



INTRODUCTION

My Purpose and the Scope of Inquiry

What I want to do in this thesis is to construct a philosophical theory about the nature of artistic activity, by means of analysing the nature of the products from this activity, the works of art. Here, product means not only the extensional object in space-time, if there is one, the material one, but also the intensional object in one's mind where that is the relevant one.

The Origin and The Significance of This Inquiry

Many philosophers and artists try to answer the question "What is art?". But until now there has been no common agreement on this account either in the philosophical community or the community of artists. My philosophical theory can be an alternative to give some clarity to this problem. Can we know what art is while we do not know the activity surrounding the use of this word? We aren't concerned about mere verbal quibbles, but attempt to understand the real state of affairs. And that is the point.

My Method

By the nature of philosophical theory, the necessity of documentary research is excluded, which is used in the process of philosophical inquiry only as a facility to paving the way to the matter. Knowledge of literature concerning the subject-matter only gives us knowledge of the current discourse or interest in the problem by those contemporary in any era. What is significant in

doing philosophy is the power of reasoning, which is the heart-core of philosophical activity, to give the understanding of the states of affairs that are the objects of inquiry.

After reading much literature on this subject-matter, many pieces are excluded. Some by their irrelevance, some by their insignificance. Only those that are clear-cut on some point or contain crucial arguments survive.

I do philosophy by means of critical speculation, as many traditional philosophers have done. My bias is that I try to make sense of commonsense belief, and where my account conflicts with it, the explaining of why common sense is confused is necessary. Then my style of doing philosophy is seen as if descriptive in its form. Reading only some parts of my inquiry can lead one to misinterpret my account, the whole reading is necessary.

My total aim is as of Wittgenstein's words in Philosophical Investigations: "The philosophers treatment of a question is like the treatment of an illness."

For the clarity that we are aiming at is indeed complete clarity. But this simply means that the philosophical problems should completely disappear.

The real discovery is the one that makes me capable of stopping doing philosophy when I want to. - The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring itself in question. - Instead, we now demonstrate a method, by examples; and the series of examples can be broken off. - Problems are solved (difficulties eliminated), not a single problem.

There is not a philosophical method, though there are indeed methods, like different therapies.

This is true of my way of inquiry as well. And surely, there are many ways of presenting the matter, not only one way.

Presupposition

For the sake of truth if we, on doing philosophy, can avoid presupposition it's seems better. But why? Is it necessary as such? The claim of Husserl that his method can exclude any presupposition is proved now as faulty. Why does it matter have or not have presuppositions? 'For the sake of truth' is our guide-line, isn't it?

(I only briefly say that you can call my position "minimal relativism" or in reverse form "minimal objectivism", mutatis mutandis. This name I invent on my own. Relativism does not mean everything is possible. It's only aware of the context of its reference, the paradigm of its discourse. Objectivity is a function of the paradigm we presuppose.)

The Merits from My Inquiry

If it is successful, this alternative theory can fulfill its purpose. When a problem is solved we call it no problem. Otherwise it is unsuccessful, because of some inner problematic. For at least, I believe that this theory can give us clarification about some point.

The construction of a new theory, this 'new' does not mean that 'out of nothing' or 'not on any merit of other theories. This 'new' theory can accept some assumptions from other 'old' theories, even based on them. This is the natural way of our constructing any 'new' theory, isn't it?

Some Caution on Reading My Essay

1. Notice my style of thinking, analysing the problem. Everybody has his/her own style of thinking. There are many styles of doing philosophy, not only one style.

2. Notice the relation between chapters. You can misinterpret the point, by rapid reading. As every good reader, the attempt to read the invisible words among the visible sentences, the words which speak but not reveal themselves as literal visible one, is necessary task.

3. Because of the author taking the problem seriously, do not interpret his account too trivial. Some misunderstanding of his account and overlooking his innovation is possible, by interpreting his account too trivial. Why do you feel sympathetic toward such author, e.g. as Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Kierkegaard and attempt to make sense of their words?

Note

All sentence in the parenthesis is the note, not the directly account of the thesis.