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An Approach to Reconciliation Study from Philosophical Psychology: Toward the Ground of Memory, Empathy, and Civilizational Transference [ver. 3.0]

Eiichi NOJIRI
Osaka University

The mission of "Reconciliation in East Asia" might be firstly regarded as a project in the discipline of history or politics, but knowledge and insights from psychology and philosophy must also be very important as long as it deals in "reconciliation" which is a phenomenon at human mind. Being a researcher of philosophy, social theory, and psychoanalysis, I am in charge of that area for this whole project. When it comes to the reconciliation in East Asia, it is a problem of frictions between national and historical identities in the era of globalization which is haunted after-effects of formations and clashes of nation-states in the twentieth century. Since we are facing a kind of newly emerging problem, we are yet to have a resolution. Thus my project toward an "ethics of reconciliation" which is based on an elucidation of its mental mechanism should be started with a lot of preparatory works. What are those?

It will be a kind of amalgamation of, a) a psychological and psychoanalytic approach to the relation of memory and ego, b) a philosophical and sociological approach to a generative mechanism of empathy and collective identities, c) a social theory approach to how that collectiveness is formed to a nationalism, and d) a cultural theory approach to an analysis of production-and-consumption circuits of images on historical identities through cultural works and media. Once this kind of synthetic approach of philosophy, social theory, psychoanalysis, and cultural theory was tried in early Frankfurt school's works, but a re-formation by replacing each part with latest findings and theories of each areas is required for us confronted the globalizing situation today.

Our "mind" has a mechanism of composing identities through a resonance of memory and empathy. The largest successful unit of its composition mechanism was the twentieth century's nation states, but today's expanding hyper-globalization jeopardize its ground. Individuals are confronted to a critical split between the universal and the

particular, which causes the issue of different perceptions of history among countries and their nations, and rises the problems of "reconciliation". It is possible for us today to understand, for example, the concept of "ethnies" by Anthony D. Smith, which is supposed to be a core of nationalism [1986], or the concept of a sense of integrity through a shared grief and mourning by Norihiro KATO [1994] who started the "historical-subjects-debates" (*rekishi shutai ronsou*) in 1990's Japan by lamenting over the loss of that kind of integrity in post-war Japan, were the products of their theoretical endeavors to reframe a core of identity-building at the beginning of "hyper-globalization" [Dani Rodrik, 2011] contexts. A nuclear of our identity which is composed by memory and empathy is easy to be formed in the relatively local environments. This serves as a psychological core where nationalism is forged. Whether this sort of a core would be an obstacle for trans-national reconciliation or not and how we could convert it to a useful tool for reconciliation are the main task which my project tries to work on.

As for the identity formation through an interaction between memory and empathy, we have legacy trials from philosophical qualitative inquiries like theories of imagination in German idealism (on memory and imagination), Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis (on trauma, repressed memory and ego-formation), Maurice Halbwachs's solo achievement of the theory of collective memory (on interpenetrative relation of memory and empathy), although it is where no one has gone before to link those respective accomplishments into a single thread.

Recent advances both in knowledge and social recognition about things like psychopathological phenomena and developmental disorders provide us with a combination of unprecedented theories and considerably suggestive materials: a) an insight into a relation between modern social environments and individuals' identity formation which is highly dependent on memories (an analysis of a link between multiple personality disorder and contemporary social environments in the United States after 1970's by Ian Hacking) and b) a clinical finding on a cooperative work of empathizing and memory in typical developed individuals (analysis on the difference of ego-structures between the typical developed and autism spectrum disorder by Eiichi NOJIRI and Takuya MATSUMOTO). These new insights and findings help us to take a leap forward to connecting dots into a single thread; a critical theory of empathy and memory. This must be a basic philosophical theory of our project, as it were. [See also Appendix 1]

Another further step is required to be taken in order to reach an "ethics of reconciliation". One of the insights expected from examinations outlined above is that the memory, in the case of the typical development, is not a kind of simple and frozen storage of images but already a product of social symbolic acts, i.e., a representation. It is a psychological function from their mental system in the middle of a particular set of social and historical environments. That composition makes a content of their "self". This whole formation process is performed at an unconscious level and cannot be accessed directly. For that very reason, it serves as an essential foundation for their identity and then seems very natural and precious one to them. To understand this whole structure, that is, in order for them to see through the architecture of their identity, the representations they produce and consume is the only clue. Representations could be a useful tool for reconciliation in case that it is used as a neutralizing zone like Lagrange points where gravities vanish by equipoise or a special optics tool like a view-finder of the rangefinder camera to see the parallax. According to Stewart Hall, producers encode representations and consumers decode it. Each individuals' way of decoding a representation expresses the formation of their desire. An abstracted model of encode-decode relation from a big hit opus could be used as an ideal-type of collective desire of a certain society.

Let us pick up a recent example. What has made the manga and anime of "Demon Slayer" (*Kimetsu no Yaiba*) by Koyoharu GOTOUGE a historical big market in 2020 Japan? A point of this story is that the power of collective memory of mortal human beings defeats the ultimate beings, the demons (*Oni*), which are individually ageless and immortal. A main motif of this work seems that something important should be protected and survived through a desperate and courageous fight against the other which has an alien nature, and the ultimate weapon of human being is the culture and memory handed down from their ancestors. To what kind of political unconsciousness deep inside audience is this type of representations responding?

Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba, Koyoharu GOTOUGE, 2016-2020

Representations are the only pathway into the structure (Fredric Jameson 1981). You therefore should make representations represent, analyze yourself as is consuming it, and talk over it together. This was the essence of Lacanian final ethic for psychoanalysis:

Be loyal to your own desire and do not oppress it. This attitude also shares basic philosophy in common with a cutting-edge psychotherapeutic method/movement of "Open Dialogue" [Jaakko Seikkula and Birgitta Alakare 2007]. It is reported that just holding horizontal conversations and representing openly their own symptoms each other among clients demonstrate a profound healing effect much more than expected.

The point is that it is not just a dialogue in an ordinary sense. A lesson here is like that no matter how you try to have rational dialogues under a theme of reconciliation, you could not be reconciled with a counterpart, not even with yourself. Only through coming out an object of your fixation and talking over your fantasies on it, the pathway into the deep inside of you would be open up, and a road to a mutual understanding and reconciliation would be found. And another point is that this kind of ethic derived from a psychopathological view seems to be compatible with an afresh inquiry into concepts like the "civilizational transference structure" (Naoki SAKAI 2019) and the "crustal movement on which question are generated" (Yoshimi TAKEUCHI 1948): a tectonics-plate which our questions and ideologies are always and already aboard. This is a kind of new horizon that philosophical psychology in collaboration with social theory can open up for reconciliation study. It is just a hypothetical idea, but discussions on a possibility of cultural representations could also be one of tactical maneuvers for reconciliation in East Asia. [See also Appendix 2]

The whole project outlined above, that is, an approach from philosophical psychology to reconciliation study will be naturally a comprehensive and integrated academic area dealing with a broad range of topics and objects. For today's discussion, I would like to highlight the importance of a civilizational psychoanalysis view as a basic philosophy of this project. I suppose a horizon of a reconciliation ethics could be open up on that basis. There could be a possible connection among the "Asia as a method" concept by Yoshimi TAKEUCHI (1961), the theory of "civilizational transference" by Naoki SAKAI (2017), and a civilizational and psychopathological view of philosophical psychology showed here today. This is a crossover point between intellectual history and theoretical study: examining the current situation with past thoughts and reinterpreting past ideas from a contemporary view. Interactive dialogues between the past and the present will help us measure exact position of us and calculate trajectory toward the future.

Appendix 1

I am handling more than twenty thinkers from Plato and Augustine to Derrida and Žižek for my project. Here is a summary of five essential types of arguments from it.

No.	Ethical Connotation	Theory
1	**Listen to the universal: <u>Hegelian</u> philosophy of single memory and history**	Surprisingly or not surprisingly, <u>you cannot find any problem of conflict of individual memories in Hegel's philosophy</u> and psychology. In his philosophy, the mutual recognition stage is already completed at early stage of self-consciousness and a major task which remains for the individuals is <u>how they can be reconciled with the universal</u>, which means, the universal human memory; the History.
2	**Inhibit your memory and imagination: <u>Derridean</u> ethics of respecting others**	Derrida, of course, criticized this Hegelian violent leap from individuals' memories to a large history based on a complicity of mutual recognition relationships and deconstruct it as a structure of modernity. Because of this savage and rough way of "understanding", the modernity enables us to develop an enlightened society and dynamic economy, but it still is a violence. Derridean philosophy was very sensitive to a violent nature of human imagination. <u>When you think you can understand other people's suffering, you are overpainting their experiences with your imagination</u>. You should stop it and respect the other as the other. This Derridean ethics of not-understanding seems aiming a perfect respect to others but it also hinders us from understanding our own families, friends, and ancestors. Which means, we should abandon any kinds of unity with intimate people since that kind of bonds by mutual understanding results in making us closed and exclusive to other kinds of others.
3	**Quest for the unity as a core of me: <u>A.D. Smith and Norihiro Kato</u>**	Smith and Kato thought much of our bonds through sharing memories and emotions with others as a core of our identity. <u>Imaginative bonds with ancestors compose a core of our identity at deeper levels</u>, so if we are prohibited from engaging in it, we even lose an understanding of ourselves. Imagination to others also enable us understand ourselves since we are being a historical and temporal being. You can also connect a reinterpretation of Halbwachs's theory of collective memory to their insights in a new light.
4	**Be loyal to your own desire: <u>Lacanian</u> ethics of psychoanalysis (>Slavoj Žižek)**	You may not like psychoanalytical knowledge just because it deals in psychosis believing yourself quite irrelevant to any kind of madness. From Lacanian point of view, however, everyone's mental system is already a psychosis. <u>Lacan's final concept of "normal psychosis" means that being human is a psychosis since human being is alienated from natural being and has come to have a complex and dynamic structure of mind</u>. It is just that everyone has different type of mind structures, regardless you are diagnosed as a mental disease or disorder, or not. A sort of detachment view of human kind. Having fantasy against reality is a true nature of human being. You can not cure it. Attempts to cure it by others cause transferences and you can never get out of it. Only solution is a kind of self-healing by expressing your desire as it is. The worst thing is oppressing it. Lacanian theory has a significant shortcoming: Its indifference to the historical and economic movement of society because of its tendency of a structuralist.
	New Materials: a) An insight into a relation between modern social environments and individuals' identity formation which is highly dependent on memories: An analysis of a link between multiple personality disorder and contemporary social environments in the United States after 1970's by Ian Hacking. b) A clinical finding on a cooperative work of empathizing and memory in typical developed individuals: Analysis on the difference of ego-structures between the typical developed and autism spectrum disorder by Eiichi NOJIRI and Takuya MATSUMOTO.	
5	**Toward the Ground of Civilizational Transference: <u>Reconciliation study</u>**	Social theory from Marxist tradition and contemporary psychopathological view teaches us that our dilemma and fluctuation movement between the universal and the particular is two sides of a coin. <u>Our identity is an imaginative function of dynamics of capitalist economy</u>. It is a response to structural variation of substructure. At the same time, a crustal movement of history can only be detected through cultural symbols which our mind produces as an imaginative resolution for unsolvable contradictions which we are experiencing at the level of the real.

Appendix 2

The anime movie of "Demon Slayer" (*Kimetsu no Yaiba*) is becoming a super big hit in Korea as well even though it is a story that takes place in the *Taisho* period (1912-1926) when Korea was under Japanese rule and ear accessories of main character, <u>*Tanjiro*</u>, has a resemble rising sun symbol which used to be a flag symbol of the Imperial Japanese Navy. Ear accessories actually was redesigned in Korean version according to an article below. It is saying that this great production has succeeded to overcome "anti-Japan" emotions of Korean. Is it true? And if so, in what way?

"Won a rave review in Korea. *Demon Slayer* is overcoming "anti-Japan"
https://news.yahoo.co.jp/byline/yoshizakieijinho/20210303-00225435/
(accessed on March 5, 2021)

I found another English article about a big Demon Slayer market in Korea.
"Korea Box Office: 'Demon Slayer' Rises to Top, Shutting out 'Tom and Jerry'"
https://variety.com/2021/film/asia/korea-box-office-demon-slayer-top-weekend-1234917803/