

## The Value of Philosophy and Scientific Spirits

What is philosophy? What is the value of it? Everyone has his own answer or no answer. It's so difficult for us to hold identical views. Even somebody think philosophy is useless, science is useful on the contrary. Obviously I don't agree.

Bertrand Russell has told us philosophy is very useful. It is a kind of knowledge which gives unity and system to the body of the sciences, he said. Philosophy always keeps contact with sciences. We can hardly give a critical conception of philosophy. But we can describe its features. Science is extremely profound and philosophy is extremely wide, in my own opinion.

Philosophers of ancient China had some statements about this. Although there was no mature science then, they had contemplated the relation between philosophy and technology. I have learned a little of these theories and I think they are quite right. At first, let's suppose that you were a peasant. You have to plant crops and gather in them. In this process the tools you use, like sickle and machine, have some analogy with science. On the other hand, how do you use these tools? Why do you choose these ones not those ones? The method and the thought about this process can be likened to philosophy. Ancient Chinese philosophers regarded philosophy as "method" or "the way to do something" and technology as "tool". They gave them special names, "dao (道)" and "qi (器)". These two words are belonging to ancient Chinese metaphysics. "Dao", an orientalized word with several meanings, here means "method". It's on the upper level compared with all other things, almost on the top. "Qi" has an original meaning that is utensil or equipment. Here it means "tools". You do certain thing using certain "qi" follow the certain way ("dao"). So we can say philosophy determines the direction when we do anything.

However, this direction would be correct or not correct, according to our decision. When we make decision we would use the knowledge about the outside world. Although this knowledge named philosophy it has summed up the achievement of sciences. Scientists do many research works to make our understanding of the world as exact as possible. The more exact that this understanding is, the more close to truth that philosophy is. But philosophers have much wider field of vision. They can image anything which sciences have not reach or can not reach; even it is only illusion. So I think philosophy is partly based on science but it is beyond science. Then we can describe the relation between philosophy and science using these two words, "based on" and "beyond".

Relatively science is much more objective. When we touch the objective world science emerges. Everyone knows some stories of scientists. We recognize that they should do many many examinations and experiments. Not only using their brains, but also they use their hands. Thus we can come to a conclusion that the objects science investigating are mostly something we can touch with our own hands or any other tools. Scientists must respect the objects they research in. The attitude must serious and rigorous. The evidence is very important and should be sufficient when they want to prove something or some views. There is an exception, mathematics. You maybe

puzzle why we consider mathematics is one kind of science instead of philosophy. Mathematicians seem to do their research works only using their brains. They have nothing to do with any equipment. They could stay in their own house to image the battle between numbers, one plusing two, four minusing three, etc. I think mathematicians' work is very special. The objects they concern are objective though they seem not very specific. They are not manmade. These objects are the foundation of all kinds of sciences so we call mathematics Basic Science. Mathematics serves all other sciences but it doesn't serve philosophy directly. It provides many possibilities to make scientists work more conveniently and make better researches. However philosophy can not reap profits from it.

Scientific researches can obtain achievement more easily and more evidently than that of philosophy. For example, practical sciences provide us a lot of products which become indispensable, such as electricity, car, computer. Every time when you change your hardware or software in your computer you might say "my work will become more easily because of science, I like that". Certainly you will be glad to use new products. But at that time where philosophy is? You can't see it. And I can neither.

The achievements of philosophy can't be seen evidently but it is in your mind. Even though you are very stupid you have your own viewpoint about external world. At the very beginning philosophy seemed useless because it stemmed from philosophers' personal interesting and curiosity. They felt very happy when they made their researches and they thought that's enough. Now we know philosophy can not only do these simple things. At least it can provide us guiding ideology.

Philosophy concerns human spiritual world with critical thinking and scientific method. Some west researchers say that philosophy of contemporary period may be best characterized best as the philosophy of consciousness. The objects can not be seen or touched even if using equipment. So philosophers can think more freely than scientists. Of course you can also say they are more difficult.

Finally I consider that philosophy is more subjective compared with science. Their purpose are different. Science let us understand the world better and make our life more convenient. Philosophy is partly alike but its main purpose is to prove itself.