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Title	Life in the Nuclear Age From the Viewpoint of Philosophy
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Citation	Praxis , 22 : 73 - 90
Issue Date	2021-03-31
DOI	
Self DOI	10.15027/50889
URL	https://ir.lib.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/00050889
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Life in the Nuclear Age

From the Viewpoint of Philosophy

Masahiro Yamaguchi

Introduction

Fukushima became the name of the third nuclear disaster area in Japan after Hiroshima and Nagasaki. There are many people who associate Fukushima with these towns, even though there are differences between the atomic bomb and the nuclear power plant, and the military and the peaceful use of nuclear power. It cannot be denied that a common problem is underlying them. That is, humankind has destructed an atom that cannot be seen with the naked eyes, and brought about uncontrollable difficulties. It raises not only a whole new technical issue, but also requires to work in various fields, such as environmental pollution caused by radiation and its effect on living organisms, psychological changes in extreme conditions, social relief for survivors, and measures concerning the safety of nuclear facilities. It is no exaggeration to say that humankind has entered a new era of crisis since 20th century. The seriousness of the problems that surround it even raises the question of whether a coexistence of humankind and nuclear power is possible. Things have reached the point of doubting the meaning of human life itself.

What can philosophy say confronted with such a situation that makes us feel the end of the world? According to Hegel's words, "Splitting is the source of the demand of philosophy"⁽¹⁾, philosophy must begin even in crisis. It must seek ways to survive this crisis. However, it is said that the life of the spirit can preserve itself even in the midst of division.⁽²⁾ Then, can modern people retain the spiritual strength described by Hegel? Or do the thoughts that humankind has cultivated over the centuries provide clues to answer this challenge?

These questions may have been rumored since Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Knowing what people have been thinking about for more than 70 years since then is indispensable when trying to tackle the current problem of focus. Finding clues in traditional ideas is also an unavoidable issue for philosophers.

In this presentation, along with the efforts that have been accumulated in various fields since Hiroshima, I would like to ask how to grasp and think about contemporary issues from the field of philosophy and thought.

I. Before and After Fukushima

Fukushima First NPS was devastated by the earthquake that shook East Japan and the subsequent tsunami on March 11, 2011 at 14:46 pm. The reactor, which had lost the emergency power source, melted into the core, caused a hydrogen explosion, released a large amount of radioactivity, and made the surrounding area uninhabitable. The enormous technology, which should have brought together the essence of science and technology, has brought convenience to human society, but at the same time, transformed the civilized area that people have cultivated as living spaces, into a wilderness. Civilization is about to return to the primordial, savage, the savage with the strongest toxicity. When can humankind regain civilization? This outlook is still out.

It is said that it will take 40 years to decommission a nuclear reactor. The Handling of the Chernobyl accident in 1986 has not yet been completed. How many people are still alive until the 2050s, when the Fukushima reactor is scheduled to be cleaned up? For most people who suffered the disasters at first, the accident never ends. In that sense, it must be uttered that the accident is eternal.

Fukushima does not end. If so, is it possible to talk about “After Fukushima”, that is, post-Fukushima? Indeed, public opinion has changed drastically after the accident. Even among those who had been the promoters of development, it is confessed that the overconfidence in safety was incorrect, and the fiction of safety myth came to be told. To act in accord with such public opinion and appealing for a nuclear power-exit is to walk in parallel with an unsettled, ongoing accident, not to live in a world after the end of the accident. Looking at the problem of the utmost urgency, it is impossible to talk about “post-Fukushima”.

This means that modern people continue to struggle in the destiny in which they have been involved since the beginning of the development of nuclear energy. Fukushima is by no means the beginning. Nor is it the first time. To trace back the history of atom catastrophes, Chernobyl in 1986, Three mile Island in 1979, Windscale in 1957, the 5th Fukuryumal in 1954, we arrive at the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of the second world war 1945. While it is uttered that there is a strict line between atomic bombs and nuclear reactors, military use and peaceful one, it is generally accepted today that there is no large difference in the tragedy they bring about. Not

only that, it is an international recognition that states with nuclear reactors are recognized as having potential nuclear weapons, and politicians are also talking about their deterrent effect.

If so, without limiting the point of view to Fukushima and anticipating easily post-Fukushima, it will be necessary to consider from a broad perspective what effects have been exerted on human society and the ecosystem and environment by the development of nuclear energy after the discovery of nuclear material and energy at the end of the 19th century, and what changes have been made to life sentiment. Especially the interest of the Japanese people, it is not possible to overlook the history from Hiroshima to Fukushima. Regarding the large amount of radiation that could not have been possible with conventional weapons, it is a fact that Hiroshima and Nagasaki are attracting attention both inside and outside Japan.

To think about the future of Fukushima, dialogue with the past is unavoidable. And it must be done not only in the field of medicine, but also in the consequences of the nucleus on the human spirit. How far can the human mind maintain itself in the extreme situation of the fundamental destruction of human survival conditions? If philosophies and religions are asked for their true value, what can they do. Can traditional thoughts still throw light on it? Isn't that what we, researchers of philosophy, should ask about?

The atomic bombs, which were used for the first time in human history, have not yet healed people's wounds for more than half a century. What does it mean to the injured people? Is it only the object of despair, remorse and grief? Can the human spirit challenge the overwhelming life-destroying device and still swallow it? What does it mean that such a device appeared in human history? Why did state leaders decide such development, not only destroying military and industrial bases, but also indiscriminately erasing old people and even infants, compelling those who tried to survive to suffer hell. What were their intentions and aims? What responsibility do they take for the results they have brought about? Now that people's wounds haven't healed, we can't say that the outcome is fixed. I suppose that not only the parties involved, but all human beings must continue to question the meaning of this undecided case.

With these questions the author was once led to the writing of Robert Jungk (1931-94) "*Atom Empire*".⁽³⁾ Of course, what is covered in this book is nuclear power plants, not atomic bombs. However, it seems natural that there is no essential difference between the military and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, given the experience of the atomic bombing in Japan. The characteristic of atomic bombs that differ from conventional weapons is that they cause unpredictable and radiation hazards difficult

to control. Even the nuclear power plant has a threat that is not different from the atomic bomb. In addition to such technical problems, Jungk points out the social scientific problem of how these dangerous technology will affect a society and people who live in it, when they are introduced into a state. It further becomes a question about the human being and its spirit. And it even raises questions about the meaning of life. Can philosophy and thought answer such questions? Are traditional ideas prepared to face to it? If we are to envision a philosophy post Fukushima, further nuclear era, we cannot avoid these questions.

II. Homo Atomicus

What Jungk points out and worries about is that the introduction of the huge technology of nuclear power will make society a rigid management one that deprives people of freedom and creativity. The roots of democracy are being eroded, and an “atom empire” with a totalitarian tendency will emerge. Behind such anxiety was Jungk’s fight against the experience of fascism in German, but at the same time there is an insight that the nuclear power plant poses an uncontrollable threat of radioactivity. Due to this threat, no matter how to advocate peaceful use, the nuclear nation is forced to regard its citizens with hostility.

An essential aspect of peaceful use is, namely, how to ensure safety, and how to protect citizens from nuclear reactors and radioactive waste. But this perspective is quickly converted, and the debate turns into a question of how to protect nuclear facilities from the public. Even citizens are considered to be the subject of caution. There are two factors that encourage it.

First, many nuclear accidents are due to human error. As such, every human weakness must be monitored as a cause of mistakes and all compelling human elements that threatens to lead to an accident must be eliminated. The mental and physical eligibility clauses for workers are rigorously defined, and strict prescreening is conducted, as well as constant monitoring and inspection after recruitment. This is exacerbated by the fact that those who dare to engage in dangerous works are mostly socially vulnerable persons.

Second, nuclear power plant can be a target of a more aggressive sabotage. Permanent alerts are put to prevent nuclear terrorism, including the removal of nuclear material. A special unit that is allowed to carry weapons is organized and given authority over the police. And they will try to establish a surveillance system not only for those who approach the facility but also for the general public. The general climate

of society is regulated by it, the freedom and the spirit of criticism are deprived, the person changes into a “homo atomicus” that only obeys the command given and reacts mechanically to them, and a hard society that admits merely such a person.

But in spite of doing so the danger of a nuclear power plant is not eliminated. On the contrary, the constant production of new fissionable materials increases the possibility that peaceful use will be converted into military ones, and to aim for progress and prosperity while knowing the danger must be a bet sitting back-to-back with a risk.

Although various scholarships will be mobilized for this bet, creative research based on free discussion and criticism will be blocked, and science itself will become authoritarian. The hypothesis is not tested through experimentation, the results are only predicted on the basis of theoretically calculated probability. The nuclear facility as a huge technology cannot be tested as a whole and invalidates the unwritten rule of development that it should be operated after being confirmed safe. The operation itself always means an experiment. And research is evaluated and adopted only when it promises success, on the contrary what suggests pessimistic results is concealed with disadvantageous facts. There is no room for a free change of perspective. Researchers are prevented from advancing in face of the “force of facts”, and must consider it as a pressure that affects their research life.

Nuclear development appears to be at the top of science and technology which enables humankind to control nature, but also restrains and controls researchers themselves who are engaged in it. To rule nature with science and technology leads to rule humankind itself. Human science is no exception. It is that which by knowing all aspects of society and human nature, supply tools of controlling the criticism and resistance, and are made to produce “homo atomicus” which works as the dangerous parts demand, as well as the parts of machines that work without will. It is told that a person who is calm, and obedient without losing attention can be trusted.

The development of nuclear power creates such a rigid system of control, and makes the nuclear “empire” appear. It is a tyrannical nation with some technocrats as its roots. However, not only does it never guarantee real security, but the whole becomes fragile and unstable, regardless of internal rigidity. Moreover there is a worry about how much the patience and adaptability of citizens can endure restrictions on freedom and rights, control, and oppression, and the “explosion of social nature” must be feared. Jungk warns that the top of the rigid road leads to the greatest catastrophe.

Jungk characterized this transformation of humankind with the name “homo atomicus”. It closely resembles the phenomenon which Horkheimer called “instrumental reason” in the *“Eclipse of Reason”* (1947)⁽⁴⁾, which is the subjectification,

formalization and instrumentalisation of reason. Horkheimer, a leader of the Frankfurt School who defected to the USA from Germany during World War II, observed American society and analyzed the concept of 'rationality' that underlies industrial society. The traditional reason (ratio) loses the ability to present the purpose and value of survival, and functions only as a tool for accepting and mechanically responding to the instructions given within the organization or mechanism in which individuals are incorporated. He sees in such a reason "die instrumentelle Vernunft" (the instrumental reason), and the holding and formalization of the former reason, whose objective was to tell the order and meaning of the world, "objective reason".

In this place, instead of the autonomy of reason that Kant admitted, a heteronomous behavior pattern becomes normal. However, the heteronomous way of life that abandons freedom involves internal repression. The candid expression of human inner nature is forbidden and the price for it is sought in a sense of unity with race, motherland, faction, tradition. Blind, irrational belief in such things causes public behavior. And it becomes a hotbed for the emergence of a totalitarian society.

Horkheimer's essay, which overlaps with the analysis of fascism, is not limited to simply revealing the roots of American and German societies, but it also includes the modern enlightenment, the fate of all civilizations, and the dialectic of enlightenment ("*Dialektik der Aufklärung*")⁽⁵⁾ was meant to be revealed. Enlightenment, which seeks to control nature by reason, leads to the "revolt of nature" that is suppressed under it.

Horkheimer's insight, published soon after the end of World War II (1947), is considered to have been shared by Jungk, in "*The future has already begun*"(1951).⁽⁶⁾ Horkheimer said at the beginning of "*Eclipse of Reason*", "As technical knowledge expands horizons of human thinking and activity, human autonomy as an individual, the ability to resist enormous mass-manipulation devices, imagination, independent judgment seems to decline." It can be said that Horkheimer had the same worries as Jungk in the perspective of the history of civilization as a whole, not limited to nuclear power development.

III. Tribulation and Guilt

With the introduction of nuclear power, the society becomes rigid and people change into silent robots. Jungk's pessimistic future outlook is backed by a series of nuclear disasters, including that once severe accidents occur, environmental pollution and health hazards are comparable to the results of using nuclear weapons. American psychologist Robert J. Lifton has revealed that it raises questions about the meaning of

human life and death. He says in "*Death in Life*"⁽⁷⁾: In this age of enormous technology "man could invent grotesquely absurd death". "Through his technology, he could render the meaningful totally meaningless. And more, elevate that 'invention' to something in the nature of a potential destiny that stalks us all". In face of such meaningless death, only the extinction of humankind is foreseen. Hiroshima was the "end of the world" in this sense.

If wisdom is still possible in modern times, in response to "unlimited technological violence and absurd death", our need is to go further, to create new psychic and social forms to enable us to reclaim not only our technologies, but our very imaginations in the service of continuing of life. Jungk advocates against the rigid path of the "atomic empire" a "flexible path" that does not destroy the environment. Whereas the rigid path leads to oppression of people, destruction of nature, alienation, chills, isolation and hostility, it is a way to protect and restore the health of citizens, seek freedom and regain trust and solidarity.

Experiences in Hiroshima and Nagasaki have shown that nuclear weapons break human bonds and turn people into disjointed atoms. It's not just breaking the horizontal connections of people, but also cut off the continuity of life that was inherited by his descendants and took the future dimension away. It impaired the time-structure of human existence to live for the future and deformed the human spirit. By conducting a psychoanalysis of the atomic bomb survivors in Hiroshima, Lifton revealed that among them, deep agonism and irresistible sense of guilt resided.⁽⁸⁾ If suffering has to be turned into the consciousness of guilt, not only people turn into disjointed atoms, but also they crack inside, and the atoms themselves are divided internally. Lifton sees the complex internal contradictions and divisions of personality in extreme situations.

From a moral point of view, it can be said that it is a conflict between human morality (moral consciousness) and selfishness. Standing on the border of life and death, "People had to think about how to survive and could not afford to think about other people." The result is that they didn't or couldn't help those whom they should have to. And it later becomes deep regret and settles at the bottom of mind.

It may be said that it is a manifestation of instinctual self-preservation and self-defense instinct, but it can also take the form of conscious or unconscious "psychological exclusion" and paralysis of emotions and sensations, says Lifton. However, such self-defense did not always last long and did not succeed. If the state of paralysis persists, it creates a feeling of prostration and even collapse due to "impact from within". Protecting oneself through psychological exclusion causes shame and sense of guilt. "A-bomb survivors feel guilty about the fact that they only have survived from an early

age, and they feel the need to justify them.” “I was helped, but could not help others. Was saved at the expense of others”, “Because of ignorance of the atomic bomb I treated harshly them and killed.” Consciousness of guilt is expressed as the regret, or the feeling that one’s slight carelessness, choices, and mistakes in the decision caused the death of others. The stronger the connection with the dead, the greater the consciousness.

Such sense of guilt shows the duality that persons have egoism inside, but at the same time are deeply involved with others and cannot live without them. The passage of Sankichi Toge’s poem, “Return Me and Give back those who are connected with Me” is nothing but a strong demand for the restoration of human coexistence.⁽⁹⁾

Although the atomic bomb revealed human selfishness, it was also revealed that man cannot live without ties with others. It means that they are responsible for others. It can be said that when both sides are disjointed and incompatible, blame and sense of guilt arise. However, it is difficult to make both sides compatible. Man cannot live without sacrificing either of them. Man is imperfect and lacking in this sense. In other words, it is an obligatory existence (Schuldigsein). Kitaro Nishida(1870-1945) touches upon this issue, in his essay “*I and You*”.(1932)⁽¹⁰⁾

“It is said that we are considered moral by considering the infinite duty in our finite self as a personality, and religiously we cannot be considered as a personality without a sense of guilt. But why should our personal selves have to be considered as such ? It means that we have at the bottom of ourselves others. Because what is considered to be absolutely else is of great significance of the absolute ‘you’, we must feel infinite responsibility at the bottom of ourselves, and the existence of ourselves must be considered guilty. We feel always a deeper anxiety and fear at the bottom of ourselves, and the clearer our self-consciousness becomes, the guiltier we feel ourselves.”

Human guilt is found in Jewish and Christian scriptures, “*Genesis*”⁽¹¹⁾ in the *Old Testament*. On the sixth day of creation God made Adam and Eve and made them live in the Garden of Eden. God allowed them to rule over everything, but told not to eat the fruits of the “tree of knowledge of good and evil” and the “tree of life” in the center of the garden, because they would die if they eat it.” Here at first man was presented with a prohibition clause and taught the distinction between what may be and must not be done. However, it was under the condition, “You should not die.” According Kant’s classification, it was hypothetical imperative rather than categorical one.⁽¹²⁾ The former loses its validity if the condition clause is not true. The command, “don’t die, don’t eat

gives a loophole “if you won’t reject to die, you may eat”. It was the snake that noticed this point. It apologizes to Eve, “God knows that though you eat it, you will never die, if you eat it, your eyes open and you will know good and evil like God.” Eve touches the fruit coaxed with the words. When she knew that it was delicious, she handed it to Adam.

This well known history is said to be the first sin man has committed against the command of God. Then their eyes became open and they noticed their appearance. When God came to the center of the garden in the evening, Adam hid behind a tree. At the call of God, he replies, “I’m scared because I heard your footsteps and I’m hiding. Because I’m naked.” God finds that they have broken the ban, expels them from the garden of Eden, and together with them punished the snake forever.

Reading back this well known history of the original sin, one may wonder if God, not only man, had not made a failure. He gave the hypothetical imperative, as shown above, and the order based on false assumption. From the craft of the snake, it is by no means an absolute command. There is a loose relationship between God and man, and a relationship that carries the possibility of separation. If God punished man, man could on the contrary have blamed God’s lie. And the rebellious attitude toward God is inherited by the descendants⁽¹³⁾. Cain, the firstborn son of Adam, and Abel, the second, became soil tillers and shepherds. One day, when they tried to offer their harvest to God, God did not look at Cain’s, but only Abel’s.

When Cain became angry and turned his face down, God blamed him and warned that sin was awaiting him. Cain could not overcome his sin and on the way home he shot Abel and buried the body in the soil. When God asked Abel’s whereabouts, he answers, “I don’t know. Am I the guardian of Abel?”

The anger against God’s unexpected discrimination, jealousy to his brother, Abel, and his murderousness can all be attributed to Cain’s self-love and selfishness. And Cain conceals the act in the face of God and pretends to be innocent. This is not different from the attitude that Adam tried to avoid the eyes of God. The Bible seems to explain man’s concealment from God as the greatest sin.

It can happen even to those whom God consider most loyal to him. *The Book of Job*⁽¹⁴⁾ describes how man holds a curse over the world and a grudge against God in terrible hardship. Gazing at faithful servant of God’s pride, Satan proposes to God to expose Job’s self-love and selfishness, and he uses tricks to bring a number of disasters to Job. It hurts his family and property, and his body one after another. He tells however his wife, “We have been happy because of God’s brace. So we would like to accept the unhappiness.” However, when the friends come to visit, he starts to moan, curse his

birth, and even desire death. The world looks like wrecked and overwhelmed by the wicked, and even the eyes of God feel annoying.

He even tries to contest with God over justice. “There was no unlawfulness in my hands, and my prayers were pure, but God gave me to the evildoers and left in the hands of those who oppose God.” But his friend Elif dismisses Job’s fault. That is quenching the thirst with ridicule, instead of water, taking sides with those who do evil, and walking with those who defy God. “Be wary, don’t turn to bad deeds. This is exactly what is being tested by suffering.” Anguish is the crossroads of despair or keeping hope, heading for evil or seeking justice, a test of people. Job is about to be overwhelmed by this test in that he is convinced of his rightness and regards the world as wicked and loses his trust in God.

On the other hand, God calls out from the storm, shows his great power, and makes Job conscious of his powerlessness. As a result, Job finally acknowledges his irreverence and arrogance, and repents himself. God gives in turn a blessing more than ever before. Here, unlike a god who tries to make man obey in exchange for their obsession with life, there is a rigorous pursuit to dig out man’s self-love by thoroughly putting a knife into the human mind. In response to this, man had to respond by complete self-neutralization.

IV. The Life questioned

Job’s desire to destroy may include what Lifton called “a psychic closing off”. Only the world of the dead, where the light and God’s eyes do not reach, is seen as a place of rest, and Job is about to go there. Frankl, the Author of “*Night and Flog*”⁽¹⁵⁾, regards how prisoners in the concentration camp in Auschwitz fall from the first step named “containment shock” to the “insensitivity, numbness and paralysis of emotions”, which should be called internal death. This was the most necessary psychological outfit to protect oneself against the assault. It is a primitive impulsiveness to concentrate only on the direct maintenance of life, and to make anything that does not serve exclusive interests completely worthless, but it is nothing but retrogression of human life. There are many arguers who link Hiroshima and Auschwitz over the human situation in hardship. Jungk also grasped Hiroshima and the development of nuclear energy from the perspective of persecuted Jews.

The environment in which the prisoners of the camps were placed was “that in which human beings are exclusively subject to the genocidal policy and the thorough exploitation of physical labor capacity before its final purpose”. In it, prisoners

experience the devaluation of their personality. It was accompanied by the feeling of loss of the sense of being a subject, lack of the internal freedom. Frankl calls it the “internal collapse phenomenon” and names its mode of experience as “temporary existence”, in which no realistic meaning can be found. Moreover, it is nothing but a temporary state that never ends.

It means that prisoners lose their future and cannot live towards their goals. If there is an internal idea in such a situation, it can be sought only in the past, and the retrospection of the past becomes the inner tendency of the prisoners. However, if it is not accompanied by ethical excitement, it leads to self-abandonment and self-destruction. Frankl wrote that those who couldn't believe in their own future were destroyed. To stop it, it is necessary to strain the prisoners towards something in the future. This is nothing more than making conscious of the <why> of living, the purpose of life. If it was happening in Hiroshima and Nagasaki that the connection between people was cut off, the future of human beings was deprived, the inner life was destroyed, and the emotions of life were exhausted, the problem above also applies to those cases.

Frankl finds a resistance to such situations in political, religious interests, love, artistic and natural experience, and examines the relation between human freedom and the force of the environment. “Is human being nothing but an accidental consequence of its physical characteristics, personality traits, and sociological circumstances?”, “No mental freedom of attitude toward given environmental conditions, no mental freedom of behavior?” He asks. It is questioned as a matter of choice, whether to be forced to perform under the menacing force of death or to take another action. In other words, the question is whether to fall into the power of the environment to deprive men of their most unique one-internal freedom and abandon their freedom and dignity into a mere plaything of external conditions, and to recast them into a typical camp prisoner, or not.

Frankl responds to this question by saying that spiritual freedom, or at least the ego's freedom to take an attitude toward the environment, seemed to exist even under seemingly absolute oppressive conditions. He shows the observation that the last freedom cannot be deprived. The prisoner's psychological response pattern is more than a mere expression of physical, psychological, and social conditions and is the result of internal decisions. In any situation, man can ask what comes out of himself in a spiritual sense. It is to accept hardships as a man and to produce one achievement from them. Recalling Dostoevsky's words, “I was only afraid to fall out of my suffering”, Frankl says : In a correct suffering is an achievement.

Hardship is a chance of providing ethically high-value acts, possibilities and

opportunities, in which it is asked whether or not man produces internal achievements. And until the end of life, the rich possibilities of shaping life meaningfully are open. In this sense, hardship also has a significance. And men are considered to have a mission to shape life meaningfully. It shows the way to escape from the impending situation of indefinite time, the blockage situation of loss of purpose. It is an ask, "What does life expect from me?" rather than frustrating that "I no longer have anything to expect from life." Here we do not ask about the meaning of life, but are experienced rather as being questioned ourselves. Life asks us hourly questions every day and we must respond to them with the right actions. It means taking responsibility. Man is recognized as being responsible and questioned.

V. Life in the absence of God

Then, where does the question come from? In Frankl's thought the existence of others is presupposed. He says that something in life is waiting for him in the future and expecting something. It means that the gaze of others is directed at him. "Someone is looking down at each one of us in this difficult and the last time that is approaching...with asking gaze...one friend, one wife, one living, one dead... and one God." The "other" is not limited to the living, but includes the dead, and God is supposed to be in the innermost part. It is ultimately the religion and God that teach what any sacrifice means.

However, a more serious problem in modern times is that God's death is being declared rather than God's gaze. At the same time, there is a feeling that others have moved away. God's eyes had begun to be annoying to man since Adam hid himself behind the trees and Cain lied about his conduct. The absence of God is due to man's trying to avoid God. And it has resulted in the dumping of man into barren lands and away from living things. Avoiding God means losing others in general. In Kant's words, it is nothing but loss of universality and public spirit due to self-love. Even this is the heart of what has been condemned.

At the top of this history of sin is the declaration of God's death. What is important is that God's death was brought about by man's act. Nietzsche made a madman confess, who ran around the market by hanging down lanterns in the middle of the day.⁽¹⁶⁾ God's killing is allegorized as drinking up the water of the sea, wiping off the entire horizon, and separating the earth from the sun. It is understood that man takes the earth from God's hands, holds all its wealth in desire and control it as a ruler of the whole earth at will. The reaching point of the modern human being who stood up saying "Knowledge

is power”(F.Bacon) ⁽¹⁷⁾is shown here.

However, such human domination of the earth has no goal nor direction. Man has set himself in the void of nothingness and, as Pascal says, stands in an infinite space of silence forever.⁽¹⁸⁾ After the death of the most sacred and powerful being the world has worshipped, all value systems collapse. Man no longer knows how to comfort himself in a lonely void, a cold and deep night. He has no choice but to endure what he has done and to accept the consequences. To be able to do that, man must transform himself and become God. He must go beyond himself and become “superhuman”.

Following “*Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*“ Nietzsche wrote „*Also sprach Zarathustra*“ (1883-5)⁽¹⁹⁾. In it, he introduces the practitioner of the killing of God as the “ugliest man” and makes confess the motive of the act. It was revenge and retaliation on God’s persistent watch. Exactly the rejection of God’s eyes, that was the motive of this act. It has something to do with Job’s pity. But, instead of Job’s desire to die, this man slaughtered God. However, it was an act that neither comforts nor sympathies could be hoped for. “He(God) saw everything, he saw the bottom of man. He saw all the hidden insults and ugliness of man. His sympathy was shameless. He slipped into every corner of my dirty heart. I could not make alive this most curious person, this overly thick-faced, overly sympathetic person.” This confession tells that the killing was done in order to conceal human insult and ugliness. This makes the murderer “the ugliest man”. No one can comfort his supreme ugliness, and no one can sympathize with his great deeds. Tsarathustra recognizes human loneliness and pity, ugliness and panting, hidden shame, self-love and self-contempt.

However, Tsarathustra says that this self-derogation is one of the heights. Because it makes man more than good. “Human beings have to be overcome, no matter what.” It means that there is a destiny that we must still live in a godless era.

From this point it can be seen that overcoming oneself is the first and foremost way of life. Life is a creative activity that aims to produce something higher. It is inseparable from the constant measurement and evaluation of things. Man is an evaluator and a source of value. Of course, there is a conflict and a struggle between values. Life aims to heighten with this conflict as the driving force. What it takes is courage. Above all, it is necessary to overcome the most human. Man has to conquer pain, dizziness in front of the abyss, sympathy for distress, and even death. Seeing is seeing the abyss and is the source of dizziness, distress and compassion. In order to conquer these things he must conquer the sight and even the senses.

Beyond that, the “original self” is found. That is what does see, hear and ask, compare, suppress, occupy, destroy and rule. The goal must be this true self. To find it is to draw

a circle and return to hometown. Then all actions are perceived as manifestations of it. And the idea of accident disappears, and it can be said that everything that happens to me is my own work and my own. There is a state that can be called freedom. One must have a high sense of self-love in order to retain this freedom and self. That is how the creation is done. The creator is the one who establishes the purpose of man and gives the earth meaning and future. Only by this one will good and evil be created.

For this one, the past is no longer a fetter. Because he only wanted it with pure creative will. It involves ingesting and saving the past on its entirety. “Saving those which have passed in the human being, and transforming all “was” into “I wanted it”—this is the first time that deserves the name of salvation.” Tsarathustra says, “I have made and am making the will say: ‘But what in the past so was, I wanted and will want that they will be from now on so’—I taught them this in the name of saving”. It’s also about throwing the past into the future. “The will to create says, I still want, and will always want to be.”

Thereby time is filled with repetitions of the same thing. The idea of eternal recurrence is established there. It is eternal transit, life and death, destruction and reconstruction, separation and reunion. Every time, every point is the same, the beginning and the center. The same goes on forever.

If the soul gets the idea of this eternal recurrence, it is no longer biased towards anything, it can go back and forth between the opposite poles without being trapped. “A soul that has the widest area within itself and can run, hesitate, and wander, the longest of all. A soul is most inevitable, however jumps into chance with the pleasure of playing. — A soul that has existence, but sneaks into the stream of generation. — A soul that possesses wealth and wants to jump into the desire and hope. — A soul that escapes from itself, but return to itself after describing the largest arc. — A soul that loves itself most, but in which everything flows in and out, and the low tide and high tide repeat. This highest soul harbor even the worst parasites”, so Tsarathustra says.

For those who affirm all, none of the opposition is dispensable. Everything is connected by chains, threads and love. In this way, Nietzsche transcends all conflicts while gazing at the tragic nature of life through the words of Tsarathustra, but in the meanwhile opens up the ground of the souls playing. It has something to do with Hegel’s dialectic and the idea of the “Geist”. Nietzsche affirmed the world not only with happiness, but also with pain and love. He showed that such love for the world is the way of life in the time without God. It may be said that this love is no longer human love but superman’s-godly one. In addition, some people may feel uncomfortable there. However, against the pessimism, as Lifton said, “I can no longer expect to survive the

disaster of an endlessly destructive weapon and gain the wisdom of survivors”, in order to serve the survival of life, we must try to create a new form of spirit and a new form of society that allows us to reclaim not only technology but also imagination itself, then confronting Nietzsche’s “best soul” is certainly inevitable.

VI. Pioneering a greatest spirit in Asian culture

In Asian cultures, the strong idea of the only one God as in Judaism and Christianity is rare. Therefore, the nihilism, which declares the death of God, cannot be understood with severeness. When Zen Buddhism preaches “nothingness”, Nihilism is pointed out by different cultures. However, it is not without the equivalent of Christian love and Nietzsche’s love for the world. Above all, the oriental people have fostered a vast, endless heart that oscillates between the greatest opposition poles and does not lose its self.

Tang’s Zen priest Sosan Kanchi(?~606) explained that „The supreme way is not so difficult. Just dislikes selection.” We must not look at things in an oppositional and discriminatory way with obstinacy and greed, and avoid one-sided bias. “Without hatred and preference, everything appears clear and clear” (If you don’t choose by taste, you can clearly see everything), “With a least difference, things are so far from each other as sky and earth” (If there is a slightest discrimination, the top and bottom are so far).⁽²⁰⁾ However to reject the view of discrimination does not mean to stand indiscriminately without any distinction, or in a transcendent position without or in opposition to confrontation. 1 precedes 2 and 2 is by 1. But it is not correct to esteem 1 as absolute and overlook 2, to take only 1 and throw away 2. “Don’t protect one.” There is no substance in 1, it is the same as 2. “All include All.” 1 includes 2, and it is 1 by including all.

It is the same concept that Hegel described as “true infinity” in contrast to “inferior infinity”.⁽²¹⁾ It can be said that it is recommended to have an attitude of seeing and accepting all things evenly, while having a relationship with them. As a result, the spirit becomes a vast one that surrounds the 3,000 worlds. Obaku Giun(?~856) explained in “*Denshin Hoyō*”⁽²²⁾ : “Mount, River and Earth, Sun, Moon and Stars, all are not outside the spirit. Three thousand worlds are all in your Self.” (Where outside the spirit are many things?)

Japanese monk Myōan Eisai(1141~1215) taught about “The spirit of the greatness”. “the height of heaven cannot be grasped. Nevertheless the spirit can go above it. The thickness of the earth cannot be measured. Nevertheless the spirit can go below it. The

light of Sun and Moon cannot be exceeded. Nevertheless the spirit can go above it. The enormous world cannot be reached. Nevertheless the spirit can go outside it.”(*Kozen Gokokuron*)⁽²³⁾

It is recommended to cultivate such a spirit. Dogen said: “To learn the teaching of Buddha is to learn Self.”(*Shobogenzo*)⁽²⁴⁾ However, he says, “To learn Self is to forget it.” It is said that when you forget egocentricity and abandon your selfishness and become innocent, all things in the world come into and illuminate you. “If you surrender yourself, you will be proved by all things. To be proved by all things, means to make the body and mind of yourself and others fall off. In this way to prove oneself by all laws is said to be enlightenment.

But enlightenment does not mean a mere lack of delusion in life. “While all things are teachings of Buddha, there are enlightenment, training, death, Buddha and sentient beings”. However, it is also said that “when the whole things are not in me, there is no delusion, no harm, no Buddha, no sentient beings, no life, no death”. The meaning of the antinomy of ‘life and death’ and ‘no life nor death’ is that there is a vast spirit beyond the conflict, while embracing the conflict. Moreover, it does not mean to cut down the emotions and be ruthless. “Flowers fall sorrowfully, and grasses appear disgusting”. What is born there, will be mercy. When we leave conflicts and discrimination and see things as they are, mercy and compassion for them emerge. And the practice based on it begins.

In this teaching there seems to be an opportunity to turn our eyes to the west. Paul, a fervent Christian persecutor, was hit by the light of the sky when he went to Damascus to attack the hideout of the believers, and fell blind and heard Christ’s voice in the darkness.⁽²⁵⁾ He later confessed : “It is no longer I that is alive, but Christ liveth in me.”⁽²⁶⁾ and, said also: “We were buried therefore with him(Christ) through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.”⁽²⁷⁾ I wonder if this idea of “living and dying” overlaps with Dogen’s teaching, which reaches the state of “being able to be proved by all things” through “denying yourself” i.e. my death. Regardless of whether or not one assumes a transcendent God, there seems to be a water vein that runs through the east-west thoughts. In Nietzsche’s superman, love for the world was still possible even in the absence of God. It could be said that it suggests a way to overcome the critical situation in the nuclear age, where human ties are broken and individual souls are divided.

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