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THE RELATION BETWEEN EPISTEMOLOGY AND VALUE THEORY

The aim of this presentation is to explore the relation between epistemology and value theory. Because I want to claim that there is the necessary and reciprocal relation of the theory of knowledge and value theory determine what kind of philosophy can be considered. In the first part of speech, I would like to explain the relation between epistemology and value theory, it is necessary to define the concept of epistemology and the concept of value theory in a general sense. Epistemology is "the theory of knowledge". The theory of knowledge is an attempt to answer the question, "How do you know?" the question is about how one knows but not about knowing per se. Secondly I will explain the concept of value in philosophy. The concept of value is used in widespread ways in contemporary culture, not only in economics and philosophy, but also especially in other social sciences and the humanities. In the general definition, the term 'value' is understood as the worth of a thing. In this meaning, the theory of value can be taken from the science of economics, but the term value has a much broader meaning than in the sense used in economics. At the conclusion, I want to discuss the necessary and reciprocal relation of the theory of knowledge and value theory on the behalf of what kind of philosophy one accepts.

Keywords: knowledge, value, epistemology, philosophy

In asking how one knows something is to ask for his basis for believing it. In other words, we want to know what justifies him in holding to his belief. Namely, epistemology has traditionally focused on epistemic justification [1; P. 21]. Epistemology is the general term for the theory of knowledge. Its questions include the following: What are the sources of knowledge? What is the meaning of truth? What are the tests of true statements? What rules govern how one may argue validly from known truth to new truths?

Namely, the theory of knowledge deals with how to know and how to justify what is known. The knowing and justifying process is understood in various ways in terms of what kinds of philosophic approaches have been held. For example, for the rationalists, the certain knowledge is the innate ideas and comes from reason itself. Here, I will not discuss the different approaches of the theory

of knowledge, my primary focus will be the relation between between epistemology in general and value theory in general.

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Since Plato, philosophers have argued the value theory under the concepts of the good, the right, the end, the means, virtue, truth, beautiful, etc. Value theory includes economics, ethics, aesthetics, jurisprudence, education, logic, and epistemology. However, sometimes the term value is applied in a narrower sense to cover only the term 'Good'; sometimes it is used in a wider sense under many other terms as it was mentioned above. The term value can be taken in a positive and a negative sense, such as good or bad; beautiful or ugly; justice or injustice, etc.

For the most part, the theory of value is understood as pertaining to ethics rather than to the wider sense of the meaning of the term 'value'. I think that this meaning of value is in a narrower sense. "Value" means being valued or of things that have worthiness; this meaning of value can be applied to many different areas. "... it is natural (though not obligatory) to identify value with amounts of values — amounts of things like pleasure or knowledge, which "value" claims claim to be good [7]

How is the term 'value' understood in philosophy?

There are two kinds of philosophical theories of value: **(1)** In the normative theory of value, philosophers make value judgments concerning what has value or what is good [6; P. 6] For example, pleasure is good or knowledge is good or joining with God has value, etc. Therefore, philosophers determine which things have value, and they tell us what has value or does not have value. In this sense, value is understood as "means" or "instrumental". Value as a means is not self-sufficient; it looks beyond itself to some end-in-view. In other words, value comprises objects that are "good for" something: For example, knowledge is good for happiness or something else. Value as means gives external good; so, it has objective values. For example, if I say that raincoat is good for rain, I know that the raincoat has an external and objective value. **(2)** In the metanormative theory of value, philosophers do not make a certain decision about which things are valued, but they justify and question the nature of value. They ask what is valuing or what is value, etc. Metanormativists justify the validity of value judgments; they seek how the logic of reasoning is in the theory of value, what kind of logic value theory has. I think that the theory of

the metanormative tries to give a descriptive and a factual account of what has value. This theory of values does not look forward to an end, but it is intrinsic, self-sufficient. It ends in itself, since value is simply given as good-in-itself. Value as good-in-itself gives internal and subjective value, since value is good-in-itself, but not for something else.

These meanings of value theory can be applied in every branch of philosophy. One can seek the value of the theory of knowledge, the value of ethics, the value of ontology, or of aesthetics. In philosophy, by determining the valued object, the philosopher can attempt to establish his philosophy in a meaningful way.

How is epistemology related to value theory?

As it was said before, epistemology is concerned with "how do you know?", "what are the sources of knowledge?", "what is the meaning of truth?" and so forth. Value theory is concerned with what has value, which things are valued, or what is the nature of the thing valued? [3; P. 32-33]

Epistemologists may ask how is it that one knows what has value, or how one knows that is the true nature of things which are valued. Therefore, epistemologists justify that "what we know is valuable" is really a true statement or not. Namely, the theory of knowledge, epistemology, includes also the justification and validation of the statements of value theory.

For example, either in the normative or metanormative theory of value, any statement and assertion can be subjects of any kind of epistemological approach. If one says that pleasure is valued as a good, that pleasure is good, then epistemologists justify whether this statement is true or not in terms of logical and rational reasoning, or in terms of validity of this statement from the factual evidence, or in terms of how one knows that pleasure is good. Consequently, epistemology can take the propositions of value theories as its objects which are justified in terms of epistemological approaches. In this kind of relation, epistemology has a much broader sense than value theory, because epistemology is the acting part in determining the valued object and the nature of value.

How is value theory related to epistemology?

As it was already stated, value theorists seek for those things which have value and what is the nature of the thing valued. From this point of view of value theory, one looks for what things are valued in the theory of knowledge.

The question or inquiry is what the valuable things are in the objects of the theory of knowledge. What makes the objects of epistemology valuable? Can truth be a valued thing? Can validation of the statement in the factual evidence be of value? Here, I mean that, like the epistemologists, value theorists

also inquire and examine the proposition of the theory of knowledge in terms of his value principles. For example, truth and falsity are the concepts of the theory of knowledge. Value theorists ask what makes truth and falsehood valuable, and value theorists try to have some account of the nature of truth which makes truth valuable. I believe that the relation between epistemology and value theory is one of being two-sided and reciprocal.

This reciprocal relation connects both approaches with each other. I think that without one of them, neither epistemology nor value theory can know what is being searched. Therefore, both are complementary, and this relation becomes a necessary connection.

What is the difference between epistemology and value theory?

First of all, the purpose of both approaches is different. One asks how do you know; the other asks what can be valuable. The purpose of the theory of knowledge is to define how one knows something; the purpose of the value theory is to define valued objects.

The inquiry objects of the epistemologists and the value theorists are very different. The former is interested in knowing; the latter is interested in valued objects among the knowing objects. The latter shows the former's the highest object, and the former tries to know and believe this highest valued object with its special methods and approaches.

Furthermore, epistemology is a branch of philosophy, but I cannot maintain that value theory is a branch of philosophy. Value theory, in some sense, is a part of philosophy; in another sense, it is not a part of philosophy; it can be a part of economics, social science, the humanities, jurisprudence, etc.

The relationship of epistemology and value theory

Although I maintained that the relation between them is two-sided and necessary, value theorists must use one of the epistemological approaches in order to determine which things have value. Therefore, in some sense, value theory needs epistemology in order to know what has value. Without epistemological doctrine, value theorists cannot work because without knowing the procedure of how to know, value theorists do not see their object in their inquiry. Namely, value theorists depend on epistemology. In some sense epistemologists have a broader investigation than value theorists. In other words, every theorist need a kind of theory of knowledge for his inquiry.

In the necessity of theorists for epistemology, I think that epistemologists also need to know something about the theory of value; otherwise, the epistemologists cannot know which truth is more valuable. So that epistemologists also depend on the value theory in some manner.

Being valued is mostly equated with being good. Being good is interpreted in the history of philosophy in three ways:

1. Being good in itself
2. Being good for the sake of others
3. Being good for the ends [4; P. 249]

Different kinds of value theories have been developed from these three meanings of Good. These theories maintain that their theory of value tells us the highest being which has the highest value. For example, Plato's idea of The Good, the medieval philosopher's concept of God, the hedonistic concept of pleasure, etc. For this reason, some philosophers study epistemology for the sake of the highest being. These philosophers make epistemology secondary, the study of value theory primarily. Therefore, epistemology becomes a secondary study for the value theory. I cannot agree with this approach because epistemological standards remain unaffected by the moral and prudential considerations and the things valued remain relevant to the determination of good character. In contrast, without an epistemological standard, the concept of goodness or the thing valued is meaningless and cannot be known. Therefore, some sense of the epistemological norms make goodness clear and understandable.

As a result, there is a necessary relation between epistemology and value theory. Epistemology makes value theory meaningful, clear, and understandable, since things in the object's world are meaningful only when they are in a knowing relationship.

An example of the relation between epistemology and value theory in Plato's philosophy

Here, I would like to take Plato's philosophy in order to explain how epistemology and value theory are related to each other.

For Plato, the theory of knowledge must deal with what is unchangeable, real, true, eternal, and indestructible; so that the purpose of the theory of knowledge is to grasp episteme which is genuine knowledge. Philosophy must seek the most permanent knowledge of being which is, for Plato, in the world of ideas, but not the world of phenomena. In order to know the true knowledge of ideas, Plato suggests the method of recollection and the dialectic. The theory of knowledge uses its methods to grasp the knowledge of ideas which are true and real beings [4; P. 123].

According to the Plato's understanding of the world of ideas, there is a hierarchy among the ideas. The highest idea is the idea of Good, since the idea of Good gives all the other ideas existence and life; so that the idea of Good is the highest being, and all the other ideas participate in the idea of Good.

After explaining the basic outline of the theory of knowledge of Plato, I would like to explain how this theory is related to value theory and how value theory is related to the theory of knowledge of Plato.

Plato's theory of knowledge tries to have episteme; episteme is valued as true, unchangeable, permanent, eternal, indestructible, imperishable, and real knowledge; so that episteme is the aim. For Plato, episteme is in our soul because when the mind was in the world of Ideas, the soul knew all true knowledge of Ideas. Therefore, sense perception and knowledge are not valued as true knowledge, but as an opinion [4; P. 132].

What is the most valuable knowledge in Plato's theory of knowledge? According to my understanding of Plato's theory of knowledge, it is the knowledge of the idea of the Good. "Thinking or reasoning from hypotheses does give us knowledge of the truth" [5; P. 70] Now, the question is what makes the knowledge of the idea of Good that is true knowledge more valuable than the knowledge of other ideas, since the idea of God is the highest being. Logically, if something is highest, then the knowledge of that thing must be higher than the knowledge of other things.

Platonic epistemology is based on episteme, and episteme is valued by the knowledge of the idea of Good. Plato's value theory is based on the idea of Good. The idea of Good is valued as the highest worth of any value, and this highest-valued idea of Good is the foundation for every kind of knowledge of other ideas because of the sources and origins of every kind which the other participate. Therefore, Plato's value theory and his theory of knowledge are based on a monistic theory of the idea of Good [4; P. 132-134].

As it can be seen in Plato's episteme which has been valued as the highest knowledge of the idea of Good and in other ideas of value theories and epistemology have a reciprocal and a necessary relation to each other.

I would like to support this idea with Aristotle's investigation of science. Aristotle divides science into three parts according to the purpose of knowledge: **1.** Theoretical sciences aim at knowledge for its own sake, i.e. any knowledge is pursued for its own sake. **2.** Practical sciences aim at knowledge for the sake of action. **3.** Productive science aims at knowledge for the sake of making something useful and beautiful. If one looks at this distinction of science, he or she may say that in Aristotle's understanding of epistemology and value theory, knowledge is valued according to its purpose, and this valuation of knowledge determines nature of science that we have. Therefore, epistemology and value theory have a reciprocal and necessary relationship to each other [2; P 35-36]

Conclusion

The reciprocal relation of epistemology and value theory determine the whole philosophy in terms of what kind of objects which are valued or have val-

ues, and what kind of epistemological approaches are related to that value theory. In other words, as it can be seen in the Platonic philosophy, valued objects and the method of his theory of knowledge make a foundation for all his philosophy, and all of these tell us that Plato has rationalistic and idealistic theory which are based on the relation of the theory of knowledge and the value theory of Plato. My conclusion is that the necessary and reciprocal relation of the theory of knowledge and value theory determine what kind of philosophy can be considered.

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