

Creator, Certainty and Inborn Knowledge Rethinking Based on the Debate Between Descartes and Locke

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ABSTRACT

The nature and source of knowledge has always been a classic topic in the history of philosophy. Descartes's theory of innate knowledge opened the prelude to this discussion. Descartes believes that most of human knowledge is innate. Knowledge is driven by the characteristics of human thinking, but indirectly driven by the nature of specific events we may experience. On the contrary, empiricists such as John Locke criticizes that our knowledge is rarely innate and mainly comes from experience. The acquisition of knowledge is a long learning process. In this process, the two sources of experience are "feeling" and "reflection". The mind receives various perceptions through feeling, by which we are familiar with external objects and have various concepts of perceptible nature. Through introspection, we produce other ideas by paying attention to the ideas previously provided by feeling. The concept derived from reflection is as clear as the concept derived from feeling. Based on this, this paper mainly considers the relationship between creator, certainty and inborn knowledge. At the same time, this paper absorbs the arguments of David Hume's point of view and puts forward some new thoughts on innate knowledge. This paper holds that the certainty of knowledge is inseparable from inborn knowledge. The certainty of knowledge is the premise for us to recognize inborn knowledge. The existence of inborn knowledge makes it possible for us to further obtain the certainty of knowledge. This paper will be beneficial to the academic circles to further pay attention to and discuss the inborn knowledge.

Keywords: *Inborn knowledge, Creator, Certainty.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past history, human beings spent a lot of time exploring and understanding the world on which human beings live, thus forming a variety of human imagination and views on the world. Of course, human beings have made many mistakes before finding the right answer. Of course, these wrong knowledges are based on the evaluation and conclusion of previous wrong knowledge obtained from scientific cognition. For example, there was a time when some people thought that the earth was flat, which affected many people. After we did a lot of research on the earth, we found that the earth is actually round. Obviously, the knowledge that the earth is flat and the earth is the center of the universe is wrong. Even so, there are still some people who firmly believe that the earth is flat. However, the view that "the earth is flat" represents the view of human cognition of the world at a certain historical stage and the most reasonable explanation as

possible. Therefore, can we still classify the wrong theory as knowledge? In other words, is knowing something the same as being right? To explore this topic, we need to understand inborn knowledge.

Human understanding of the world, or human understanding, can be roughly divided into two parts: belief and knowledge. For the former, faith emphasizes more subjective ideas, that is, I believe that something is subjectively correct, but this does not prove that it is objectively correct. For example, religion is a belief, but whether God itself exists is an objective topic. Different from belief, knowledge not only represents human subjective understanding, but also includes the process that the subject wants to be proved objectively. In other words, knowledge has a process of deductive reasoning. When we understand the world, we are equivalent to constantly testing and reasoning while trying to find the answer. For the learning of knowledge, we can't learn everything by feeling, because our feeling can't always give us correct information.

On the origin of knowledge, an influential view holds that knowledge is innate, that is, nativism, not empiricism [1]. For centuries, nativists such as Descartes have believed that most of our knowledge is innate. Knowledge is driven by the characteristics of human thinking, but indirectly by the nature of specific events we may experience.

In contrast, empiricists such as John Locke believes that little of our knowledge is innate. John believes that knowledge is acquired through a long learning process, in which the assumed original thinking elements (feelings) are interrelated to produce higher-level concepts [2]. Western nativism and empiricism have constructed a historical framework for the nature and production of knowledge. Since ancient times, there has been a theory in China that "saints are born with knowledge" [3]. In the human innate knowledge system, language is the most vulnerable to attention and discussion. The congenital hypothesis is the hypothesis put forward by norm Chomsky. He believes that children are born with knowledge of the basic principles of grammar. Chomsky asserts with his theory that this innate knowledge helps children master their mother tongue effortlessly and systematically, although the process is very complex. Acquiring language may be the most difficult process in children's maturity [4-10]. In addition, there are some research results on innate knowledge in recent years, which further discusses the theoretical connotation of innate knowledge from different aspects.

2. ANALYSIS OF INBORN KNOWLEDGE

2.1. Creator and the production of knowledge

Before discussing innate knowledge, I must first talk about my position. When I say the word "ground", I mean the removable foundation for all the ideas that I will be making about inborn knowledge. I believe that the existence of anything needs a reason, whether it is material or immaterial, because nothing is nothing, and my existence cannot be logically proven by nothing. Nothing cannot be the cause of everything, and the accident is the cause for the beginning of everything. For example, in our human society, we like to keep everything in order and formulate the rules to maintain social stability and live together. However, how could we do that? It is because we are intelligent beings on earth that we can think.

We used our minds to make all of us live in one society today. People who did that were brilliant. Also, the building and technology we see today and in the past are all built by human beings. Without human beings, none of those things would be made, such as cars, airplanes, and more. Therefore, I can conclude that without the existence of a human being, none of those things were built by human beings would exist. We are

the cause of those things but without the existence of human beings that the earth and the whole universe would still exist. And the universe cannot be the cause of our existence since the universe itself is not an intelligent being with a mind that can think. Thus, that cause is an intelligent being that knows everything and can create everything from nothing since that cause itself does not need a cause to exist. We often call it the creator [11].

This is where I begin with my argument about inborn knowledge. I believe that all the pieces of knowledge are in mind, and I consider it a room. In that room that has the knowledge of the world. As we learn the knowledge, that is when we get into that room, and all the knowledge itself is packed in a small box. Each box requires a different key to open it, and I consider the experience that we have from the world to form the key for each box. Therefore, I would say whatever things we define as knowledge is a combination of both. We are not just a receiver, and to be more specific, when we experience(learning) anything from the world by our senses, we will also spend time to think what that thing is. In other words, if we can only learn what we can see with our eyes; what we can smell with our nose; what we can touch with our hands; what we can hear with our ears; what we can taste with our tongue that how could we explain things like airplane, car, and many other things that our hands have created? If we can only learn things by senses, there is no solution for inventing things like the airplane or rocket, because we did not have a chance to see it before human beings created it.

However, I would not call those things a creation but part of our inborn knowledge. To make an airplane or a rocket, it requires specific materials, and people have to build them perfectly to make it work. Therefore, this is something that we cannot learn through our experience. For example, when we play an open-world game, the character we use in the game needs to do tasks to expand the understanding of the game world. However, if we use the same knowledge of build, an airplane tries to build an aircraft in that game world there will be two results, either we succeed, or we fail and is all up to the game designer. This is because it all depends on did the designer add that in the world setting or not. Back to my topic, if Creator did not add the airplane in the world setting, we would not be able to build an airplane, and because we do have that setting and the knowledge we gain through our experience leads us to that inborn knowledge thus we created an airplane. For things we can learn by our sense that I would call it "learn", but for things that we cannot learn by our experience that I call it "discover".

2.2. Certainty about knowledge

If we can only believe what can be proved by

experience, we can't be sure of anything [12]. That is, we cannot observe everything with our senses, and even if we do, we cannot be sure of what we observe with our senses.

Descartes believed in skepticism because he doubted whether anything could be known with certainty. We do often use our senses to learn things, but they can deceive our minds and give us wrong information. We usually use our senses to perceive external information and turn this information into knowledge into our brain. For example, when we were walking around on the track and field, suddenly, we saw a tree 100 meters away. Behind the tree, there seemed to be a child. Therefore, our feeling tells us that there is a child behind that tree, and we believe that there is a child behind this tree. However, as we get closer and closer to the tree, we can see it from a close distance. We find that we are wrong. The thing behind the tree is not a child, but a trash can. This is the wrong judgment caused by sensory errors. Our sensory cognition is sometimes like this, which often misleads us and forms wrong knowledge. This kind of thing often happens and always exists in the process of human history.

If feeling is the only tool for us to understand the world and our feelings can give us wrong information, how can we believe anything in our mind, because nothing is certain. However, knowledge must be determined.

In Descartes's meditation, he was skeptical about everything he learned. Finally, he came to the conclusion that he thought knowledge was a definite thing to think about. Because he can think, he knows he is thinking, so he must exist [12]. This idea has been recognized and supported by many people. I also think that the premise for us to start looking for knowledge is that there must be an answer. In other words, if we believe that there is no creator, it means that there is no reason, so there will be no answer. Anything can be true, because objective knowledge will disappear. For example, a professor gives students a test, and then he scores the test results to let students know what they did right and what they did wrong. However, if the professor does not have the answer to the exam, or the professor does not even exist, people will get full marks, because no one knows the objective answer to the exam. The reason for my existence must be the creator. The creator must be a "person" who has an answer to everything. Without any reason, everything we do to find knowledge will be meaningless and absurd, because everything can be defined in subjective things.

2.3. Two views on inborn knowledge

In David Hume's view, he believes that the way we learn knowledge can only be through our experience. He also believes that the future will always be the same as

the past [13]. For example, in the past ten months, the sun always rises in the morning. We see it, so the sun always rises. However, how can we be sure that the future will always be the same as the past? We have never been to the past. The past represents the origin and beginning of the world, and we can't reach the end of the future. Therefore, this is a contradiction. We can only learn and understand things through experience, which means that we will never find anything we have never experienced. Therefore, if we want to make this theory a reality, we must believe in the premise that the future will be the same as the past. For the past, the future is like the past. In other words, if we have the ability to observe everything and see whether the observed thing is true or false, then we can find the truth of knowledge. But this is impossible. It can be seen that this empirical hypothesis (al, language, truth and logic) cannot be realized. For example, before we take calculus class, we must know algebra. Before we start learning algebra, we must know why " $1 + 1 = 2$ ". What I want to say here is that we must have some a priori knowledge so that we can learn something else. Our experience does not provide a priori knowledge.

Descartes presented a good example in his meditation. In Descartes's meditation, he talked about wax. For us, wax is recognized by our senses, and we can touch it to feel its texture. We can see it through vision and understand its shape through touch. We can smell its special smell through smell. We can even taste it. However, after we burn with fire, the wax becomes a liquid, and we can still recognize that it is the same hard wax we just saw, because our brain knows that it is the wax we just saw, even if it has different shapes, different smells, different textures, different sounds and different tastes [12].

The idea of empiricism is that "we have no source of knowledge in S or for the concepts we using in S other than experience" [14]. However, if we still believe in the certainty of knowledge, we must admit that there is a "answer key". If we all agree with this, we should see the necessity of the existence of innate knowledge. We can also call a "p priori knowledge" innate knowledge.

In Plato's book, he wrote that three people were confined to the cave, so they could only see the shadow on the wall every day [15, 16]. Through the light outside the cave, people could see the shadow of others passing by. However, one day, a man broke the chain and finally came out of the cave. He saw the real world. Then he went back to the cave and tried to tell the other two people about the world. The description of the world is wrong. However, these two people will certainly not believe him, because they have not seen the outside world. Therefore, although the empirical view has merit, it is not completely correct. We are like people trapped in caves. If we only believe what we see, it is superficial. We will never reach or even approach the

truth. I believe it Therefore, we believe that there is innate knowledge, not because previous knowledge is truth, so we need to start learning, but because without innate knowledge, we will never be able to achieve certainty, because our experience is never certain.

John Locke believes that we are born knowing nothing. Instead all of our knowledge comes to us through sense data [17]. In his definition that Primary qualities include "size, shape, weight, and solidity, among others", and Secondary qualities include "color, taste, and smell" [18]. He believes that this is the way we learn about the world. The basic quality and the second quality he put forward basically summarize the two important stages of our learning knowledge.

However, I don't think this can happen alone. For example, if there is a red apple on the table, when we see a red apple, the first quality and the second quality occur at the same time. In other words, if we only use primary mass or secondary mass, we will not be able to recognize that the object on the table is an apple. Another example is the wax figure proposed by Descartes. When wax is solid and liquid, we can recognize it. This means that the primary and secondary quality is not how we recognize an object, but the knowledge in our mind. Just like we can't understand how mathematics or physics works in this way, because there are no shapes in mathematics. So, it is just like Kant conclude, "All knowledge of analytic propositions is a priori, and Some propositions known a priori are synthetic"[19]. Because we can't deduce and prove the true value of physics and mathematics through empirical evidence, because we can't observe this.

3. CONCLUSION

In a word, everything needs a reason, because nothing can lead to anything, and nothing is anything. Therefore, the universe needs a cause, and we need a cause to exist. Certainty also needs a cause, which is the "answer key", and the reason of the "answer key" must be the creator. Our experience can only help us find and create inductive truth, which is not the truth I am talking about. If we all believe in the certainty of our knowledge, we must recognize the existence of innate knowledge. Because the only possibility for us to achieve the certainty of knowledge is to remember it in inborn knowledge.

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