

Philosophy and Happiness : Aporia

What is philosophy? When we do or think something we are apt to forget why we started to do it Hence in every branch of study there are books which explain what that study is all about. For example Henry Sidgwick discussed, in his book "The Methods of Ethics", that ethics is the study "to determine what is right for us to do". The difficulty of defining the meaning of any field of study is apparent here because if one tries to determine what is "right" to do, one should first define what does it mean to be "right".

In the case of philosophy, we often talk about philosophy of something, for example, the philosophy of "beauty or to be beautiful", "philosophy of life", "philosophy of war" and so on. In each case, these expressions become meaningful by first defining the matter under discussion, beauty, life, war and so forth. Then it becomes possible to try defining how these matters should be or better be , or to start doing philosophy.

One may summarize the procedure of philosophy as making clear the concept or structure of things under consideration. Naturally, it follows that such procedure inevitably results in the final problem of considering the question what is **the philosophy of philosophy**?

This kind of questioning in which the question is about the subject matter itself are one of the cases of "self-reference". (I am telling a lie. I am that I am. (אהיה אשר אהיה)).

The difficulty of getting an answer in "self-reference" was mentioned in the case of "idea" by **Plato**. He noticed the difficulty of thinking what is **the idea of idea** in his book "Parmenides" and tried to give answer in "Timaeus", by contriving the field which contain every idea called the "chora". **Aristotle** noticed this difficulty, saying that anything cannot be itself and not itself at the same time. In logic, this is called **the law of contradiction**, and is one of **the basic axioms**. If, one accepts the contradiction, in other words, if you approve one thing is this and that at the same time, it will result in the situation where you can prove any illogical proposition and end up in a situation in which you cannot prove anything at all. "**Raison d'etre**": the reason why it is so, cannot be given to anything (or can be given to everything) while we are usually asked to show it and accept the explanation.

Examples of Aporia seen in the various teachings in history.

Heraclitus : Good and Evil are the same. . The road up and the road down **is** one and the same.

Parmenides :All is one

Plato : Idea of idea is idea. Ideas exists in Chora.

Aristotle : Aporia appears when one ask for the foundation of axioms.

漢書芸文志(*Book of Han, Hanshu: history of Han dynasty 206 BC–25AD*)、相反相成、contradiction exists to make things complete.

Kant : Antinomies are ubiquitous.

Hegel : Antinomy → Aufheben, transcendence from duality? One step in dialectics (弁証法) (Ablegen go down.).

Vimalakirti विमलकीर्ति:**Advaya** (non-duality,अद्वय).不可思議解脱(acintya-vimoksa=inconceivable liberation, from duality).

Laozi 老子, : Zhuangzi 莊子 : 混沌 Hun-Dun, Chaos.

Hakuin 白隱 (Zen Buddhist) : Listen to the sound of one hand clapping. (隻手音声) .

The reason why we usually live being able to explaining everything is that we are living within certain **boundary conditions** (土俵、どひょう) which we accept as the social convention. For instance when the cause of a car accident is due to the drunken driving, the driver is accused as being the cause of that accident. No reason why he got drunk is questioned. There must be some reason why he got drunk in every case of drinking but if such cause is being asked, **infinite regress of cause of cause asking** starts and no social order can be maintained. We are living in the boundary condition in which only the "**direct cause**" of anything is taken up as **the cause**.

Acceptance of such boundary conditions is inevitable and it is the **wisdom of our life** for sure, but we should remember, that **it is the rule of society but it is not the rule of nature**.

If one thinks, asking what is happiness, is a philosophical question. Then one should examine what is philosophy. Then one should go into the "aporia" of getting into the infinite regress of questions. It is because of the fact that philosophy is our quest for the truth in the world or universe we live in which there should be **no boundary in the limit of thinking**.

Thus, by nature or by definition, **philosophy is a study in which there is no answer** and so is the question what is happiness also. It may sound funny that we, the "homo-sapience", since the beginning of history have kept thinking of philosophy and of happiness which should have no answer.

We can surmount such difficult situation by asking what in fact we were looking for by this question. If there is one true and valid answer can be given to that question, as shown in the above explanations, it is a false answer. **No one can go up to infinity** to examine and find out the **"initial" cause of causes**.

The meaning of pondering what is happiness or what is philosophy, then is that, we can be reminded ourselves by doing so, that **we are too accustomed to be given the reason or cause of anything in everyday life**. We are forgetting the fact that the truth cannot be shown in anything. However, in pursuit of truth (= pursuit of happiness?), we are privileged certainly to find out the meaning of life as "homo-sapience".

A bigger 0, smaller 0 and absolute 0 ? A bigger ∞ , smaller ∞ and absolute ∞ ?

As the extension of the above consideration over the quest for the cause of the causes in infinite regression, we head into a further riddle in the nature.

In the previous discussion over the symmetry nature of good and evil, joy and sorrow, plenty and scarcity and so on, we found numbers can be expressed by the symmetry expression as, $-\infty, 1, +\infty$, which corresponds to the familiar expression of numbers, **0, 1, ∞** . The point of such expression is to express numbers as, a^n where a is any finite number. For the values of n $-\infty < n < +\infty$, numbers can be written as, $1/\infty, \dots, 1/1, \dots, \infty/1$, instead of, $0, 1, \infty$. In this way of expression we understand **0 is equal to $1/\infty$** .

This expression means, if we put down this relation explicitly as, $0 = 1/\infty$, we should aware that 0 is not absolutely 0 but it should mean that there is 1 (thing or matter of unit number) in the expanse of ∞ numbers. If the symmetry of numbers is remembered, the infinity should be written in similar manner as, $\infty = \infty/1$.

Now following Cantor's theory of infinite set, the cardinal number (which corresponds to the size, of a set) of an infinite set is smallest for a set of rational numbers denoted as \aleph_0 . The next greater infinite set is defined by the relation, $\aleph_1 = 2^{\aleph_0}$. By following this rule any larger set may be obtainable which is denoted as \aleph_n . At least in formal interpretation, the theory of the size of infinite sets claims the existence of the difference in the size of ∞ . Thus it should result that there should be the difference in the **"size" of zero** which may be expressed for instance, $(0_0 = 1/\aleph_0) < (0_1 = 1/\aleph_1)$ and $(0_{n-1} = 1/\aleph_{n-1}) < (0_n = 1/\aleph_n)$.

Such speculation leads to the notion of the smallest zero which may be written as, $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} (1/\aleph_n)$.

It is curious to think if the ultimately small 0 is the absolute zero or not. Absolute zero may be defined as zero which is not the ratio of 1 to ∞ . However, since the limit of small 0 may be something different in nature from the ordinary or "finite" 0 to become an absolute zero.

Zen Buddhist Hakuin invented a question, about 300 years ago, which states : **"Listen to the sound of one handed clap"**. Clapping can be done only when there is something for a hand to hit upon. The word absolute means without impurity or extra component. Since sound is raised as a result of interaction of two different things, single hand cannot make sound in usual sense.

Meditation of what is this world we are living or what is the cause of cause, may lead to the notion of what does absolute zero mean. One hand clapping **can be imagined easily** since we have hands and clapping is so easy to do. But when we try to do one hand clapping we are at a loss. Such situation gives us the **experience of aporia, the unsolvable yet ubiquitous questions**.

Further consideration leads to the opposite side of the one hand clapping or absolute zero. Which may be termed as **absolute infinity**, or **absolute density**. Absolutely large or dense state of something may be visualized as a counter state of absolute nothingness or vacuum. If the absolute vacuum is the state without anything in infinitely large space, there should be a state of something existing without any accommodating space at all. In classical kinetic theory which describes the motion of matter, a notion of "mass point" which means the existence of unit mass without volume, is the basic concept.

Thus, absolute zero or absolute emptiness and absolute infinity or absolute dense state, also make a paired notion or mirrored state or symmetry of the world we live.

Philosophy in essence means our conduct of thinking or imagining of things, at infinite or at the limiting conditions, which are not around us to be experienced or "proved" from experiments or by logical analysis. Yet such philosophical thinking are about things without which nothing in real (finite) world can be defined or asserted.