

## In the Name of God

### David Hume's Theory of Intellectual Affairs

In previous articles, we examined the theory of two philosophers on intellectual affairs. Now in this context, we want to consider the opinion of another western philosopher, David Hume, about intellectual affairs.

At first, we introduce him a little bit. David Hume, one of the western philosophers of the eighteenth century, was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. After a while, he went to France from his hometown, to study and think about philosophy. Hume wrote some of his best works when he was very young. For example, at the age of eighteen, a kind of intellectual revelation occurred to him, and till the age of 26, he was engaged in writing a massive and revolutionary book called the "Treatise of Human Nature". After publishing the book, he thought that by writing it, a scientific revolution would emerge in him. But after publishing the Treatise, the readers of philosophical works were displeased, and nobody paid much attention to his writings and according to himself, it was born dead from the printing-house. He was one of the philosophers whose view was seen by some as ambiguity and some as a reasoning in new philosophy.<sup>1</sup>

He also questioned most sciences; in fact, the origin of arguments against various topics has started from David Hume. But about intellectual affairs, a few things were fundamental for him.

He believed that mind does not accept anything in reality. In other words, the mind is like a mirror that only reflects the full faces of the objects and does not do anything else.

His other opinion was that what exists in the human mind includes ideas and impressions. He accepts these two chains in intellectual affairs.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> -Hume has treated with skepticism all knowledge, cognitions, sciences which are achieved by experience and feeling, and considers the most important criterion in cognition and human perception to be sensory experience. He chooses the path of skepticism by treating all human sciences with total animosity and stubbornness. It is as if Hume does not at all think of discovering paths and ways of acquiring scientific cognition and strives through forcible and unilateral emphasis to introduce the principle of experience as the sole criterion of intuition and scientific cognition.

<sup>2</sup> -He called that which is in the human mind perceptions, which itself includes imaginations and acknowledgments. According to Hume, perceptions are twofold: The first category are impressions and the second category are ideas and thoughts. Impressions are the result of direct exposure of the mind to the outside world. Hume's concept of "Impression" suggests immediate information of sensory perception (apparent or inward). These perceptions, include perceptions through senses, such as awareness resulting from seeing, hearing, etc., and perception of an inner sense, such as knowledge of pain and feelings of wrath and affection, etc. This kind of perception is created only when there is direct contact of senses with sensory evidence. But imaginations or ideas are mild and blurred faces of impressions. Thus, after disconnecting direct sense of the agent from the object of evidence, the weak form of the object -- which Hume has called idea or thought -- remains with the help of memory or imaginative power.

But it should be said that is what comes to our mind part of our imagination or the result of our impression? What is the role of imagination and impression in establishing relationships with others?

Researcher and philosopher Ostad Seyyed Ali-Mousavi, analyzes this subject as follows:

"Imagination" is a mental garrotter, which means that a person brings something to his mind or memory, but it only stamps in his mind for a moment, then he imagines something else; but in impression, whatever he gives, he receives the same from his addresser.

Accordingly, all those whose relationships are based on mere imagination, are part of the running and fugitives in the world, because they soon forget what they imagined, but if their relationships were based on impression, relationships would have strength and they would always adhere to their principles.

It is necessary to know that impression and effect must be with each other, so that the origin of love would flow, and both sides should be steadfast in loving each other. Impression has levels; it is sometimes strong, sometimes moderate and at times weak, but the key point is how does impression and effect take place?

Ostad says: Seven factors must be the same in the effective and the affected in order for them to accept each other.

First principle: Natural power of truthfulness being similar in both sides.

Second principle: The feeling of the effective and the affected should be on the same path (for example both sides are affected by the whining of an oppressed).

Third principle: The purity and elegance of the first side being like the second (for example both of them will tremble by seeing a phrase).

Fourth principle: They should be equal in forgiveness.

Fifth principle: Most importantly, the second one is affected by that which the first one has within him. In other words, if the first one has a pain, the second one feels that pain at the moment.

Sixth principle: With regard to generosity, if the first one easily forgives, the second one forgives similar to the first one.

Seventh principle: The faith of both sides are on the same path and circle.

So according to Ostad's opinion, we realize that the power of impression is based on the truth of love between the two people who are friends and companions of each other, . In the other words, the state of impression in human relationships is very good and full of benefit, because it causes the person's heart and blood to tremble when he remembers the name and memory of his

beloved and it even affects the color of his face, like Owais Qarani, who despite the great distance from the Prophet, when the palm and arms of his highness hurt from people of Mecca, he saw the effect of that blow at the moment in his palm and arms, and this was a sign of his love and passion and being affected by Rasulullah (s).

Source: Series of research-based topics by esteemed philosopher, Ostad Seyyed Ali Mousavi