

Study of Francis Bacon's "Four Illusions" from a Psychological Perspective

Bei Huang

Yangtze University, College of Education and physical Education, Jingzhou 434000, China

Abstract: In the development history of modern Western materialism, Francis Bacon is undoubtedly one of the most outstanding philosophers. He devoted all his life to the realization of the "great revival" of science, for which he wrote a masterpiece "The Great Revival" with "New Tools" as the main body, and put forward the "four illusion theory" and scientific induction in "New Tools". Bacon, through the analysis of the collective illusion, caves illusion, market illusion and delusion theater, showed that illusion hindered the people on the correct understanding of things, but the illusion couldn't be eliminated fundamentally. This article starts from the content of the four illusion and its relationship with psychology, from the psychology perspective to discuss the four illusion theory, hoping to promote people's understanding on things.

Keywords: Bacon, Four illusion theory, Psychology.

1. Introduction

The study of Francis Bacon's "four illusions" has great theoretical guiding significance for us to understand people and things around us. In Bacon's view, only by creating new methods can we get a correct and in-depth understanding of nature, and the creation of new methods must first solve the problems left over by the old methods. This requires not only to criticize scholasticism, but also to explore the causes of human cognition errors, and then to eradicate fallacies and propose new methods[1].

The four illusions theory points out that human cognition is wrong because of the subjectivity and one-sidedness of cognition, which can help people prevent and overcome wrong cognition. Our perception of the world comes from the senses, experiences and thoughts, which cannot be separated from the people themselves. There must be subjectivity, which will inevitably produce illusions and cannot objectively reflect the world itself. When blinded by illusions, people's understanding become more subjective and narrow, more susceptible to prejudice, and it is difficult to grasp the truth of things[2]. Only by abandoning these illusions can people obtain correct knowledge. From this perspective, the four illusions are closer to life. Even if it is impossible to completely abandon the subjective to understand things and obtain all the truth of things. However, the greatest significance of the four illusions is to alert people to recognize the limitations of their own thinking, minimize the influence of subjective factors, and guide people to constantly correctly and deeply understand the people and things around them, and better get along with themselves and the world[3].

At the same time, from the perspective of psychology, the significance of the "four illusions" is also instructive for us to understand psychology more deeply, which can promote the integration of interdisciplinary learning and experience.

2. The Main Content Analysis of 'Four Illusions'

2.1. The meaning and content of racial illusion

Bacon pointed out in the first volume of 'New Tools': the illusion of family is based on human nature itself, that is,

based on the family or category of people. It is a mistake to assert that the human sense is the measure of things. On the contrary, no matter the senses or the mind of all awareness is always in accordance with the individual scale rather than the scale of the universe; the human understanding is like a concave convex mirror, which accepts the light is irregular, so it makes the nature of things deformed and faded because of its own nature when selecting things[4]. Bacon believes that racial illusion is a special illusion among human beings, and this illusion is not owned by individuals, but by the whole human beings, which is determined by human nature.

Bacon also expounds several manifestations of racial illusion. The first manifestation is that human understanding by its very nature tends to assume more order and regularity in the world than it sees. The second manifestation is that once human understanding has adopted an opinion (whether it is taken as an accepted opinion or as an opinion that is in accordance with one's own will), it will be supported by everything to reinforce that opinion. Human understanding is not quiet, it can never stop, and always push forward, but it is futile[5]. This is another manifestation of the racial illusion. The last manifestation of racial illusion is that the greatest obstacle and disturbance to human understanding is still the dullness, incompetence and deception of the senses; this is manifested in the fact the things that move the senses can overwhelm the things that do not directly move the senses, even if the latter is more important.

2.2. The meaning and content of cave illusion

Bacon believes that although human nature determines the cave illusion, it belongs to everyone's unique illusion[6]. Bacon pointed out that because everyone (except for the common mistakes of universal human nature) has his own cave, the light of nature bends and discolors. This is because everyone from a young family environment, school environments is different, the family education, personality, hobbies, education or life experiences are different, but these will become a part of everyone, will naturally affect people's views on things, thus distorting the truth of things. Like Plato's cave, if a person lives in a cave (the environment in which everyone grows from small to large) for a long time, lives in his own world and forms his own set of thinking

modes, then when he walks out of the cave, what he sees must not be truth of things, but the result of thinking with his own thinking mode. If our thinking and psychology are trapped in a cave that we are accustomed to in our daily life for a long time, it will inevitably produce many wrong ideas[7].

Therefore, Bacon believes that in the study of philosophy and science, he does not blindly promote the thoughts of the ancients, nor does he urgently follow the ideas advocated by modern people, but maintains neutrality and absorbs useful elements, because truth is not left over by history or accumulated over time, but must be constantly tested by practice.

2.3. The meaning and content of market illusion

The market illusion is formed in interpersonal communication. Because language is particularly important in interpersonal communication, language is presented through words, which will hinder people's understanding[8]. Market illusion refers to the illusion caused by improper use of language or confusion of meaning in interpersonal communication. Bacon believes that this is the most complex illusion.

It refers to the temporary shelving of things that cannot be named due to insufficient observation, or the naming of things that cannot be proved to exist based solely on one's own conjecture or fantasy; the second is that the things that do exist do not correspond to the names one by one, and are simply named very carelessly. The first kind of things, such as the planetary orbit, which are conceived by people with only their names but no facts, are relatively easy to be expelled. As long as they firmly reject those false doctrines and do not use these names at all[9]. The illusion that belongs to the second category is much more complex, because it is confusing defined but real.

2.4. The meaning and content of theatre illusion

Bacon said: 'There is another kind of illusion that is transplanted into people's minds from various dogmas of philosophy and some wrong rules of argument. I call these theater illusion. Theatre illusion is the error resulting from the blind worship and obedience to authority without criticism[10]. There are also recognized systems, various philosophies or other doctrines, and various philosophies or other doctrines, and various systems that are now fashionable. People will blindly follow these systems because they do not think about them, so prejudices and errors arise in the understanding of things.

3. To explore the 'Four Illusions' from The Perspective of Psychology

3.1. Discussion on racial illusion from the perspective of psychology

From the perspective of modern psychology, racial illusion can also be called the illusion or cognitive fallacy of the perceptual system. For example, we see chopsticks that are obliquely inserted into a water cup that seem to be broken, but are not. Two equal-length lines, with outward or inward arrows drawn at both ends, look unequal, which is the Mueller-Lair illusion.

Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance also has the

effect of racial illusion in a specific environment. Festinger believes that the inconsistency between cognition and behavior or between cognition leads to a sense of disorder. Changing attitudes to achieve consistency is a major way to reduce the sense of disorder[11]. When human beings have different words and deeds, they will find various reasons to excuse themselves, rather than resolutely admitting mistakes and then making changes. This can also be called the weakness of human nature. Billions of people on earth these weakness.

3.2. Discussion on cave illusion from the perspective of psychology

Racial illusion is common to human beings. The cave illusion is unique to everyone. It can be called personal preference of prejudice. The combination of unique events experienced by each person and the unique environment in which they live constitute a small cave. The books we read, the education we receive, the people we communicate with, are always strengthening our existing prejudices[12].

The famous twin experiment psychology explores the classic topic of which factor between gene and environment has a greater impact on individuals. The premise of this topic is that psychology affirms the objectivity of the existence of individual differences. Individuals are born with different ideas and psychology. We also include individual differences as a common variable in psychological research.

3.3. Discussion on market illusion from the perspective of psychology

The racial illusion is born of the limited rationality of animals like human beings. The cave illusions is formed because of the unique genes and growth environment of human individuals. The market illusion that will be discussed next is due to the ambiguity of natural language itself.

In educational psychology, Chomsky's universal grammar theory is a key content. In the early 1980s, Chomsky and other linguists put forward the theory of Universal Grammar, also known as Principle and Parameter Theory[13]. They believe that universal grammar is a language knowledge system unique to human beings and exists in the brain of normal people.

3.4. Discussion on theatre illusion from the perspective of psychology

In addition to the ambiguity of natural language itself, human beings are also easily misled by the authoritative worldview prevailing in the local area at that time. This is what Bacon called the theater illusion.

Many people have a tendency to superstitious authority, which can be explained by herd mentality. Conformity psychology, that is, under the influence or pressure of the group, the individual abandons his own opinions or violates his own views to keep his speech and behavior consistent with the group, that is, what is usually called following the crowd[14]. Conformity behavior generally refers to the tendency behavior of group members to follow the group.

4. Conclusion

Bacon's four illusions explain to us the illusion of understanding things from the perspective of self-understanding, understanding others and understanding the world. Man is not the scale of all things. Everything has its

own law of growth and development, and is not transferred by human will. Therefore, to understand things, we should jump out of the limitations of our own understanding and overcome the weaknesses of human nature. In view of the inherent weaknesses of human beings, it is not untraceable. After the process of evolution and development, human beings have retained the gene sequence conducive to human survival in the human collective subconscious. The weakness rooted in genes may be difficult to change, but they can be consciously avoided. A correct understanding of id, ego and superego allow us to better understand the illusions in life[15].

In summary, Bacon has unique views and insights on illusion, leaving valuable and meaningful ideological results for future generations. Philosophy is the father of psychology, and it also brings important enlightenment to the development of psychology. The premise of correctly understanding things is to know yourself. Only by knowing yourself can you better understand the world, adapt to the world and transform the world.

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