

International Symposium

Crossing Cultural Borders
Toward an Ethics of Intercultural Communication
— Beyond Reciprocal Anthropology —

Edited by
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and
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Preface

The 14th International Symposium of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies was held on November 10-13, 1999, under the title of "Crossing Cultural Borders." The symposium was co-organized with the *Fondation Transcultura*, which has searched for a new perspective in the area of mutual communications and cross-cultural understanding between different cultures in the field of humanities as well as in human cognition in general.

The purpose of the *Fondation Transcultura* is to re-examine the Euro-centrism hidden in scientific methodology. It has tried to search for the academic as well as the practical and ethical conditions necessary to the reciprocal exchange of human knowledge. It has aimed at proposing alternative research methodology to be applied and developed in the investigation of alterity in cultures. Put into question were such conventional frameworks as "participating observation versus distanced observation," differences between *etic* and *emic* or "the positionality of the observer." It has focused on the inter-disciplinary exchange of opinions from different disciplines crossing over different cultural spheres. It has, until now, especially encouraged participation from non-Western people.

In the last ten years, the *Fondation* has organized many conferences, not only in Europe (Louvain-la-Neuve, Paris, Santiago de Compostella, Bologna, Florence etc.) and in the United States (Chicago), but also in such non-Western countries as Malta (Balletta), Tunisia (Hamamette), Mali (Tounbouctou, Bamako, Mopti), Hongkong, Macao and mainland China (Guangzhou, Sian, Turfan, Dunhuang, Urumqi and Beijing). Until this present symposium, however, the *Fondation Transcultura* has not had an occasion on which to develop discussions of high critical interest in Japan with Japanese colleagues who are sensible to the problematics of "Otherness" and the inequality in relationships between observers and the observed, between victimizers and victims.

Although the international environment is described as being borderless, intercultural misunderstanding originating from cultural differences in manner and customs has raised new issues. Even within the narrow confines of Japanese borders, friction occurs between the "outside" and the "inside" of society. This symposium, held under the theme of "Crossing Cultural Borders," has invited scholars specializing in the

problems of intercultural exchange to discuss the ethical questions involved. Such proposals as "facing up to the arbitrariness in rescue intervention," "the meteorology of cultural conflicts," and "border-crossing as cultural treason and self-revelation" will serve as key notions to get beyond the limits of "reciprocal anthropology."

As the convener of the symposium, I hope that the present publication will serve as a milestone for further discussions on the issue of "border crossing" as a critical moment of transgression in mutual understanding. This publication will also be an initiation to the poetics and poietics of the "border-crossing."

A special word of gratitude goes to Professor Kenneth L. RICHARD who assumed the painstaking task of editing the English papers provided by non-native speakers and discussants. Among members of the Center Staff, let me express my thanks to Ms. HONDA Ayako, Ms. MURAMOTO Haruko, and Ms. MORITA Misao, as well as to Ms. KATAHIRA Nagisa, Doctoral candidate in the Graduate University of Advanced Studies. Without their devotion, the publication of the proceedings would not have been possible. Additional thanks go to Ms. SUMIKURA Mariko in the Research Exchange Division of the I.R.C.J.S., and her team, for their administrative handling and care taking during the symposium period. In Ms. Sumikura's three years of service at the Center, this was her last and much appreciated contribution, felt equally by the organizers as well as by the participants in the symposium. Let me take this opportunity to acknowledge her enthusiastic job as a border-crossing partner to our three days of heartwarming intellectual adventure.

INAGA Shigemi

Convener of the 14th Symposium

N.B. Technical problems encountered during the printing process of these Proceedings has meant that diacritical marks for French, Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese original language inscriptions could not be systematically rectified within the time and budgetary constraints of the present publication. The editors apologize to both readers and contributors for any irregularities that remain in regard to the orthography of non-English vocabulary.

Introduction

Cultural anthropologists have been busy defining the ethics of "understanding others." The innocence of the eye in fieldwork has been called into question. Naive scientism, which has believed in the neutrality of describing the "other" culture chosen as a "field of research," has been heavily criticized. What had been praised as scholarly contributions have been shown to reveal hidden desires of domination. The power structure implied in the hierarchy between the observer and the observed can no longer be ignored. Instead of being a privileged observer, the anthropologist at work is observed with, or without, curiosity by the community of people who welcome, or refuse, him/her.

This shift in observation has created a drastic cognition crisis with regard to ways of "understanding others." Experimental ethnographers have attempted to reproduce dialogues with informants as constituting their immediate field experience. But in so doing, this has revealed instead the fictionality of the "immediacy." Archeological ethnographers have tried to reexamine the practices/customs of their own "ancestors," but accusing one's own ancestors does not necessarily lead one to be exonerated from one's own "crime". In lieu of such "autopsy," performing ethnographers have theatricalized the "crime" by ostentatiously demonstrating the "criminality" of the act of "rewriting culture," but this self-reflexive self-accusation is simply a reversed self-justification played out in a fictional and self-fabricated lawsuit conducted as a court trial. By introducing a "different mirror," seen from the other side, reverse anthropologists have also revealed the limits of reciprocity and the incompatibility of crossing gazes. The syndrome of these crises is spreading nowadays irrevocably over all branches of the tree of humanities.

What is wrong with these vicious circles of introspection? Surely the search for a "politically correct" way of describing other cultures implies the positionality of the describer. And since there is no neutral describer, the question becomes one of for whom the information is encoded and to whom it is sent. If the destination is confined only to a community of specialists, the issue comes to a dead end. The question remains, then--who is entitled to represent which culture? However, it is a question of taking an essentialist position. Are "Westerners" not qualified to "understand" Japanese culture? Can the Moslem people only understand Islam? Clearly, such ethnic or religious identification can be abused and usurped through political manipulation. And

what about the symbolic violence of giving voice to the hitherto voiceless, inevitably altering and eliminating the voiceless-ness as if a necessary compensatory side-effect to the decision-making of "speaking out"?

The question of "understanding" can no longer be regarded as a simple epistemological problem. As far as "understanding" implies cultural intervention in "the other," how can it be distinguished from transgression? If minorities have to obey canonical criteria and accept global standardization, aren't they already tamed by the dominant logic of the majority? To what extent can and should obstacles to transience and resistances against global ecumenics be defended and encouraged in cross-cultural confrontations?

Crossings of borders (between genders, cultures, administrations, faiths, religions and even scholarly disciplines) touch on the experience of liminality. By focusing on this *topos* of transition and alterity, this interdisciplinary symposium hopes to propose a new framework for ethics in cross-cultural communication.

INAGA Shigemi
New York,
Oct. 10, 1998

Between Revelation and Violation: The Ethics of Intervention

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Hospitality in Question

Let us begin with an anecdote. About 10 years ago, Professor Wang Bin was invited to Bologna University in the program entitled "reciprocal anthropology" proposed by Professor Umberto Eco and the *Fondation Transculturale*. Upon his arrival in Bologna, friendly Italian colleagues asked Wang Bin to visit their homes whenever he wanted. Naively, taking this invitation at its face value, Wang Bin visited some of them without even announcing his visit. The Italians' embarrassment puzzled him. Evidently his sudden visit was extremely disturbing for his Italian colleagues. Because of this unexpected reaction and refusal, Wang Bin at first felt humiliated and thought that Italians were impolite and did not keep promises. Later on, by trial and error, Wang Bin learned that he had misunderstood their behavior. It is one thing to say "you are always welcome," but it is another thing altogether to take it at its face value. Between formal expressions of courtesy and the acculturated practice of making appointments is a conflict, and each culture bridges this gap differently.

Several years later, in 1992, it was Wang Bin's turn to invite his Italian colleagues to China. At the reception party in Zhongshan University, Umberto Eco raised two intriguing questions. Had the Italians and Westerners been invited after the Chinese fashion or according to Italian fashion? And which of the two should be the proper way of demonstrating hospitality? According to Umberto Eco, these questions posed a crucial dilemma of inter-cultural communication, especially within the framework of Reciprocal Anthropology. Indeed, if Wang Bin had invited them after the Italian fashion, he would enjoy a reputation of being faithful to the custom of those whom he welcomed. But in this case, the Italians would have been doomed to "humiliation" in the same impolite way that Wang Bin had experienced in Italy. On the contrary, if Wang Bin had invited them in a Chinese manner, the Italians would certainly have been welcomed fervently, in Chinese (*re-lie huan ying*) "熱烈歡迎". However, as things turned out, the Italians were invited in a non-Italian way (which would certainly be no less "humiliating" than the former case as I have explained). What is still worse, though, is that this Chinese custom could be regarded as a typical example of Chinese ethnocentric arrogance (*zhong hua si xiang*) "中華思想," that is,

never respecting the customs of foreigners. (Inaga 1995: b. Cf. Kawai 1998. Kimura 1998) In confronting this funny ethical dilemma, I have to ask a serious question. What would be appropriate hospitality in a cross-cultural context?

Ethics of Interventions at Issue

The word 'hospitality' is closely related to hospital, hotel or hostel, that are accommodations or facilities for care taking. At the same time, 'hospitality' also shares its etymological root with 'hostility.' Friendship and hatred are two sides of the same coin, as the dilemma I mentioned above would suggest (Sh  rer 1996, Washida 1999). Hence the initial difficulty of understanding the Other in terms of crossing cultural borders. Understanding the Other means revelation of that which lies on the other side of the borders, but the revelation cannot be achieved without intervention, and the intervention often inevitably implies some form of violation to the Other (Ricoeur 1993). Physical intervention, including medical and especially surgical operations would illustrate this delicate margin between 'revelation' and 'violation.' Among innumerable relevant examples, let me illustrate with two:

The first example is of a Japanese girl student, who had spent several weeks in Peshawar as a volunteer on a Japanese medical team, and who had had a frustrating experience. A Muslim father came to the medical center with his daughter, who was suffering from a tumor on her back. The father, however, refused to allow his daughter to be examined by a male doctor. The Japanese girl took the doctor's place and reported her observations to the doctor, who stood behind a curtain. The doctor concluded that an operation was necessary, but the Muslim girl declined to be operated on by a non-Moslem. And so they left the center without receiving treatment (Matsuda 1997). In this context, surgical operation constitutes cultural transgression. Afterward, the Japanese girl wondered if she was right to have let them go. Should she have refrained from medical intervention in respect for the customs of this Muslim patient? How should she have handled the situation, and what should serve as her guideline?

The second example is a case of female genital surgery (F.G.S.). Female circumcision is a cultural practice in some parts of the Arabian Peninsula, North East and Sub-Saharan Africa. Since Fran Hosken's report to the Copenhagen Women's Assembly in 1980, and Alice Walker's *Possessing the Secret of Joy* (1995) that followed her documentary film *Warrior's Marks* (1993), many Western feminists have protested against this practice as a form of female sexual mutilation, and pleaded for its abolishment. "It is by no means a culture but a torture," declared the Hosken report,

which claimed that the practice was a form of violence exercised on the female body and soul by patriarchal society and feudal tradition. Despite this, many protests were raised, against the Hosken Report and Alice Walker's novel and documentary film, by several feminist activists in the third world such as Nawal El Sadawi, as well as by some African-American women. Although she was engaged with the abolition of F.G.S. for hygienic and traumatic reasons, still Sadawi could not help but protest against the Hosken Report which saw Africa as savage, inferior, and as a remnant of the past, as stagnant (Inaga 1995-c).

Oka Mari, who has concentrated on the problems of gender in the third world, has convincingly criticized the tendency to reduce this issue to an alternative opposition between (native) cultural relativism which would defend female circumcision as a local culture, and the (Western) human rights movement which accuses the former of human enslavement, constituting 'a criminal violation of universal human rights.' Oka argues that, firstly, the defense of local culture as something inviolable and monolithic, is a refusal to account for cultural relativism, and which is no less ethnocentric than the (Western) universalist claim of human rights. Secondly, she maintains that the (Western) universalist claim of human rights is also unconsciously reproducing and reinforcing the power relations implied in colonialism, which believed in the superiority of the colonizer over the colonized. By accusing local people of sexual mutilation, we (including the Japanese) run the risk of justifying and consolidating our own hidden domination over and discrimination against the Other. Our own seemingly sympathetic attitude toward the Other may constitute a mutilation of human dignity, reducing these women to helpless victims. Such an attitude is no less harmful than the physical mutilation itself (Oka 1996).

Accessibility and Transgression

Any act of crossing cultural borders, however innocent, may imply interventions similar to those I outline above. Even a simplistic view of the Other may provoke transgressions, a peeping into the hidden side of things. Kamishima, an island in Ise Bay, is famous as the setting for Mishima Yukio's novel *Shiosai* (tr. *The Sound of Waves* 1956), a Japanese version of *Daphnis and Chloe* relocated to that island. The region is famous for fisherwomen who collect abalone (*awabi*) and turbo (*sazae*), edible and delicious shellfish. The fisherwomen of the village of Wagu in the same region, for example, used to pray for safety and a good catch at a small Shinto shrine on a tiny island off the coast of the Shima peninsula. At the New Year purification ceremonies, they were accustomed to making ablutions on the seashore. During this ritual, they are

said to have been completely naked, but as photographers began to invade the ceremony at the end of 1950s, the custom was inevitably changed and the fisherwomen began to wear white clothing to hide their bodies. In exchange for accessibility to photographic documentation, a ceremony had been altered in one essential detail forever, even if the ceremony itself had not been completely abolished.

Similar cases are innumerable. Visibility can constitute a case of transgression, but so can audibility. Some native North American "tribes" believe utterance as a part of ceremony to be endowed with performative magical power over nature. To record such human voices by magnetic tape-recorder can be regarded as a violation of irreplaceable personal property. Several damage suits have been filed in recent years. Ironically, such violations of ancestral rights and interests cannot be legally recognized as such unless allegations are reformulated to conform with the very laws, which have maintained jurisdiction over these natives' ancestral customs, laws which are alien to their tradition. In this sense, pleading for ancestral rights itself can be regarded, in part, as surrender to a dominant and "foreign" power structure effected by those Westerners who settled their lands. Moreover, it was not until after the introduction of voice recording as a new technology that use of such devices were judged to constitute a cultural violation. Until then, the very idea of "deprivation of voice property" could not have existed.

Since the late 1970s, foreign scientific investigation and fieldwork has frequently become a target for criticism. The allegation is one of intruding into native properties, either material or intellectual. The British being asked to return the Elgin Marbles from the Parthenon to Greece, or native opposition to the excavation of human remains from Neolithic graves are the most widely publicized cases. Offering ethnographic information to foreign scholars can be regarded as cultural treason, as if the informant were selling a society's secrets to heretics. Beneath purely scholarly interests often lies economic concern, even demands for pecuniary rights. Materials of no commercial value on the local market can become valuable and even invaluable to scholars. Exchange of scholarly information in an academic market outside the field can provoke redistributions of wealth. The anthropologist at work may become implicated in such affairs and come to be regarded as an unexpected troublemaker. The neutrality of one's scholarship does not guarantee one's innocence because one is declared responsible for having added extra-value, like King Midas, to ethnographic information that had no value until one had touched upon it. Ethnographic research can no longer be independent of suspicions. (Imafuku 1995. Yoshida 1998).

The Narrative between Revelation and Debt

Thus, the narrative obtained by crossing cultural borders comes into focus. The Mexican experience of the American anthropologist Ruth Behar is illuminating in this respect. From the outset, Ruth Behar's encounter with her informant had been unusual. Usually, it is the anthropologist who chooses his/her informant in the field, but in Ruth Behar's case, it was Esperanza, an old woman known locally as a sorceress who sought her out. With the proviso that her life story not be published in Spanish within Mexico, but issued only in an English translation on the other side of the border, Ruth began recording Esperanza's recollections. As Behar crossed the U.S. border, she felt at the customs office that, in her mind, she had something to declare, that her fieldwork was by no means duty-free (Behar in Fernandez 1994). After six years of writing, the book was finally published. She brought a copy of *Translated Woman: Crossing the Border with Esperanza's Story* to Esperanza, but the woman pushed it away, saying it was useless to receive a book she could not, would not read. "I already know my *historia*. And besides, this is in English. My children can't read it." At this refusal from her informant, Ruth remarks: "I understand that not accepting the book is my compadre's way of refusing to be the translated woman." (Behar 1995)

Ruth Behar's collected words thus became bastards because their own mother declined their recognition. The authenticity of Ruth's story is guaranteed solely by its being illegitimate, by its not being recognized as such by the person it proposes to describe. Uneasy with this confrontative refusal, Ruth Behar still felt she owed Esperanza a special debt she would never be able to pay back. A reviewer had this to say about her book in *The New York Review of Books*: "the lesson is clear; the lives of anthropologists are rarely as rich and fascinating as those of their subjects." (Behar 1995:78) Although she is materially much richer than Esperanza--and this is why she was able to pursue anthropological research in Mexico-- Behar had to admit that her own life was much poorer and far more boring than that of her "exotic Other," usually called "the informant." The debt Behar felt she owed reveals what is hidden behind the professional disguise of the anthropologist as a transparent and impersonal interpreter of what lies on the other side of a border.

Ruth Behar's story explains how her narrative came to be composed at the price of border crossings, and how an economic gap between borders had sustained the framework of her anthropological research. Opposing electric fields of potential difference, separating the U.S. from Mexico, had enabled Behar's discharge at the border crossing, thereby supplying the energy necessary for her narrative to be articulated as a gift. Here the narrative is marked by a debt which is a token of an

irremediable wound torn ever apart by cultural intervention and symbolic transgression. As a self-reflective meta-story in her metier, Behar's story witnesses the structural imbalance, which separates the narrator from her subject.

Love as a Distance, Understanding as a Loss

Ruth Behar's story also reminds me of a passage from Simone Weil: "A pure love consists of accepting the gap, the difference which separates you from what you love." Evidently, what Simone Weil meant by this was that God, perfect, eternal and omnipresent, remains limitlessly beyond the limit of human understanding, and from whom human beings are inevitably separated because of their limited and temporal existence. Her theological/mystical metaphor is applicable to an understanding of 'the Other' in general. Stories cannot be articulated as long as immediacy is assured between the narrator and what he/she tries to describe. Story telling, like the accumulation of documents, is not possible without some delay and distance, which serves as a necessary mediation (hence, medium/media). Narrative fills the gap 'in between,' so that a lack of distance would erase the margin necessary for articulating a narrative. If narrative is an indispensable tool for understanding, it follows also that the separation between subject and object is a necessary condition. Understanding thus appears as a token of separation, and as separateness implies a loss, understanding must now be regarded as a mourning (*travail de deuil*), given as the price of separation from what you love, and --as it is suggested by Islamic mystics like Ibun Arabi or Sufrawardi--the narrative witnesses the loss in question. (Inaga 1995-a)

Double-bind and Split Personality

Speculations, such as those I propose above, help one to better realize why understandings are constantly threatened by misunderstandings. In elaborating one's experience in the framework of academic language, one inevitably loses sight of one's daily life and cannot keep oneself in touch with what is called 'usual reality.' Even if one's academic elaboration is legitimated and recognized by a community of specialists, it inevitably implies an estrangement and entails alienation. A satisfying explanation is often formulated only in compensation for the repression of a hidden sentiment of betrayal toward one's subject. In other words, any transparency obtained in academic language inevitably intensifies the obscurity around itself. (Muroi 1986) This is particularly true when it comes to explaining to a foreign interlocutor something that you need not elucidate in your native language, and when you are in a more familiar

environment. An informant often is put in the frustrating position of acting as a mediator in cross-cultural communications.

Let me examine a stereotypical example. Ordinary Japanese have a notorious reputation of not being good at English conversation. Worried about this lack of communicability of the Japanese in the international community, several right wing Japanese critics have spoken out on the necessity for Japanese to be more combative when engaged in debate in English. (Suzuki 1999) A student reacted negatively to such comments about combat readiness. He had learned in high school that war is wrong. Since Japan has abandoned war as a means of solving international conflicts, and abolished its former military forces, officially at least, he argued that it would be against the Japanese Constitution if the Japanese people would be expected to obtain fighting efficiency by using English as a weapon in international negotiations. It would seem as though a Japanese conversant in English would be no longer fully entitled to be a constitutionally correct Japanese. (Inaga in Sasaki 1996)

This reaction, for which the *Nikkyoso* (Japanese Teachers Labor Union) is entirely responsible in my opinion, is closely related to the inferiority complex post-war Japanese still cannot shake off. As a mirror effect to the student's reaction, among Japanese with sufficient competence in English, and especially among Japanese women, it is often observed that such people demonstrate a tendency to have two distinct personalities. Between the Japanese female's English and Japanese conversation, she seems to undergo a metamorphosis. While modest, silent, sadly smiling and even seemingly repressive in Japanese, she suddenly changes her personality upon switching her language code from Japanese to English; another ego appears, possessing a self-assertive, mentally emancipated and active character, and which is willing to logically articulate its own ideas. (Nishimura 1997) In Japanese conversation, such is hardly recommendable.

A shift in personality is the only possible choice for survival in Japanese society for a Japanese woman efficient in English. Whereas in North America communication is based upon a horizontal and equitable human relationship, conversation in Japanese is said to be vertical, that is, in accordance with social hierarchy. It is not by chance, but quite suggestive, that this classical and stereotypical hypothesis was put forward at the end of 1960s by a Japanese female sociologist, Nakane Chie, after her extensive stay in an English speaking country. (Nakane 1970) It is also well known that among the so-called *kikoku shijo*-- Japanese children, including girls, who have returned from abroad, a somewhat discriminatory category coined by the Ministry of Education--that efficiency in English is only reluctantly exhibited because it can bring on harassment from classmates and teachers. Japanese expose themselves to the danger of being

discriminated against if they carelessly demonstrate fluency in English and American-style thinking in an inappropriate situation in Japan. (cf. Tsuruta 1990, Field 1991)

Mediators as Traitors

One typical example is the case of Miyamoto Masao, who had majored in psychology and medical studies in the U.S. Miyamoto was appointed to the Japanese Ministry of Health and Welfare, but was recently forced to resign because of his inappropriate behavior as a civil servant. (Miyamoto 1993) He published a book in which his quirky insider analysis and harsh criticism of the Japanese bureaucracy was widely acclaimed as a timely and relevant account. The volume was translated into English as *Straight-Jacket Society* (Miyamoto 1994), with a preface by the late movie director, Itami Juzo. Miyamoto appeared to be a qualified informant to outsiders of what was the Japanese reality, much welcomed by several 'Japan bashers.' However, to the Ministry, Miyamoto's statements in these sensational publications seemed derogatory and a sign of disloyalty, revealing as they did a caricature, in dead earnest, of the Japanese bureaucracy. His book was banned at the bookshop of the Ministry of Health and Welfare, while it was frequently purchased and enthusiastically read by other Ministerial bureaucrats. As a by-product of this affair, Miyamoto's case also pointed out that the Japanese civil servant is not authorized to criticize his/her own Ministry. Of course, as a civil servant one is deprived of the right of free expression in Japan. A foreign journalist remarked to Miyamoto that if he had been a civil servant in Singapore, he would have been either jailed or murdered long ago. (Miyamoto 1995)

Miyamoto's case is by no means an exception. Revelation to the outside tends to constitute extreme treason within the system. Recognition from without comes hand in hand with betrayal from within. By diffusing information that which is useful worldwide, one risks being accused of spying and leaking privileged data. International contribution of any sort is regarded as an inadmissible transgression, and can be met with jealousy and calumny. The 'perpetrator' can be accused of betrayal in the name of self-aggrandizement and condemned to exile and exclusion. The Korean scholar Mr. Kim Donguk recalls that the publication of his *History of Korean Literature* in Japanese and English cost him the notoriety of being named a traitor to Korea in the 1970s. A serviceable book on the international market was rejected as shameful, and lacking in respect towards his native country. (Kim 1974. Cf. Inaga in *Transcultura* 1988. Kurokawa 1998)

To serve as a mediator and to be engaged in the transmission of messages across cultural borders is not an innocent act. To be an inter-national negotiator between needs

and supplies does not mean becoming neutral and transparent like distilled water. Rather, to use the tale from Aesop as a metaphor, a mediator is like a bat, that is, a being between the realms of bird and animal. Working at the risk of being refuted by one's own culture, one is also constantly threatened by expulsion from the community to which one is sending messages. Double identity can have a double edge, and a double-bind contract can provoke double-alienation. It can result in double-spying. (Oguma 1998. Sugihara 1998) A mediator is therefore easily exposed to diaspora, a state of constant nomadic existence, deprived of any stable settlement and/or protection. (Inukai 1988. Inaga in Fernandez 1994. cf. Chow 1993)

Exploitation of Voices

In this interplay between faithfulness and betrayal, audibility of the voices involved must be made a central issue. To give voice to a heretofore-voiceless minority has come to the political fore in recent years. A number of legislative measures have been put into effect, especially in North America. (Cf. Ohta 1999. Nissen 1994. Ohtsuka 1997. Shimizu 1997) It must not be overlooked, however, that these several pieces of legislation constitute in themselves a form of political intervention. (cf. Spivak 1998) Once recognized as an audible voice in the public sphere, the voiceless voice becomes erased and is thus expunged. Between the alternative of remaining silent or coming out with one's own voice, there is an irrevocable border crossing, as well as an experience of liminality. (Z. Baumann)

It is not my intention to criticize a concerned minority for elaborating and/or sublimating their voicelessness into a public voice so as to make themselves heard and understood. (cf. Taylor 1994) Yet it must be recognized that this sublimation entails an alteration, a kind of violence similar to that which the 'coming out' could not help exercise. By making a voice public, one is deprived of one's own private voice. Emancipation realized through public media entails a resignation to being exposed to the public. And this public exposure can easily constitute mental torture. (Kakefuda 1997) Between public information disclosure and the protection of privacy, compromises are sought after for the sake of civil order. Theoretical elaborations are proposed by applied ethics. (Kato 1994; 1995) Still, such ad-hoc and allopathic type solutions, however practical, can act to turn our eyes away from the fundamental dilemma implied in the right of using voices.

The sublimation of voicelessness into a public voice involves the recognition of a public voice as the necessarily authentic one. This logic reminds me of the discussion on '*Eigentlichkeit*' developed by Heidegger. (Bourdieu 1981) The right to enjoy freedom

of speech is open to everybody. But in reality, only a tiny elite can realize this universal potentiality. When such an elite does, in fact, make this possible, the masses that have failed to do so will be condemned to a state of 'in-authenticity.' Citizens who fail to appeal to the public voice are declared guilty of not fulfilling their duty and are disqualified as 'in-authentic' people that should be barred from the public arena.

Sympathy and Compensation

How can a person who has a voice, then, speak for the voiceless that have been deprived of a public voice? How can one bear witness to a question that remains voiceless? In her paper "Becoming Witness," Oka Mari states that a witness is a person who looks at suffering without being able to succor, who lacks efficient means of rescue intervention. "Looking at others suffering, I am incapable of doing anything. This incapability causes me to suffer, which belongs to me." I can be blamed for not being sensitive to the suffering of others, yet it would be arrogant to pretend that I can understand the suffering of the others. Our capacity for understanding 'the Other' suffers from an incapacity to share others' suffering. Sympathy is defined as the sharing of an incapacity—an incapacity to share an original suffering which lies beyond our accessible border (Oka 1997).

My reflection here brings me back to my starting point. The aporia of hospitality accompanies the aporia of compensation. Just think of a situation where one must ask for compensation from an enemy. If one asks for compensation according to the enemy's expectation, one is obligated to uphold the enemy's moral code. This can imply one's surrender to one's own enemy. If, on the other hand, the enemy were forced to make compensation according to one's own manner, then the enemy would not recognize the issue as one of compensation but as one of humiliation. This may victimize one's enemy and would prepare for further revenge and retaliation. Ukai Satoshi recognizes one of the fundamental deadlocks of the Palestinian problem in just such a dilemma (Ukai 1997. Cf. Nihon no... 1998).

I do not want to make an issue of international law making here because the question is not reducible to a settlement of money accounts. The ethics of intervention should take into account the very foundation of the public sphere, or the international community by extension, which can only be maintained through the inequitable exclusion of the voiceless from internationally recognized and recognizable voices. As an aside, I should point out that this is the reason why E. W. Said, as a Palestinian, severely criticizes the idea of "communicationality" in Jürgen Habermas.

It is true that some sort of sacrifice could shatter the infernal and vicious circle

of retaliation. By giving something that one's enemy cannot repay, one can get rid of the interminable chain effect of vengeance. As Georges Bataille and Rene Girard have suggested, the circle of crime and punishment is cut off by a sacrifice which may annihilate the violence of interminable revenge. In Christianity, the redemption of the world by the self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ is, of course, the supreme representation of this mechanism. However, in such a state of absolute superiority, the enacted sacrifice becomes a form of pervasive violence in the sense that the effect of the intervention is only guaranteed by the total impuissance of the self-imposed, masochistic nature of this particular act of sacrifice. In more general and recent terms, unconditional surrender can constitute the worst form of revenge. The Palestinian Intifada reveals that the mishmash of self-sacrifice easily invalidates the Christian ideal of unconditional submission, intended to put an end to the cycle of endless reprisal.

Appropriation of the Voice: in Guise of Conclusion

So far, I have revealed the deceptiveness of the act of our representing an 'Other' who is voiceless; I have confessed my own impuissance in assisting at a scene where the deprivation of others' voices is occurring, and I have admitted that I benefited from a gift from the 'Other' that I cannot return. The German word for gift, for example, indicates that it can act as a poison. Still, I must also point out that exposing the wounds of intervention does not justify one's own position nor redeem one from the violence of border-crossing. "I can speak, therefore I can confess my deception as a token of my hope. I can speak, therefore I can declare my distrust as proof of my confidence." With these lines, Ms. Jong Yonhae, a Korean resident in Japan, confesses to her ambivalent position, and speaks to us of the suffering of the double bind when speaking across borders. Her statements have been usurped and appropriated by some sectors of the Japanese academic community to give evidence of their political correctness, and, at other times, sucked up by Japanese mass media as an act of self-justification. In so doing, statements that come from Ms. Jong's private voice have been assassinated, one by one (Jong 1997).

Tsuboi Hideto, a literary historian, talks about the uneasiness he finds unforgettable when he heard, for the first time, his own voice coming from a tape recorder. He was also dismayed when he saw, for the first time, his own text in print (Tsuboi 1997). Was he disturbed by the fact that he had transgressed by making representation of something that extended beyond his own existential limit? The thrill of talking of one's own culture to 'the Other' is accompanied by a bad aftertaste of having committed something like self-betrayal. There is an uncanny mixture of

superiority and criminal consciousness in encoding the voice of 'the Other' into one's own, even if it were according to academic rules. Instead of repressing the uneasiness, I try to scrutinize what is at stake and what is suppressed through a rite of passage, the rite of border crossing.

One further anecdote, in the guise of a conclusion. A book edited by Yanagihara Kazuko, *Zaigai Nihonjin* 1994 [*The Over-seas Japanese*], gathers 108 confessions and opinions of Japanese who have looked back on their home country from the outside. In the postscript, however, the editor reveals that some of the texts were unable to survive the border crossing and had to be abandoned like aborted children. Harsh criticisms of Japanese society were censored by the informants themselves in fear of doing harm to their friends and relatives after their return. Several informants requested anonymity (let us recall Miyamoto Masao's case). Confessions revealing cases of bigamy where the informant had a family in Japan and another one in the country of temporary residence, had to be systematically excluded for obvious legal reasons. From this evidence, it would seem that the materials most important to an examination of the difficulties of border crossing are included among these aborted first-hand accounts (Yanagisawa 1994). Invaluable testimonies were eliminated only because such revelations could be contested legally. They are made conspicuous by their absence. The ethics of border crossing need to take account of such silent lapses.

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