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Short Paper #1

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Reading One:The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics excerpt

The first time I met the word “Metaphysics” I thought it is a subject highly related to physics, which mainly focus on the motion of concrete objects such as a 10-kg-sphere or the force related to different factors. However, the prefix “meta” amazingly changes my initial definition of this impressive subject. “Meta” is a prefix drives from Greece, where philosophy starts. In Greece, “Meta” has the meaning of “after” or “beyond”. There is a theory that the reason why metaphysics has such a fancy name it is because of its arrangement. It is said that the book is put behind physics. In that case, the “meta” here refers to “after”. On the other hand, as far as I am concerned, especially with the term “attunement” I prefer the meaning “beyond”, because it does focus more on the philosophy problem beyond the simply physics. No matter how we define the meaning of the prefix here, the applying of metaphysics in daily is unstoppable, especially the term, attunement, mentioned in the excerpt of *<<The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics>>*

According to my life experience, though it very limited, I would like to raise three theories:

First and foremost, attunements are everywhere, and they are mainly presented in terms of changing the atmosphere of a room like the beginning of the excerpt mentioned. However, attunement is not only limited in forms of changing the atmosphere of the room.

Next, attunements could be ignored if the audience pay most attention on something else. The effect of attunements could be lowered for a while.

Last but not least, upperclass men are capable of applying their atmosphere to lower level people. In that case ,the environment could be tuned to fit the upperclass men.

As the beginning of this excerpt said, “A human being who—as we say—is in good humour brings a lively atmosphere with them”, the atmosphere brought by people could be infectious. For instance, when the humour guy come into the room ,the atmosphere will definitely be delighted a lot. However, if we let a businessman who is about to claim bankrupt, the atmosphere will obviously be more passive. This point could also be illustrated with what happened during our daily class. During the period of discussion, all classmates are enthusiastically proposing their own opinions no matter how funny those comments are. However, when Dr.Eglash starts to talk, the whole class tend to be more silent. Seldom do we would dare present these “funny” ideas. Then the discussion turns to be more scientific and academic rather than “Harambe” or some other popular urban-dictionary words. That is how attunement present in terms of atmosphere of a discussion in a class. Dr.Eglash could use some attunements to tune the discussion back to track. It could also be presented in a number of other forms. Culture is also a classical way how attunement is applied. In United States, there are people from different races. There are native american, asian, european, and even african here. However, all of these people are tuned into american. Take Chinese as an example. Known as ABC, American born Chinese kids are more used to coke-cola, scrambled eggs, and, Xbox while tradition Chinese children are tagged with tea, extremely good at math, and, regarding their teachers as god. Even in the famous game “Cards Against Humanities”, there is a card known as “Asian not good at math”. That is how these Chinese people are tuned into different patterns to fit various living environments via non-identical attunements.

As for the temporarily ignored attunement, it could still be explained with the example of what happened during the class. When students pay most of their attention to the topic, they would ignore the atmosphere brought by the teacher. In that case, the opinions presented are the most unaffected and directly reviewed. The attunements from the external world, here refers to the atmosphere is no longer work anymore, because students are tuned by their own pattern of attunements. However, when teacher is talking ,their pattern of attunements is forced to be break down. Then, the atmosphere brought by the teacher will be applied again to tune the discussion back to the proper track. It could also be well illustrated with the video we watched on the day of tuning the Hindu music instruments. At the beginning of that video, students are required to count the time that people in white throw and catch the ball. When students are only focusing on counting the people in white, no one is paying attention to the strange black gorilla passed by till the instructor pointed out the fact. That is how attunements could be ignored, and there is another key word “temporary”.

The other key word “temporary” is of great importance here, because barely no one could focus on one thing all the time, and the moment they are not paying attention, they are being tuned into the main pattern of attunements. It could be imagined as swim toward the opposite direction of river. It is easy to

As for the last theory, upperclass men are capable of applying their atmosphere to lower level people. To be more specific, the attunements could even be done without any consciousness. The upperclass men don’t even nee to pay extra attention on tuning the atmosphere into the patterns fit them. As for the lower class people, their atmosphere would be ignored. Accordingly, the attunements will apply on these lower level people to tune them into the pattern brought by the upperclass people. This theory could be used to explain a lot of phenomenon in the real world. It is perfectly applied on the famous cliche, “Like father, like son”. To be more specific, the lifestyle of parents will directly impact the lifestyle of the children who live with them. Again, take RPI as an example. In this famous engineer school, it is pretty common that the parents of an engineer student are very likely to be an engineer or have a job related to STEAM(science, technology, engineering, art, mathematics) education if the student has a great passion in STEAM related area. This theory could also be well illustrated with what happens in companies, especially the famous companies such as Apple, Google, Bain, , which is known as the culture of a firm. The character of a group manager could directly tune the other group members into the way that how this manager do his work. In that way, the efficiency of the whole group could be largely increased to perform a professional team, which is known as leadership. The amount of attunement could be applied to the group members are usually related the class difference between the upperclass men and the lower level people. For example, project manager can directly ask his group member to work on a task without talking too much about why he would ask that member to do so while it would be way more complicated to assign the work to the vice project manager. Normally, the vice project manager would ask the chief project manager why they are spending resource on this task to make sure they are not wasting time. It is like a physics problem. When the main force is closer the other force, the direction of the object will be changed a lot compared to the time when main force is way more stronger than the force on other directions.

However, there is an interesting question toward the third theory: what phenomenon would present when there are two or more equal upperclass men with totally opposite tune? If we apply critical thinking here, we would get two opposite results:

In the first result, the opposite tune will directly lead to the split of the group. The attunement could not be done, and the working efficiency of the whole group is largely slowed down due to the unpaired atmosphere brought by these equal upperclass men.

However, if we look on the bright side, the opposite tune can help the whole group analyse the problem with multi angle of views, which is actually of great benefits to the project.

In conclusion, attunements are largely yet secretly applied in our daily life no matter if we ignore them or not. Tough the result could be positive or negative, the truth that attunements are applied to us will not be changed.

Work Cited:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/metaphysics/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metaphysics#Pre-Socratic_metaphysics_in_Greece>