

3. 'Liberalism is beset by a paradox at its core' (266/156). What is the alleged paradox? In your view, is the paradox real or only apparent?

Liberty itself can benefit individuals in terms of their own freedom - the idea that promotes the human ability to practice in the world as much as we can. But the goal that Liberalism wants to achieve can increase the problem and, in some areas, is at odds with Liberalism itself. Humanity, as the tree, naturally expands its own life everywhere as much as it can. Many of the trees that grow nearby, may stand too close to each other and cause a problem to each other too.

What is the alleged paradox? It occurs when we, from a liberal viewpoint, consider the situation of certain groups that have their own illiberal perspectives, such as religious sects or dictatorships. We may want to or think that those groups' ideas must be limited or shaped, or that the group members should be educated. But when we carefully consider this desire to fix other people's ideas in this way, it appears that we are in conflict with our own liberal beliefs.

We can live together even though we have our own moral perspective that may or may not be the same as other members of our society. How do we live together without killing each other? If that moral concern is very important and seriously affecting your life, can we give up on it? How can we survive with a minimum wage of only 3,000 baht per month? We will try our best to make sure most of the members in our society agree with our reasoning.

How can we define the boundary of unharmed personal action? Can we judge which kind of action can harm or not harm others? How about an aggressive thriller movie that is full of blood content? Can that hurt me if I watch it? The director can say how safe the movie is and that it will never be able to harm us. But my son or daughter may watch it every week, and I can see how it might affect my fragile teenage child. Is it still in the boundary of harmless? I'm not so sure.

What is the limit of this freedom? What is the boundary to ensure we do not harm other people? This is the topic that is wide open to debate. Liberalism may want to protect personal interest from the authority, but instead it has the potential to create chaos and dangerous situations in society. If you kill your dog in your own house, does it not do any harm to me as your neighbour?

Mill may say that ultimately people will understand the right way to see, agree and follow the opinion which best benefits society. But that will never work in practice, and it seems to conflict with itself. People should not be being limited as regards their own ability and how they live their life. How can anyone, whether philosopher or genius, force or persuade them to that direction?

The free can sometimes benefit from the rules. Artistic works can be based on the rules

of Art itself. The rules of colour can make the artwork more worthwhile. Liberty may come with a sweet taste of freedom, but this can more enjoyable if served on time.

Nietzsche may see Liberty as poison for a human. We may go too far with that hunger for knowledge. History may show how this instinct can lead us to a disastrous outcome. However, I'm not sure that this is a fair argument from Nietzsche. Do we need to be conservative forever?

Problems can arise from the way people have and exercise their own right to do what they want as long as it doesn't harm others. It is best to gauge public judgement, because everybody has their own moral judgement. We can't let everybody do what they think is the right or moral thing to do. Because what is moral for them is based on their own innate moral judgement. We have to find the agreeable point by finding the majority ideal in society. If everybody can accept this way of judgement then society can continue.

Of course, the paradox is real. I can see how an unbalanced result can happen in society by exercising Liberalism alone. Even today in 2017, we still have a problem between what the far-right and far-left believe. Do I really need to give away my salary to someone that I never know personally? Where is my money going? Does it really come back to benefit me? Do I really need this society institution for my survival? I can connect all questions with this because it is still there in our everyday life. On the other hand, I also see how functional this social authority is. I always feel safe when I see a policeman near me on street. I want the authority to catch the murderer quickly. This shows how we still need the rule of society to rule us, however happy I am that I am able to choose my own job. I can plot my own life and of course within the limits of the rule of society. The rule that I accept, or at least that I can control myself to accept.