

There is an old tradition to claim the supremacy of the ratio over emotion, which Popper carries on in his quotation. Actually, the very idea of philosophy as a subject is based on the premise that rational thought is capable of describing the world and that this rationality can be communicated, understood and logically tested. If an argumentation is rationally necessary we feel forced to accept it, and if it contains a contradiction, we stop describing the world in that way. How weak does emotion seem next to the importance of her so worshipped sister! She may induce empathy, but cannot persuade. She is not bound to the strict rules of logic and therefore condemned as a paradox. If I dared to write this essay in an emotional way, I had no chance to persuade anyone - but for the fact that I am a pathetic mind that has misunderstood the principles of philosophy.

But what exactly is the reason that formed our thoughts into believing in the rules of consistency in such an absolute way? It is evident that this question is one particularly hard to answer, as we are asking for a reason why we are reasonable. It is the problem that made Kierkegaard to write under pseudonyms: One has to follow the rules of examination in order to understand their borders – an inconsequence he left to his fictive authors.

Of course, there are good – logical- reasons to follow logical thought. It may seem evident to use rational sentences in order to describe the world, as all other sentences are per se inconceivable. We are just not capable of thinking a paradox, and whoever tried to think the liar's paradox consequently knows the mind's desperation in the sight of the unthinkable. As Whitehead's paradox expresses, we cannot reach any knowledge we do not believe in, but we cannot believe anything we cannot think: Our only hope is to find true knowledge in the realm of logic, so that it is better to search it there than to despair because of the mere possibility of truth lying beyond these borders.

However, whilst the argument is perfectly valid, it does not give any reason to prefer ratio over emotion. This flaw becomes visible when its parallel applicability for emotion is demonstrated: Only those sentences have a chance of being believed, that we want to believe. This premise might be surprising at first glance, but if we take the notion of the *will* serious, we will have to admit, that no one ever does anything freely without wanting to do it in the first place. This thought, being stressed by Schopenhauer in nearly all of his works, is an analytical sentence following the definition of the notion *will*. Beyond all logic, our direct reason to believe a sentence is that we want to believe it, just as our direct reason to do something is that we want to do it. And who has not experienced tiresome discussions with followers of some ideology, who accept the superiority of the other's arguments but do not think this to be a sufficient reason to change their mind.

Our will is, however, based on nothing but emotion; it is, in a way, another word for emotion. It might be affected by reason in its evaluations, but whether a fact is agreeable or not is decided in the emotional dimensions of happiness and unhappiness, as we are not capable of wanting something and being unhappy about it. This is a possible formulation for an emotional Whitehead's paradox.

If we now admit that our only opportunity of finding truth lies within the sentences we can possibly believe, the consequence is that the borders of our emotions are just as forceful for this 'pragmatic' argument as the borders of ratio.

The relationship of ratio and emotion seems to be too complicated to be analysed concerning its hierarchy in such a comfortable way. The result of our contemplation is that

only the section of both emotionally and rationally acceptable sentences can be consequently thought. Furthermore, this is the only function both aspects have. This might not be very surprising in the case of ratio, as it is always seen in combination with thought. The thesis, that the function of emotion can be reduced to its role in contemplation is of course more arguable, as our will seems to be important in every pragmatic action as well. But the notions of *consequent thought* or *belief* as they are used here do not remain theoretical. It is not possible to really believe that you want to do something without doing it, so that the emotions' task as dimension of thought includes all actions which are led by will.

This leads us to a surprising problem: If both equally define the borders of our possible thoughts and have the same role for our epistemology, we will have to find the difference fundamental enough to make ratio and emotion to separate concepts. Why do we even have two so different notions with so very different connotations and associations? Why are they not examples of the same principle, just as there are different types of syllogisms? It is bewildering, that mankind had the strange idea that their emotional feelings were not part of the rules of thinking in the way Aristotle's sentence of contradiction is. The only quality difference between emotion and ratio is the possibility of movement. We can imagine a different emotion than we have right now and even have experienced such changes. There are many different and ever changing emotional states and decisions of the will, whereas a contradiction always remains unconvincing and the unthinkable will not be thought. Emotions are to be thought as contingent, as changeable and transformable, but logic remains stable. This does not mean that they are less strict for every single thought. But as it is possible to change them we can think about how they *should* be. It is possible to apply one's normative ideas on them.

The idea of changing emotion with one's own reason is a thought that has accompanied philosophy ever since Socrates was discussing it on the Agora. Plato's ideal of the wise soul can be understood in the metaphor of wisdom being the coach-driver controlling the horses of emotion and for Stoicism every emotion has to be permitted by reason; an autonomy a wise human being does never give up.

As we have seen above, no thought can be formed without us wanting to do so, and therefore these ideals cannot be understood as the tendency "to become [...] more rational" in the meaning of *less emotional*. They intend to *change* emotion so that it does not fight against the thoughts taught by reason, and their emotions are a very central part in that decision. This is the recursive structure of emotion and it fits perfectly to the thoughts we have had above. There we understood the area of thought on which we could possibly search for truth as a section of the two principles ratio and emotion. As we are now capable of changing one principle (which is emotion) to a certain degree, must it not be our hope to change it in a way that makes it cover every part of the area the fix principle covers in order to get the largest possible area? Therefore every true philosopher has to work on his emotions to change them in a way that prevents them from contradicting logical sentences in order to have a better chance of finding truth.

This is, as has been noted above, an argumentation that only works if the reader's emotions are already covering enough rational area to be affected by such a – hopefully – logically

persuasive train of thought. But maybe this is exactly the definition of what we call a philosopher.

However, Popper's quotation goes further and asks us "to use language [not] as self-expression [...] but of rational communication." He thereby fails to see the fact that rational communication can never be anything else than a philosophically prudent form of self-expression. Reducing emotion in the way he wants us to is a horrible imagination born of blind fear of subjectivity. In the metaphor we were using above, it would mean to even reduce the area covered by the relevant section, because we reduce the absolute area covered by emotion until we completely stop thinking. As soon as we were rational in Popper's way, there was no consciousness left to recognize this fact.

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