**Phil. 114 4/27/2016**

**From last time: The grounding argument against Middle Knowledge:**

-For any of A-F to be true, they must be grounded in basic facts

-The basic facts concern the (simple) past and the (simple) present (so they include M and N), but not the likes of A-F, i.e., not the future, the hypothetical future, nor the hypothetical past

-For a non-basic claim to be made true by being grounded in basic facts, the grounding must guarantee the truth of the grounded fact

-If the agents in A-F are (as we are supposing) free with respect to the actions in question in the relevant future and hypothetical scenarios, then the basic facts cannot guarantee their relevant actions

-So, none of A-F is true (in cases of free actions)

-Though they can be probably true

**Nick Trakakis, “Theodicy: The Solution to the Problem of Evil, or Part of the Problem?”**

Final exam question 7: Explain, in its most important aspects, Tarakis’s case against the project of constructing theodicies in our reading #8, making sure to explain what Trakakis takes theodicies to be. Then critically evaluate his argument in light of what you take to be the best objections that can be leveled against it.

-Advice: I’d start with the following passage on p. 175, which organize what seem to be Trakakis’s three main complaints, and then work out from there:

Here we have the convergence of three distinct, but inter-related, themes: the teleology of suffering exemplified in theodicies displays a deep moral incoherence (morality just doesn’t work that way), an inexcusable moral insensitivity (treating people as mere means), and an equally culpable moral blindness (which refuses to countenance the possibility of unjustified and inexplicable evil).

-whether to go into the “with or without a second thought” dilemma (169-171) is up to you

-Thoughts about “the inviolable sanctity of childhood” (179.0): “But the children, the children!” (Dostoyevksy’s Ivan Karamazov, quoted at 177.1)

-The Challenge of the Worst Suffering (in relation to the Trakakis’s third complaint in the passage above)

-Brief thoughts about the Positional Epistemology of Great Suffering (relevant to 182.5-183.7, but also to Greenberg epigraph): those who “sense” vs. those under illusion