomenalism about phenomenal properties. According to it, Jackson’s knowledge argument undermines his epiphenomenalist position because according to Jackson, a person who is confined to a black and white environment will gain new



phenomenal knowledge once she experiences a colorful object. However, it is claimed, if phenomenal properties are knowable, then epiphenomenalism cannot be true. For, knowledge of something requires a causal relationship between knowledge and the object of knowledge. But if phenomenal properties are causally inefficacious and if their absence or presence do not make any change in the universe, then how is it possible that they change a subjects' epistemic position? Apparently, this counterargument assumes a causal theory of knowledge, so one way to avoid such an objection is to reject all causal theories of knowledge or to give a non-causal account for phenomenal knowledge. However, in this paper it will be claimed that even though we accept a causal theory of phenomenal knowledge, this would not necessarily render epiphenomenalism and the knowledge argument inconsistent. It will be argued that a more refined causal theory of knowledge that is supplemented with the notion of reliability can enable Jackson to avoid the inconsistency objection. The causal theory of phenomenal knowledge that will be proposed will be based on Alvin Goldman's notion of reliability. It will be claimed that phenomenal knowledge is not the direct effect of phenomenal properties but is rather caused by a brain state that is the common causal origin of phenomenal knowledge and phenomenal properties in question in a reliable way. To this aim, Jackson's knowledge argument, the main lines of epiphenomenalism and the inconsistency objection will be presented respectively. Finally, a causal theory of phenomenal knowledge that undermines the inconsistency objection will be proposed.

Jackson's Knowledge Argument and Epiphenomenalism

In "Epiphenomenal Qualia" Jackson aims to establish an anti-physicalist conception of qualitative aspects of mental states in terms of an epistemological argument. His argument is basically designed to show that if physicalism is true, then a complete body of physical information will be able to explain everything. Given that, there are things that cannot be captured by physical information, then physicalism is false. Jackson states the basic line of his knowledge argument as follows:

Tell me everything physical there is to tell about what is going on in a living brain, the kind of states, their functional role, their relation to what goes on



at other times and in other brains, and so on and so forth, and be I as clever as can be fitting it all together, you won't have told me about the hurtfulness of pains, the itchiness of itches, pangs of jealousy, or about the characteristic experience of tasting a lemon, smelling a rose, hearing a loud noise or seeing the sky. (Jackson, 1982: 127).

The qualities that Jackson claims not to be embraced by physical information are *qualia* (sing. quale) that are defined as “what it is like to be in a state” and that refer to distinctive qualitative aspects or distinctive subjective feels of certain mental states such as the hurtfulness of pain or redness of red experience. (Arıcı and Toy, 2015: 1-2).¹ Physical information on the other hand, though vague, means every kind of information that can be provided by physical, chemical and biological sciences. So, according to Jackson, no matter how much information physical, chemical or biological sciences can provide, that is, even if they do provide every information there is to know about the universe, qualia will never be captured by it. Jackson justifies his knowledge argument by a very famous thought experiment:

Mary is a brilliant scientist who is, for whatever reason, forced to investigate the world from a black and white room *via* a black and white television monitor. She specialises in the neurophysiology of vision and acquires, let us suppose, all the physical information there is to obtain about what goes on when we see ripe tomatoes, or the sky, and use terms like ‘red’, ‘blue’, and so on. (Jackson 1982: 130).

Jackson asks us to consider the question of whether Mary will learn anything when she is released from her room and encounters colorful objects. Jackson's answer is affirmative. Even though Mary knows everything physical to be known about vision, colors and color perception, when she first has contact to a red object she will learn “what it is like to experience red”. Mary, having the qualia red, learns something that no amount of physical information can convey to her. Given that Mary's physical information is incomplete with respect to phenomenal properties, Jackson concludes that physicalism cannot give us a complete story

¹ Throughout the paper, the terms “qualia”, “phenomenal property” and “qualitative property” will be used interchangeably.



about the universe, hence is false². As Jackson puts:

The trouble for physicalism is that, after Mary sees her first ripe tomato, she will realize how impoverished her conception of the mental life of others has been all along. She will realize that there was, all the time she was carrying out her laborious investigations into the neurophysiologies of others and into the functional roles of their internal states, something about these people she was quite unaware of. (Jackson, 1986: 292).

Jackson's thought experiment has been opposed in different ways. For instance, David Lewis (1983) claims that when released Mary does not acquire new propositional knowledge but rather acquires new abilities. According to Lewis knowing "what it is like" is a matter of possessing some abilities to imagine, remember, predict and recognize. Therefore, having all physical propositional knowledge there is, does not require having phenomenal knowledge and this does not render physicalism false. A second line of objection is to claim that living in a black and white surrounding does not necessarily prevent Mary to have color experiences (Çağatay and Ekemen, 2011; Thompson, 1995). For instance, Çağatay and Ekemen state that Mary, by using her complete physical information, can construct a device that can affect her nervous system and create color experiences (Çağatay & Ekemen, 2011: 30). Another way to reply the knowledge argument is to claim what Mary knows before her release is not something new but rather what she already knows before her release presents itself under another description (Braddon-Mitchell & Jackson, 2007:137). The counter argument that constitute the focus of this paper, on the other hand, is based on the apparent inconsistency between the knowledge argument and epiphenomenalism which is, according to Jackson, the most powerful reply to the knowledge argument (Braddon-Mitchell & Jackson, 2007: 142) . Therefore, before explaining the details of this argument, it will be useful to states Jackson's argument for his epiphenomenalist position concerning qualia.

After introducing his epistemological argument against physicalism,

² Jackson proposes another experiment in the same paper concerning the situation of a man, Fred, who has better color vision than we have and can make perceptual discrimination that we cannot make. But for the sake of simplicitiy we are going to consider only the thought experiment about Mary (Jackson 1982: 128).



Jackson goes on establishing his epiphenomenalist position about qualia. Epiphenomenalism in philosophy of mind can roughly be defined as the view that mental phenomena are causally inert or impotent, and that only physical phenomena are causally efficacious. In other words, while physical phenomena are the causes of mental phenomena, mental phenomena have no effect at all (McLaughlin, 1994: 277). Jackson is a qualia epiphenomenalist. In other words, he is not committed to the claim that all mental states are causally impotent, he rather claims that qualia are such that their possession of absence does not make any change in the physical world. He is therefore, not committed to the claim that qualia are totally causally inefficacious either; they may have causal influence on other mental phenomena. So, Jackson's main claim is that certain properties of certain mental states, that is qualia, have no effect on the physical (Jackson 1982: 133). According to Jackson, one reason for claiming that mental phenomena affects physical phenomena is the apparent regularities between them. For instance, there seems to be a strict regularity between experiencing pain and exhibiting pain behavior. However, for Jackson, this regularity is due to a common physical cause that creates the dual effects of the physical and the mental. For instance, pain seems to be the cause of pain behavior, but according to the epiphenomenalist both phenomena are the effects of a common physical cause. Another reason for the attribution of causal power to mental phenomena is based upon the adaptive role phenomenal states are supposed to have on survival. According to it, phenomenal states such as pain are conducive to survival, therefore their causal power cannot be denied. However, Jackson replies this argument by claiming that qualia are only evolutionary epiphenomena or by-products that develop as concomitants of other biological traits that are conducive for survival (Jackson, 1982: 134). So, qualia are irrelevant to survival, just like having a heavy coat is irrelevant for the survival of polar bears. The last reason to deny epiphenomenal qualia according to Jackson, is the argument from other minds. If qualia are epiphenomenal, then how do we know that other people experience pain if their pain behaviors are not the effects of pain qualia? According to Jackson, it is possible to infer epiphenomenal qualia by "arguing from one effect back to its cause and out again to another effect" (Jackson, 1982: 134). That is



to say, from pain behaviors of other people I can argue for the brains states that cause pain behavior, and from this brains state that is also the cause of qualia, I can infer that other people have qualia. Given that epiphenomenalism allows that qualia are the outcomes of physical brain states, other minds does not seem to pose a special problem for epiphenomenalism (Jackson, 1982: 134-135). Even these replies given to counterarguments against the existence of epiphenomenal qualia are not conclusive, nevertheless they show that we do not have any reason to reject their existence. When we combine this line of reasoning with the knowledge argument we would have good reason for accepting the existence of epiphenomenal qualia. It can further be claimed that epiphenomenalism has some apparent advantages compared to their rivals, interactionist dualism and physicalism; by allowing qualia having no causal influence on the physical it does not violate the principle of causal closure of the physical, and by locating them outside of the physical realm it respects their seeming mystery.

The Inconsistency of the Knowledge Argument and Epiphenomenalism

Besides its advantages, epiphenomenalism seems to be counter-intuitive in rendering qualia totally ineffective in the physical world. According to the epiphenomenalist picture, qualia “do nothing, they explain nothing, they serve merely to soothe the intuitions of dualists, and it is left a total mystery how they fit into the world view of science. In short, we do not and cannot understand the how and why of them” (Jackson 1982: 135). However, the claim that qualia are causally impotent has a more substantial handicap than merely contradicting intuitions. Being causally impotent prevents qualia from being the object of human knowledge, and renders phenomenal knowledge impossible, for epistemic knowledge requires a causal connection between a belief and the object of knowledge. If the object of knowledge (quale) is causally impotent, the how it is supposed to cause to corresponding belief about it? Given that Jackson’s knowledge argument assumes that we can have phenomenal knowledge (since Jackson believes that Mary will learn something new about her own and others’ phenomenology), then his epiphenomenalist claim seems to undermine his own argument for epiphenomenalism. This argument against Jackson’s epiphenomenalism highlighting the in-



consistency between the knowledge argument and epiphenomenalism is known as “The Inconsistency Objection”. It roughly aims to show that Jackson cannot coherently hold both that Mary (brilliant scientist mentioned in the knowledge argument) gains new knowledge when she is released from her room and that the phenomenal property of which she gains the knowledge is epiphenomenal. The inconsistency objection is introduced by different philosophers independently. Neil Campbell (2003) claims that “Mary learns anything new unless her qualia are causally efficacious. The idea that Mary’s newfound colour qualia have causal efficacy, and so make a causal difference, is implicitly assumed in Jackson’s own description of Mary in her new state” (263). Similarly, Michael Watkins (2015) states “if qualia are not causally efficacious, then my beliefs and memories would be just as they are whether there are qualia or not. Beliefs about qualia cannot be justified on the basis of qualitative experiences since those experiences do not cause those beliefs” (160). And finally Fredrik Stjernberg argues that what Mary has knowledge of “must be endowed with at least some causal powers, or else she has perceived nothing new, learned nothing new...” (1999: 5). Yujin Nagasawa, on the other hand, makes the inconsistency argument explicit as follows:

- (1) If epiphenomenalism is true, the qualia are causally inefficacious in virtue of falling under a mental type.
- (2) If qualia are causally inefficacious in virtue of their falling under a mental type then Mary cannot acquire new knowledge about upon her release.

Therefore,

- (3) If epiphenomenalism is true, then Mary cannot acquire new knowledge about qualia upon her release.
- (4) If the knowledge argument is sound, then Mary acquires new knowledge about qualia upon her release. Therefore,
- (5) If epiphenomenalism is true, then the knowledge argument is unsound, and vice versa. (Nagasawa, 2010:42)

As Campbell also emphasizes, Jackson’s remarks concerning what will happen when Mary is released from her room clearly strengthens the intuition that what she learns after her release creates differences in her epistemic and behavioral conditions. When Mary first perceives a ripe



tomato for instance, she may possibly think “So! This is how a ripe tomato looks like” or she will at least acquire beliefs that she never had before. However, whether the inconsistency objection succeeds against Jackson or not is closely connected to the theory of knowledge that should be adopted. The inconsistency objection clearly assumes a causal theory of knowledge that posits a direct causal connection between the subject’s belief and the object of knowledge (which according to Jackson is mistaken). Therefore, in order for the inconsistency objection to work we need evidence in favor of the causal theory of knowledge. The success of the causal theory of knowledge lies in its ability to deal with Gettier cases that are introduced against the traditional definition of knowledge as justify true beliefs. In a famous paper published in 1963, Edmund Gettier successfully introduces examples that indicates that if an appropriate connection between a belief and the phenomenon that makes the belief true is missing, then the conditions of knowledge will not be satisfied. A useful and simple Gettier case that will highlight the relevance of the connection between a belief and the object of belief is introduced by Roderick Chisholm (1966). Chisholm asks us to imagine that we are standing in a field looking at an object that looks exactly like a sheep. Naturally in such a case we would form the belief that there is a sheep in the field. Imagine further that, unknown to us, there is an actual sheep in the field as well. So, our belief will not only be justified but it will also be true. On the other hand, this true and justified belief does not qualify as knowledge because in the scenario above the belief in a true proposition is held for wrong reasons. Alvin Goldman attempts to solve this problem by stressing the necessity of the causal connection between the belief and the phenomenon that makes the belief true. According to Goldman “the sheep in the field” case is not a genuine instance of knowledge, because the cause of the belief is not the actual sheep itself. So, according to this account, if we are supposed to have true beliefs about qualia, in order for those beliefs to count as knowledge they should be caused by qualia themselves. If this direct causal connection between a quale and a corresponding belief is missing (as epiphenomenalism holds), then we cannot have a genuine instance of phenomenal knowledge. If we are to claim that Mary learns what it is like to experience red when experiencing a



ripe tomato, then her belief should be the effect of “what it is like to see red” namely, the quale of red should be the cause of her belief. However, if qualia are epiphenomenal, it would not be possible to claim that Mary learns something new *because* of her new gained qualia. Therefore, Jackson’s knowledge argument that is committed to the view that we may possess epiphenomenal knowledge of qualitative properties of our experiences is inconsistent with his epiphenomenalist approach towards those qualitative properties.

Even though Jackson is aware of the strength of the inconsistency objection, he avoids giving a full-fledged evaluation of it. Instead of providing a detailed account of phenomenal knowledge, he contends that the requirement of a direct causal connection between qualia and qualia-beliefs are mistaken. He rather claims that,

This reply does not tell us what is wrong with the knowledge argument. It seeks to show that there must be something wrong with it somewhere. What we know about the way the world works tells us that Mary cannot acquire knowledge of how things are that outruns the physical story she knew beforehand when she leaves the room – despite the fact that it certainly seems that she does! (Braddon-Mitchell & Jackson: 142).

One way to argue against the inconsistency objection is to deny a causal account of knowledge in general, or to offer a non-causal account for phenomenal knowledge. However, it is also possible to claim that the inconsistency objection will fail even though we keep a certain form of causal theory of knowledge. Therefore, in the following part of the paper, we will try to construct a plausible causal account of phenomenal knowledge that will not undermine epiphenomenalism and that will succeed against the inconsistency objection. The causal theory that will be proposed is based on the notion of reliability of the causal process that gives rise to phenomenal beliefs.

A Causal Theory of Phenomenal Knowledge

Even though the standard causal theory of knowledge that requires a direct causal relationship between qualia and the phenomenal knowledge of qualia undermines epiphenomenalism, it faces important counter-examples hence cannot be true. The most important counter arguments



against such a standard causal theory of knowledge is the knowledge of future events (Braddon-Mitchell & Jackson: 2007). Given that we may have knowledge about future events, and future events cannot be the direct cause of our beliefs or knowledge about them, seeking for a direct connection between knowledge and the object of knowledge is mistaken. Therefore, the inconsistency objection is unsuccessful since it relies on a mistaken conception of empirical knowledge. However, a causal account of knowledge that requires a direct connection between a phenomenon and the knowledge of it, is not the only possible alternative to explain empirical and phenomenal knowledge in causal terms. Moreover, even though the standard causal theory of knowledge cannot account for every kind of knowledge and hence be rejected, epiphenomenalism still is in need of an alternative account of how Mary gains new phenomenal knowledge after her release. One possible alternative is to posit an indirect causal connection between qualia and the phenomenal knowledge of them. Actually, Goldman's causal theory of knowledge provides such an alternative. According to Goldman, in order to know a phenomenon, the phenomenon in question does not have to be causally linked directly to the belief about it. If the phenomenon and the belief about it, has a common causal origin we will still have a case of genuine knowledge that escapes Gettier's criticism. Goldman gives the following example;

T intends to go downtown on Monday. On Sunday, *T* tells *S* of his intention. Hearing *T* say he will go downtown, *S* infers that *T* really does intend to go downtown. And from this *S* concludes that *T* will go downtown on Monday. (Goldman, 1967: 364).

According to Goldman, if *T* goes downtown on Monday because of his intention, then *S* can be said to know that he will go downtown because there is a common cause of *S*'s belief and *T*'s going downtown, namely *T*'s intention. If *T* goes downtown for different reasons (if he is kidnapped and brought downtown), then *S*'s belief would not constitute knowledge since the common cause of the future event and *S*'s belief would be missing.

Would Jackson's epiphenomenalism allow such a causal connection to exist between qualia and beliefs and knowledge of them? Certainly, Jackson is not denying that after her release Mary will undergo some



physical changes. Through experiencing a colorful object for instance her brain will be subject to certain neural events for the first time. Therefore, Jackson can coherently argue that Mary's knowledge or belief about her red quale, and the red quale itself are the outcomes of some common physical events that take place in her brain. So, in order to account for phenomenal knowledge, there is no need to seek for a direct causal connection between Mary's belief and her red quale. If they are causally connected by a common cause, what Mary has after her release will qualify as phenomenal knowledge. And this account will not be inconsistent with the epiphenomenal nature of qualia.

However, this version of the causal account of knowledge is not without its critics. This account, even though can be coherently applied to phenomenal knowledge without undermining epiphenomenalism, seems to be too weak because it is unable to rule out situation that cannot be considered as genuine case of knowledge. As Nagasawa also indicates "everything is, at least, indirectly, causally connected with everything" (2010: 48). Indirect causality, if not restricted with a further criterion can be found between every kind of event in the universe. Similarly, any phenomenon can be indirectly attached through a common cause to any kind of belief about the phenomenon in question. Consider the following example: Suppose that Jones had a car accident and has some serious brain damage. Health officers who realize it, takes Jones to the hospital. Suppose further that Jones, who is unaware that he is taken to the hospital, also develops the future belief that he will be in the hospital in a few minutes, as the side effect of the brain damage. Although Jones' belief that he will be in the hospital in a few minutes and the fact that he will be in the hospital are the effects of a common cause (brain damage or the car accident), it is counter intuitive to claim that Jones knows that he will be in the hospital in a few minutes. What is needed here, is a criterion that will provide a closer connection between the truth of Jones belief and the fact in which he believes. In other words, positing an indirect causal connection on the basis of a common cause, does not rule out the possibility of arriving to a true believe by chance or coincidence. An analogous example that derives from a well-known *deviant causal chains argu-*



*ment*³, can be also provided for phenomenal knowledge as well. Suppose that out of an earthquake Ronald's library falls and causes a brain damage in Ronald. Suppose further that when the library falls a red book also falls on the floor. Ronald who is half faint, open his eyes and hardly sees the red book on the floor. Imagine also that Ronald's brain damage causes him to have some phenomenal beliefs about different qualia one of which is the phenomenal belief about how the color red looks. Even though, Ronald's phenomenal belief and the corresponding qualia are the effects of a common cause (the earthquake), it is hard to defend that what he has is a genuine case of knowing. What is disturbing and counter intuitive in this example, is the fact that it does not provide a sufficiently close connection between qualia and qualia-belief. The causal connection between the earthquake and the qualia-belief is a deviant chain therefore, needs to be ruled out from feasible causal theory of knowledge.

The deviancy of the causal chain that leads to the qualia-belief presented above arises because of the fact that the causal connection between the cause of the belief and the belief itself is not reliable. Goldman defines reliability as the disposition of a process to produce generally true beliefs (Goldman, 1979: 10). An earthquake causing a brain damage apparently is an unreliable process since the possibility of its producing true beliefs is extremely small. On the other hand, when we consider a standard case of perception, we can see that the causal connection between the brain event, which gives rises to a quale, and a qualia-belief is reliable. When I see a red object, the brain processes it in such a way that it usually creates true phenomenal beliefs that accompany the quale. Similarly, even though hallucination itself is not a reliable process in producing beliefs about the external world, the brain process that occurs during a hallucination is a reliable process for producing true phenomenal beliefs.

So, in order to account for phenomenal knowledge in terms of a causal theory of knowledge that will not undermine epiphenomenalism two things are required. 1. The causal connection should not be restricted to direct causation. 2. The connection between the common cause and the belief it produces should be reliable. With the second requirement

³ An example of such an argument is presented by McEvoy (2014).



the causal chain can be restricted only to common causes that are appropriate for belief formation. Hence, it can be claimed that *S* has phenomenal knowledge of qualia if *S*'s qualia-belief and *S*'s qualia are the effects of a common cause that reliably produce *S*'s qualia-belief. Therefore, *a reliabilist causal account of phenomenal knowledge* can avoid the inconsistency objection against Jackson's knowledge argument.

Conclusion

So, what will happen when Mary is released from her black and white room? Mary will encounter a red object for the first time. The object will cause a new neural event in Mary's brain. The neural process will cause the red quale and the corresponding belief about it. The neural process that Mary will undergo will be such that, it will have a high probability to produce true phenomenal beliefs about a red quale. After all, almost every time a person undergoes such a neural process, the very same process gives rise to a true belief about a red quale and red quale itself. Therefore, when released Mary will gain new phenomenal knowledge. This causal account of phenomenal knowledge does not undermine Jackson's epiphenomenalism about qualia. Moreover, the reliability criterion prevents Gettier-like cases that intuitively do not constitute knowledge. It is therefore, possible to claim that a causal theory of knowledge does not necessarily establish an inconsistency between Jackson's knowledge argument and epiphenomenalism. Nevertheless, the causal account of phenomenal knowledge is vulnerable to epistemological counter-arguments against it. However, a full-fledged account of the causal theory of knowledge will not be in the scope of this paper. Similarly, the theory of phenomenal knowledge that we proposed, is still open to criticism on the basis of the claim that it does not offer a close enough relationship between qualia and qualia beliefs. For, instance it is possible to argue that qualia and qualia-beliefs stand in identity or constitutive relations. Nevertheless, it can be said that as long as causal theory of knowledge does not require a direct causal connection, and as long as it contains a reliability requirement, it will not undermine epiphenomenalism and will not be subject to Gettier-like counter arguments.



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Öz: Frank Jackson'un siyah beyaz bir ortamda yaşıyan ve parlak bir sinirbilimci olan Mary hakkındaki düşünce deyhine dayanan, bilgi argümanı, fizikalist zihin anlayışına en önemli meydan okumalardan biridir. Argüman kısaca, dünyanın eksiksiz fiziksel bilgisinin, deneyimlerin fenomenal niteliklerini kapsamadığını bu nedenle fizikalizmin yanlış olduğunu göstermeyi amaçlar. Fizikalist karşıtı tezine ek olarak Jackson, deneyimlerin fenomenal niteliklerinin epifenomenal olduğunu iddia eder. Öte yandan, nedensel bir bilgi kuramına dayanan tutarsızlık itirazına göre, bilgi argümanı epifenomenalizmi çürütür, zira fenomenal deneyimin bilgisini elde etmenin, fenomenal deneyimlerin nedensel olarak etkin olmalarını gerektirdiğini ifade eder. Ancak, bu itiraza fenomenal deneyime nedensel bir işlev atfetmeyen nedensel bir bilgi kuramı geliştirerek karşı çıkmak mümkündür. Bu çalışmada, "güvenilirlik" ve fenomenal deneyim ve bilginin "ortak nedensel kökeni" nosyonları temelinde, nedensel bir bilgi kuramının mümkün olduğu ve bu nedenle epifenomenalizm ve bilgi argümanının zorunlu olarak tutarsız olmadığı iddia edilecektir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bilgi argümanı, fenomenal bilgi, epifenomenalizm, bilme kuramı, güvenilirlik.

