

知识、真理与文化危机

Knowledge, Truth and Culture Crisis

余达心 香港中国神学研究学院

Cawer Yu Hong Kong Institute for the Study of Chinese Theology

[英文提要]

Postmodernism, despite its severe critique of modernity, is nothing but radicalization of subjectivism that is intrinsic to the vision of knowledge and truth in the Enlightenment. From Nietzsche onward, those who revolt against the Enlightenment make the Will and not Reason as the foundation of knowledge and truth. Truth or knowledge thus becomes creative construction at the will of man as the subject. However in our present age, it is the Will of the human person that is the most questionable. What we are confronted with in the present age is precisely the reality of hollow men devoid of identity and will, of men without inwardness.

Why has Western culture come to such a predicament? Some point to the loss of critical awareness which defines the nature of the Enlightenment, with the result of modern man being blinded by the scientific world – view he constructed. Others point to the totalitarian character of any system of explanation which claims totality.

We propose that the real problem lies in the concept or vision of truth intrinsic to the Enlightenment. Truth or knowledge is regarded as something that is to be grasped in abstraction from one's existence, as something external to one's being, not knowing that the one to grasp is in fact part and parcel of the reality to be grasped. Regarding reality as

nothing but the blue print of the grand design of the universe, the founders of the Enlightenment took an objectivistic approach to reality and therefore to truth. Taking such objectivistic approach, the subject becomes an obstacle to pure reality. Doubt about knowledge of the external world becomes inevitable. Approach to knowledge thus became intellectual gymnastics to find epistemological certainty. Out of epistemological despair, subjectivism, skepticism and relativism have become the norm of the day.

An alternative perception of truth is proposed. Incarnation – the Word became flesh – is the model. Truth is not *Theoria*. Truth is that which touches the very core of our being. It arises out of the life – world where we move and have our being. To seek for truth, one cannot take a detached ‘theoretical’ attitude. One has to open one’s being to it. At the same time, the seeker of truth can no longer regard himself as ‘subject’, as that which has the capability to subject the object of his knowledge. Rather he has to let the personal realm of being, which reflects the reality of his own being, show him the way to know. In the personal realm of being, one cannot suppose oneself to be a subject over – against other persons as objects. The others have their subjectivity which determines the way they are to be known. Revelation is common in the intercourse among human persons. Revelation involves relation, involvement and commitment. That is the Christian approach to real knowledge of truth. God as the Absolute Subject invites us to open ourselves to His revealing Himself. It is an invitation of mutual participation and interpenetration. In this journey of grasping truth, our life is shaped and determined by the truth in which we have a part.

从各种时代的迹象看来,尼采的预言似乎真的应验了。尼采