

HISTORICAL REFLECTIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF JAPANESE HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

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I. The Globalization and Diversification of Humanistic Psychology

One of the main features in the development of humanistic psychology during the past decades is its globalization. This does not simply mean its worldwide spread and the establishment of its organization in many other countries than America. The globalization of humanistic psychology involves two things. One is the diversification, or pluralization, of humanistic psychology; the other is the growing international networking of humanistic psychology organizations and the increasing communication among humanistic psychologists across national boundaries.

Humanistic psychology has been developing differently, dependent upon the country and the area to which it was brought. The humanistic psychology which is well known to us and connected with the names of Rogers, Maslow and other key figures of Old Saybrook is not the humanistic psychology but American humanistic psychology which is itself always in the process of transformation. Each country or each area should have its unique version of humanistic psychology.

Humanistic psychology of each country or area will be able to develop in a way that contributes to its globalization only when it becomes fully conscious of and seriously deal with its own historical and cultural conditions and at the same time knows the situation of humanistic psychology in other countries. The sensitivity to historical and cultural diversity, I think, belongs to the nature of humanistic psychology. The globalization of humanistic psychology, therefore, calls for the development of, for example, European humanistic psychology, Russian humanistic psychology, Asian humanistic psychology, Japanese humanistic psychology and so on.

The international networking of humanistic psychology organizations as well as the international communication between humanistic psychologists is indeed accelerated by the rapid progress of information processing technology which makes us feel really living in a global village. But any technology always remains only a catalyst. The real agent is a vision, in our case, a humanistic vision.

It is a good symptom that humanistic psychologists today are not content with a call to be human but raise and try to answer a question of what it is to be human and explore the humanistic tradition. Humanism as the effort to humanize our life and the world presupposes anthropology as the understanding of human nature, and the opposite is also true. Both of them are vehicles of humanistic psychology as a movement. Despite a deep-seated prejudice which often rules the mind of the public as well as professionals, practice and theory are inseparable from each other.

In connection with the first implication of the globalization of humanistic psychology, we must realize the historical and cultural diversity of humanism and anthropology. In order to get a vision of future humanistic psychology, each humanistic psychologist needs to look back the history of humanism as well as to discover or recover the humanistic tradition in the history of his or her country.

For three years from April 1995 till March 1998 I served as editor-in-chief of "The Japanese Journal of Humanistic Psychology(JJHP)", the organizational magazine of the Japanese Association for Humanistic Psychology (JAHP). At the on-site conference at which I am unfortunately unable to be present, I initially intended to talk about my experiences and thoughts during that period. But in the course of arranging the paper, I felt more and more the need to place them in the historical context of the development of Japanese psychology in general, and the Japanese Association for Humanistic Psychology (JAHP) in particular. For this procedure seems, on the one hand, to enable me to examine more accurately what I was initially going to say, and on the other, to give you a clearer picture of both the JAHP itself and my relationship to it. So I want to say beforehand that my description of the development of the JAHP will unavoidably to some degree include autobiographical elements. Accordingly, my presentation on tasks of Japanese humanistic psychology would be not so much systematic as historical. And I say "historical" in both directions, namely, chronological and retrospective.

II. Japanese Psychology up to the World War II

First let me talk about a short history of psychology in Japan. Scientific psychology did not start in Japan much later than in the West. After giving up the national isolation policy of two hundred years in the second half of the nineteenth century, Japan was eager to absorb and assimilate Western science and technology as soon and as much as possible in order to survive as a modern independent country in Asia under the threat of colonialism. Western psychology, too, was imported and assimilated in this historical context.

In 1888, only nine years after Wundt had built the first psychological laboratory at Leipzig University in 1879, Yujiro Motora (1858-1912), having studied with Stanley Hall in the U.S.A., gave the first lecture on psychophysics at Tokyo University. In 1903 at Tokyo University, he and Matataro Matsumoto (1865-1843), one of Wundt's students, established the first psychological laboratory in Japan. In the first decades of this century, psychological institutes were established at many Japanese universities. In 1919 the first psychological journal was published, and in 1927 the Japanese Association for Psychology (JAP) was founded. After the World War I, various streams of German psychology were imported, and especially Gestalt psychology became dominant.

Yet, it is not to be overlooked that early modern Japanese psychologists were interested not only in the implantation of Western psychology to Japan but also in the integration of Japanese traditional spiritualities, especially Buddhism, in their psychology, so the development of Buddhist psychology. The most important figure is Enryo Inoue (1858-1919). While he tried to reactivate the traditional Buddhism stagnant at the time with the aid of Western rationalism, he explicated Buddhist psychological insights in the language of Western psychology, publishing books: "Eastern Psychology"(1894), "Buddhist Psychology"(1897) and "Psychology of Zen Buddhism"(1902).

Inoue and other Japanese Buddhist psychologists may have been the forerunners of Japanese humanistic and transpersonal psychology in particular and even humanistic and transpersonal psychology in the world. Unconcerned about loyalty to any sect within Buddhism and crossing the boundaries between Buddhism and other religions as well as between religion and non-religion, they emphasized the importance of intuition in grasping the whole, the fundamental and the new by referring to the Buddha-nature, the True Self or something like that which could be called the Real Self today. They tried to point to and articulate something beyond the concern of Western psychology at the time,

association and experimental.

III. Kiyoshi Miki and Japanese Humanism

Apart from the difficult question of what is the meaning of "humanistic," there are humanistic elements in Japanese religious and literal traditions as well, and it is one of the important task for Japanese humanistic psychologists to explore and integrate them in their psychology. This is also true of humanistic psychologists in other countries.

Japanese intellectuals already knew the European word "humanism" in the second decade of the twentieth century. Remembering the time, Kiyoshi Miki (1897-1945), a philosopher I regard as the central figure in the Japanese humanistic movement, counts five types of humanism: cultural humanism, religious humanism, literary humanism represented by the Shirakaba writers, neo-Kantian humanism and life philosophy humanism. Miki himself did not commit himself to any of them.

In a paper as a student, Miki wrote, "one who strives for a good life is either an idealist or a humanist." Interesting in it is also his typology of philosophers, according to which the bright philosopher type and the noble-minded philosopher were opposed to each other but dialectally united by the great philosopher type whose melancholy was that of a pregnant woman and whose logic was classic and humanistic, sought inwardly by the suffering strong soul. As an adolescent, he suffered from the dilemma in vocational choice of which to become a philosopher or a man of letters, and found a solution in becoming a humanist. Humanism as the synthesis of philosophy and art was for the young Miki the spirit which feels a deep interest in and love of human life, thoughts, emotions and aspiration of any kind and quality and seeks to understand them up to their bottom.

Miki studied philosophy with Kitaro Nisiida at Kyoto University, and then studied with Heidegger in Germany when he was writing "Being and Time." He then went to Paris and was deeply impressed by Pascal. Immediately after returning to Japan, he published his first book: "Studies of Human Being in Pascal"(1926), an application of hermeneutic phenomenology he studied with Heidegger to the French Christian moralist tradition. This book gave a deep and far-reaching impact upon Japanese intellectuals and students at the time. It was the first book explicitly related to the existentialist tradition written by a Japanese thinker.

Soon thereafter, Miki was engaged with the study of Marxism, an ideology which was increasingly attracting Japanese people at the time, and published "Historical Materialism and the Modern Consciousness"(1928). Though he showed a deep sympathy with Marxism and was arrested by the police due to the suspicion of supporting the Japanese Communist Party, he was never a communist. He was even condemned by Communists as idealist.

Miki's primary concern was the Marxist anthropology or Marxist humanism and a humanistic or anthropological reinterpretation of Marxism. He reformulated the Marxist concepts of infrastructure and superstructure respectively into basic experience and ideology. Basic experience is Miki's coinage which refers to what is not determined beforehand by any Logos in human's relationship to Being. Basic experience and ideology were in Miki's system mediated by anthropology, and he characterized anthropology as the primary Logos and ideology as the secondary Logos. For him, Marxism was one of ideologies dependent on a certain basic experience which is proletarian, and mediated by a certain anthropology.

Miki's criticism of Marxism has two points. One is that, by failing to see religion in the natural basis of human being, it committed an error of predicting the disappearance of religion in the communist society to come which was claimed to be free from class opposition and exploitation. The other is that the Marxist dialectic of nature did not know any other natural philosophy than modern natural science. Miki's version of natural dialectic admits a leap from quantity to quality which means the emergence of something hitherto unknown.

The primary concern of Miki's humanism was to fulfill two apparently contradicting demands: to realize that and how we human beings are embedded in the world which is both nature and history, and to actualize our human individuality. While recognizing limitations of Western individualism represented by liberalism, he sees in organicism represented by Hegel, Romantics and Dilthey's hermeneutics a possible danger of losing and annihilating individuality in the name of the whole. On the philosophical level, he tried to find the answer in his logic of imagination to elaborate in which the general and the particular, the intellect and the senses, are reconciled. The thought of type as represented by Goethe is deeply correlated to imagination. The task of literary writers was to discover, or better, to create those types of humans which reflect and appeal to universal and at the same time individual human needs at the time.

The actual history is always the touchstone for any humanism, especially Miki's humanism. His humanistic thought was challenged, elaborated and deepened in his confrontation with the upsurge of nationalism and fascism in the thirties in which individual freedom was excluded as barriers to the national policy. Communists had already totally been oppressed, and even liberalist intellectuals were forced either to keep silence or to cooperate with the national policy, otherwise had to run the risk of their position and even life.

It is in this difficult historical situation that Miki advocated and defended humanism in papers, essays and columns. Recalling the Western humanistic tradition and counting several forms of humanism there, he pointed out the necessity of a new humanism. He tried to overcome the narrow-minded nationalism by the discourse of a world culture, or what could be called a global point of view today. It was a kind of culture politics. Humanism, in his view, presupposes and demands a cultural unity with its tradition across national boundaries. He wished for Asia something beyond nationalism which may be analogous to Europe for Western humanists like Goethe. Goethe could keep aloof from both the French Revolution and the War against Napoleon without losing a deep concern with his fellow beings. It is very likely that Goethe, a man of purely German spirit beyond German nationalism, became Miki's mentor at the time when Japan was ruled by narrow-minded nationalism. With Goethe, he saw the true opposition not between art and science or technology nor between East and West nor between intuition and intellect but between culture and barbarism, or between open-mindedness and narrow-mindedness.

Miki tried to intellectually survive the predicament by seeking Hegel's "reason of history" in the apparently absurd historical event like the invasion of the Japanese army into Manchuria (1931) and China (1937). He, rightly or wrongly, hoped that the war between Japan and China would in the long run result in the deepening of the cultural communication between both countries and the formation of a common East-Asian cultural community. But his call to Japanese people to respect the culture of China and other Asian countries was, of course, ignored by the army and his countrymen blinded by nationalist and militarist propaganda. He himself was arrested again for the reason of having protected a communist fugitive and died in prison one month after the end of the

World War II in 1945. His works, "Philosophical Anthropology," "The Logic of Imagination" and "Shinran" remained unfinished.

I often wonder what would have become of Japanese humanistic psychology if Miki had survived into the postwar because I would like to find a support not only in the long Japanese cultural and spiritual traditions like Buddhism but also in the relatively near forerunner of the humanistic tradition like Miki. This is especially because I recently wonder whether we Japanese are not falling into a historical situation analogous to that he experienced more than sixty years ago.

IV. Postwar Japanese Psychology

Postwar Japanese psychology was under the strong influence of American psychology, especially behaviorism. The background of this change in the scene of psychology was the military, political and cultural surrender of Japan to the U.S.A. Though important for the democratization of the Japanese society, that may have meant a grave interruption in the process of identity formation of Japanese psychology. And I suspect it was just the dissatisfaction with the kind of psychology in which Japanese psychologists had hardly felt confirmed for more than thirty years since the end of the World War II that constituted the background against which the Japanese Association for Humanistic Psychology was founded in 1982. But the latter itself still remains cut off from its prewar antecedents.

I was born in 1947, two years after the defeat of Japan in the World War II. Perhaps like many other psychologists who later founded or joined the JAHP, I was, as a student in the late '60s, disappointed by the kind of psychology which claimed to be scientific. The search for concrete human reality was to be renounced in the name of scientific objectivity. Statements without statistics were despised as merely subjective. Because I wanted to become a psychologist, I became anxious about my future.

In those days, Japanese translations of the books on existential analysis by Ludwig Binswanger and Medard Boss and Logotherapy by Viktor E. Frankl were published one after another. I was interested in them because they seemed to grasp and depict human reality more vividly and penetratingly than scientific psychology. I wondered where I could learn such a new view of humans. And in 1968 I moved within Kyoto University where I studied from the Department of Literature, whose psychology was sarcastically called "rat psychology," to that of Education where there was a course for clinical psychology, a psychology alleged to deal with concrete humans.

V. Rogerian Psychology in Japan

For one and a half decades from the late 50 to the 60s, Rogerian psychology was in Japan the only alternative to scientific psychology, and the only available psychology for non-medical professionals interested in psychotherapy. A selection of his works in seven volumes from 1955 till 1964 was translated, and the Japanese version of his complete works in 23 volumes appeared from 1966 till 1972. Rogers himself visited Japan in 1961 to give workshops and lectures. Roger's theory, especially of three conditions in the counselor's attitude for bring about a constructive change in the client's personality, was well known and his non-directive method or client-centered therapy was widely practiced among psychologists and school teachers. Psychoanalysis, Freudian or Jungian, was

much less popular and hardly practiced. While theoretically more attracted to existential analysis, I was also enthusiastic in studying Rogers and his collaborator, Gendlin. I was familiar with the latter's theory of Experiencing long before his method of focusing became popular in Japan.

In the 60s and even the 70s the designation "humanistic psychology" was unknown in Japan, at least to me and perhaps to other colleagues as well, which suggests the spirit of humanistic psychology may have not been, and be still not, understood in Japan. I came to know this expression only when I studied abroad at Zurich University from 1978 till 1980. I remember that I wondered why students in Europe seemed to be so fascinated by what we Japanese had long known years before and were now even disappointed at. Rogerian therapy was called "Gespraechstherapie", so "dialogue therapy," in German speaking countries. I wondered if psychotherapists in these countries had not practiced "Gespraech" (dialogue) in their sessions.

There was a difference between Europe and Japan in the sequence of getting acquainted with Rogers. We Japanese had known first his client-centered therapy and European existential analysis before depth psychology, Freudian or Jungian, became popular. It suggests two things. One is that we may have not clearly understood the historical "necessity" or context of the emergence of humanistic psychology as the third force in the West. Controversial as it may sound, the first force for Japanese clinical psychologists may have been Rogerian psychology.

The other implication is that we may have imported Rogerian psychology only in its technical aspect without its deep message of humanistic psychology. For us, it was nothing but a set of technical procedures such as reflection and clarification. It was even sarcastically called "Hm hm, I see, I see" therapy, which meant that a Rogerian counselor only pretended to show empathic understanding of what his or her client says and lacks any authentic commitment.

Among clinical psychologists in general, and Rogerian counselors in particular there were implicit or explicit injunctions against any intellectual activity such as interpretation and theoretical discussions. Pretending to be open to feeling and experience, we were too naive and incompetent in dealing with complicated interpersonal situations including teacher-student relationship in the education of psychology. It is fatal for the development of Japanese humanistic psychology that they failed to recognize a paradox in the human psyche: that any sincere intellectual discussion on something essential tends to deeply moves discussants, and that the avoidance of intellectual matters, in other words, the concentration on emotional matters, will make a conversation unreal.

VI. The Immaturity of Japanese Psychology in Social Awareness

That may be partly related to the fact that only few psychologists, students or professionals, characteristically showed responses to the student revolution at the time which involved almost all universities in Japan, like in the U.S.A. This may be one of the reasons why Japanese psychologies including humanistic one have failed to develop social awareness as well as philosophical thinking. I dislike violence and politics, but I find it problematic that most psychologists, including me, were skeptic and indifferent to the movement.

They had already been conditioned to avoid dealing with basic problems of psychology, such as the identity as psychologist, psychologist's function in the society, philosophical

premises of psychology, in the names or ideals of scientific objectivity, especially in the camp of experimental psychology, or in the name of the primacy of practice over theory, and the necessity to establish the professionalism of psychologists, especially in the camp of clinical psychology. We students, including me, were afraid of being excluded from the community of psychologists and placed at a disadvantage by openly raising these fundamental questions.

It seems to me important to note that Japanese clinical psychology developed and became popular only after the defeat of the student movement, or "normalization" of universities, and without the political experience of the involvement in it.

The popularization of psychology in Japan may be a sign for people's deep-seated feeling of political powerlessness and resignation, a feeling that they can do nothing for the improvement of the world. I suspect that almost all trends in psychology including humanistic one have functioned in Japan as an ideology for the justification of psychologists' avoidance to face fundamental questions concerning the identity of psychology. Those students or young scholars who raised basic problems would have to run the risk of being identified as saying something merely intellectual without clinical experiences, and were forced to admit that they were not right. They had to pretend to be not theoretical but practical, for otherwise people would not take seriously what they said. But they did not realize that practice without confrontation and dealing with the social structure as well as philosophical presuppositions of their psychology would not be practice at all in its proper sense of the word.

From the 70s on, the force of Rogerians in Japan has explicitly receded. Not a few Japanese psychologists for whom only Rogerian psychology had been available for their practice became later more sympathetic to other schools. One of the reasons why Jungian psychology became popular in Japan is that Hayao Kawai, a Jungian analyst who is the authority figure of Japanese clinical psychology, succeeded in presenting us a national identity by formulating the structure and the functioning of the Japanese psyche which seemed to be effectively applicable to clinical practice with Japanese clients, at least in the sense of fabricating and enhancing a common Japanese atmosphere. Rogerian psychology, whose proponents in Japan neither had such an intention nor challenged a such a nationalistic tendency as observed in Japanese Jungian psychology, has become for subsequent generations of psychologists only one of many options in the psychology market. And in my judgment, humanistic psychology has never played a lead role in the scene of Japanese psychology.

VII. The Amnesia of Japanese Psychology

I would like to point out that Japanese psychology in general, and Japanese humanistic psychology in particular, is still suffering from amnesia, the lack of its own historical consciousness. Professionals as well as students know little about the history of their discipline and hardly want to know it. Though eighteen years have passed since the foundation of the JAHP, few Japanese humanistic psychologists know that the adjective "humanistic" involved not only the aspiration of humanizing the world and psychology but also the element of the humanities as distinct from natural sciences.

As far as I know, there is no Japanese university that has the course or even the class of philosophical, historical, cultural or ethical background of psychology. It is no wonder that books on the relationship between psychology and the humanities in Japan are rarely by psychologists because they have been not trained in these areas at universities. What

is, then, the main concern of Japanese clinical psychologists? They have always been asked to demonstrate to their colleagues and the public how efficient and useful their clinical psychology is to the immediate situation in need of prescriptions, but rarely encouraged to know the history and philosophical foundation of psychology. And their effectiveness is dubious because true competence is unlikely to develop without historical and philosophical awareness. The curriculum of psychology education so far in Japan can only produce a psychologist who is only either a clinician or a researcher, or both. But what is a psychologist who is not a humanist in the original sense, and what does he do?

Generally speaking, the interest in humanistic psychology is, in a sense, a sign for the need to restore the history of psychology, and in Japan it may also include traditional psychological wisdom in Eastern thoughts like Buddhism. But for most psychologists in Japan, humanistic psychology has only been either a psychology out-of-date or, conversely for those who don't know it, a new trend in psychology. And the self-understanding of Japanese humanistic psychology hardly involves the knowledge of the humanistic tradition.

Japan in general, and Japanese psychology in particular, has indeed eagerly absorbed and digested new theories and new techniques from abroad, and is sometimes even proud of having reached its high level, at least in the conversation with countrymen and women. But on a deeper level, it seems to still remain internationally isolated and feeling inferior.

Two things will be necessary for the international development of Japanese humanistic psychology. One is that the JAHP make more efforts to inform its members of its tradition and basic tenets as well as of the developments of humanistic psychology in America and other countries. The other is that its members contribute more actively to the global development of humanistic psychology.

humanistic psychology