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Toward an Art of Poetics and Micropolitics for Reconciliation Studies [Series of Philosophical Psychology of Reconciliation, Part II]¹⁾

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Abstract

This paper is the second (Part II) of a series comprising two parts. In this series, the author aims to examine how to address the challenges associated with memory and historical cognition through the lens of philosophical anthropology or philosophical psychology. Furthermore, I will evaluate whether such research can contribute to the vision of a new academic field, “reconciliation studies.” Emphasis is placed on interdisciplinary approaches in the humanities and social sciences. This will involve reinterpretation of Western classical philosophical theories of memory, introduction of recent findings in psychopathology, and decoding problematic constructs on memory present in contemporary representational culture such as literature, film, manga, and anime.

This series is part of a broader attempt to create a new academic field called “reconciliation studies” that seeks to reconnect relationships among the peoples of countries divided by the imperialist wars of the twentieth century, building toward future coexistence²⁾. In the first part (Part I), titled “On the ‘I’ as a Vessel of Memories or the ‘I’ as Ideational Representative (Vorstellungsrepräsentanz): A treatise of memory, autism, and nation” (Nojiri 2024a, published in *Osaka Human Sciences*, Vol. 10), drawing on the theory of sign, memory, and imagination in G. W. F. Hegel and Jacques Derrida, recent research on autism spectrum disorder, Ian Hacking’s essay on the history of science with regard to identity and memory, and Maurice Halbwachs’ theory of collective memory, I argued that our *mind* fulfills the function of forming our identity while facilitating resonance between memory and empathy. I then discussed the formation of a pseudo *national memory space* in the social space of postwar Japan.

In this second part, I continue my discussion from the “historical subject debate” of the 1990s, which occurred when the people’s memory space interfered with globalization. Then,

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via the theories of Louis Althusser, Fredric Jameson, Slavoj Žižek and others on representation and structure, I discusses the figure of Antigone in Lacan in the light of the issue of nationalism, and applies the ethics of psychoanalysis: “to traverse the fantasy,” and taking inspiration from Bakhtin’s dialogism and the modern psychotherapeutic technique of “Open Dialogue,” I approaches the issue of reconciliation in East Asia. In the development of the argument, cultural materials will be discussed, including “Demon Slayer,” “Star wars: The Rise of Skywalker,” “Pacific Rim,” “Drive My Car,” and even the popularity of transnational BL (boys’ love) works in Asia. Through this philosophical adventure, this paper seeks to open up theoretical possibilities for techniques that promote reconciliation between peoples and move towards the future in the era of globalization.

Key words: Althusser; collective memory; Lacan; Norihiro Kato; open dialogue; reconciliation studies; traversing the fantasy

6. THE DEBATE ON THE HISTORICAL SUBJECT ³⁾

Halbwachs' theory of collective memory, which I discussed in the first part, pointed to the embodied nature of memory (Halbwachs 1989, 2018), revealing the structure of collective memory and its subsumption by the nation state. Once the vectors of memory and imagination aggregated by the state lose their support and are released from their symbolic castration, the returned imagination is furnished and lodges within the body, whereafter it brings about a multiplicity of consciousness. This sheds new light on the problem awareness of persons of letters in postwar Japan as the anguish suffered by the heroic spirit when the memory and imagination once concentrated in the state are removed from the framework of that aggregation device. It is in this postwar structure that Fukuda, a conservative polemicist known for his translations of *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone*, spoke of human beings as dramatic beings (Fukuda 1960). As long as the state imposed restrictions, a heroic spirit that could rebel against the postwar state from the prewar earth could be possessed. However, once the state's restrictions were loosened, such heroism was no longer possible. It was against this background that the publication of Norihiro Kato's *After the Defeat* triggered the "historical subject debate" in the 1990s.

Norihiro Kato's *After the Defeat*, which he began writing in 1994, captures the "distortion", from the perspective of the representational culture of literature, that arose as a result of postwar Japanese society's inability to maintain a consistent relationship with its two histories—namely, Japan's own history and world history—because of its experience of "defeat" (Kato 2015). The debate flared up when Kato started discussing Japan's postwar literature, once again evoking the issue of Japan's historical perception and responsibilities in East Asia in the postwar period. Kato argued that Japan lacks subjects—that is, "Japanese people"—willing to apologize to the victims of the country's aggression and colonial rule, and that in order to establish such subjects, the Japanese people first need to mourn the Japanese victims of the war. While *After the Defeat* elucidates the problem of historical perception and reconciliation as a problem for the subjectivity that perceives history, the other important fact that Kato did it in the field of literary criticism is often overlooked. Indeed, Kato reinterpreted the wellspring of Japanese postwar literature as the conflict between two historical imaginations: the nationalistic imagination that considers the mourning the war dead in one's own country, and the course of events in the Second World War and development of postwar society based on their understanding as the basis of Japanese identity on the one hand, and the internationalist imagination that advances the need for Japanese people to reflect on and apologize for Japan's war of aggression against other countries on the other. Kato's problem awareness arose from his own discomfort as a literary figure with the statements made by other literary scholars and critics regarding the Gulf War ("Statement by Literature Against the Gulf War," 1991). Nonetheless, his critique attracted the attention of many intellectuals as it raised the issue of historical perception, setting the stage for ideological and political debate. Partly because the genre of "criticism" is a point of contact between contemporary philosophy, known as "thought" in Japan, and social criticism, *After the Defeat* ignited a fiery debate in the intellectual world

about the nature of literature, thought, and historical perception, as well as Japan's ethical stance toward other countries.

Rereading *After the Defeat* and the essays of Tetsuya Takahashi (Takahashi 2005), a member of the Derridean left known as the most outspoken opponent of Norihiro Kato at the time, from today's perspective more than three decades after the debate began, it emerges that the two scholars were not really in conflict with each other, especially in respect to the conclusions they were trying to reach. Both works attempted to explore paths to a future ethics that could neutralize and overcome the arising phenomena of nationalistic feelings, representations, and ideas by grasping the structure of forging public relationships with others of the past, that is, the dead. Of course, there were differences in their stances, methods, and narratives, with varied opinions on the importance of these differences. Norihiro Kato and Tetsuya Takahashi have discussed these differences themselves. Tatsuru Uchida among others have also provided their own commentary (Uchida 2003). I do not go into details here, but in view of the fact that they reached the same conclusion, we can argue that a "theorem" has already been established. In particular, Kato asserted that "World War II, that world war, destroyed this vessel of communality. From now on, grief will not unite us. When we grieve, we act divisively. As long as we stand in communality, we will not be without division. We have been given a predicament by this defeat that we cannot move on from unless we find another answer. However, our experiences as a defeated nation in World War II possesses a worldliness in the paradox of this communality" (Kato 2015: 294–295). This insight can be recognized as a brilliant idea that opens up worldliness from literature. It is here that the seed of "hope" for universalizing Japanese history and opening up the next generation to the world was sown. However, this theorem still lacked "proof."

Why was Norihiro Kato unable to persuade Tetsuya Takahashi back then? Hiroki Azuma, a member of the baby boomer junior generation, has also raised this question (Azuma 2011). Arguably, it was because Kato's talent and style were too "literary." Kato's ability to grasp the structural "distortion" of Japanese postwar society from a literary perspective made him an excellent literary critic. He had an intuitive grasp of the underlying structure of Japanese postwar society that enabled both terms of the ideological conflict; the left and the right. Kato's weakness lay in his inability to adequately reinforce this with theory, namely with the appropriate philosophical tools. Although Kato made some recourse, albeit minor, to Husserl's phenomenology, it failed to provide a route to the theory of memory and imagination that we developed here and even did little to support his own intuition. It only barely reached a paradoxical expression of immanence as transcendence. In other words, Kato's work was too "literary" insofar as it lacked philosophical tools. It was also too "literary" in the sense that it failed to address the representation of popular cultures, which swept through Japanese society after the 1970s and replaced literature to some extent. His subject was pure literature, with his scope limited to the likes of Yasuo Tanaka and Haruki Murakami at most (although he did have an affinity for popcultures, including discussions on Godzilla and the manga *Parasyte*). Among philosophers, Kato's greatest opponent was Tetsuya Takahashi (Derridean left), his biggest supporter was Tatsuru Uchida (Levinasian right), while Hiroki Azuma (a Derridean nerd) was more neutral in his commentary. Regardless, none

of these critics paid much attention to the issues of popular cultural imagination and ethics (internationalism/nationalism) since the 1970s from the perspectives of historical perception, memory, and empathy⁴).

Taken together, Jacques Lacan's ethics of the imaginary and Halbwachs' theory of collective memory, we see it is the task of opening the self to the reconciliation of one's inner otherness, which always permeates the self in the intimate sphere and enables me to be me, and the external other, that brings the problem. Here is the twisted Möbius strip of the union of the inner and the external otherness. Where the postwar right cherished the former (inner otherness), the postwar left valued the latter (external other). Although the theory of external otherness is principally correct in terms of ethics, it implicitly encourages change in response to external pressures. Tetsuya Takahashi used Derridean philosophy to make the responsibility to respond to others the basis of universal ethics, arguing that we should always retain and never forget our shame over the "disgraceful memories" of what Japan did to other Asian countries during the war. Paradoxically, this discourse of Takahashi, a Derridean leftist, is the logic that swims with the trend of hyper-globalization. According to Kato's logic, on the other hand, it is necessary to form oneself before facing the others of other Asian countries. However, Takahashi argued that the Japanese people, the aggressors, are not allowed to form themselves in their own way before turning to others, and have no choice but establish their subjectivity by responding to the calls of others (being questioned, judged, and condemned). In this respect, he argued that our disgraceful memories should not be overwritten by the politics of oblivion in order to rebuild the identity of the Japanese people. This is what Norihiro Kato and Tatsuru Uchida were forced to argue against in responding to Tetsuya Takahashi's internationalism and theoretical universalism, which they called "(left-wing) insensitivity" (Kato 2015: 89)⁵ and "a position that ethically looks down on everyone in the world" (Tatsuru Uchida's commentary, Kato 2015: 369). Tatsuru Uchida asserted that "the desire to seek fundamental righteousness will eventually encounter the 'evil' that is secreted by the very existence of the self. When that happens, Takahashi is probably prepared to solemnly accept the 'conclusion' that 'if my existence is evil, I will have to perish'" (Tatsuru Uchida's commentary, Kato 2015: 369–370). Citing a sense of physical rejection and biological fear, Uchida contended that this manifestation of ethics based on such universal principles was impossible to accept. What "physical" and "biological" sensations was Uchida referring to here? Neither Kato nor Uchida has provided a theoretical explanation. We can think of it as belonging to the realm of collective memory that Halbwachs advocated in opposing to the nation-state⁶.

Halbwachs elucidated the mechanisms for the accumulation of collective memories in the space of family life in a literary way. Although he did not delve into the question of the embodiment of the imaginary in the body, it goes without saying that the body is the basis of our daily actions and activities. As the body comprises the "traces" that we perceive most frequently, nearly constantly, it is our most direct and primary medium of memory. One of the ways in which Kono's *In This Corner of the World* excels as a device for the reconstruction of collective memory is its skillful use of the mechanism of desire transfer based on physicality through detailed depictions of the main character's daily life and

domestic work (Kono 2008–9). Of course, life in modern Japan is drastically different from that during the war nearly 80 years ago. Nonetheless, Suzu’s daily routines, household chores, and tools—from the way she uses kitchen knives and cutting boards, cooks rice, grills fish, and boils vegetables, to her activities of sewing and handicrafts with a needle and thread, writing letters, drawing, and taking a bath—are still a part of daily life in modern Japan. At least, the works are painted in such a way as to make the viewer feel that way. Perhaps this work resonated with so many readers because it is structured in such a way that people feel that “surprisingly, there are many aspects of life in that long-gone prewar period that we can still sympathize with.” Times may change, but in this corner of the world, the memories left by our grandparents and great-grandparents still linger and are waiting to be inherited. Even if the reader has not performed these physical actions themselves, they can recall the actions of their parents or grandparents in their family life, discovering within themselves the DNA of the ethnic culture that lives on through them and constructing a fantasy of the inheritance of memories⁷⁾. At the same time, when it is depicted in a culture of representation where it is consumed as a commodity, we can *become conscious* of this mechanism.

As Norihiro Kato noted, literature is a point of contact between the innerness of the individual and history. The literary imagination is a point of contact between the identity of the individual and the identity of the nation, as illustrated by the development and subsequent contentiousness of essays such as *After the Defeat*. We have within each of us Polynices and Antigone. On the one hand, Polynices responds to the historical change, the demise of his father—that is, the call from the other in the real—by reestablishing the political and economic symbolic order. On the other hand, Antigone does not overlook the dialogical imagination with the intimate other that already permeates the “I” as an element that enables self-identification in the tectonic deformation and physical transformation that overwhelms the subject amid historical change. As economic development continued under a structure of subordination to the United States, these two kinds of responses to the other were appeased by the collective false consciousness/symptomatic structure of postwar nationalism, creating a temporal vector representation of hope for the future. While Kato called this a distortion, twentieth-century state capitalism was a structure for economic development that used such distortions to power itself. Once the rising process of the organic composition of capital acquired by this method becomes saturated, the imagination of the individual subject departs from the structure, ceases to contribute to the social and historical imaginary, and returns to the body of the individual. The returned imagination is channeled into daydreams, and salvaged by the cultural industry and represented as a popculture product. In this way, society as a whole enters a *general dissociative state* or adaptive dissociative state⁸⁾. What Halbwachs was trying to conceive of as “collective memory” was a “collectivity” of memories rooted in the old intimate spheres of family, region, occupation, and class. He was concerned that the new form of national life created by the formation of the nation-state would act to destroy this. In this paper series, I previously proposed that the collective action of memory in the intimate sphere, based on the past feudal institutions that Halbwachs regretted, should be called “collective memory A,” while the memory space of the late nation-state, dispelled from the feudal hierarchy, should be called “collective memory

B” (Nojiri 2024a). The subject, which has adapted and developed to collective memory B (super-collective memory), witnesses the shaking and collapse of the structure that supported its composition. Here, the collective memory A that needs to return has already lost its footing. This can be considered the historical background of the rise of popcultures in Japanese society since the 1970s. Immediately after the war, when the symbolic emperor system, a device for aggregating the imaginary, and the constitution that supported it developed under the shadow of the United States, sensitive literary persons perceived this precursor as a postwar shock. However, Kato focused on, for example, Osamu Dazai’s attitude of trying to depict only things that did not change and the unchanging self during and after the war. For instance, Dazai saw “literature” as something that should extract what is in the self, unmoved by the ideas of others, such as Marxism. In *No Longer Human*, Yozo thinks, “Aren’t you society?,” in response to the words of an acquaintance who preaches to him in the name of “society,” saying “If you do that, society will not forgive you.” Arguably, Dazai’s “literature” was about distancing oneself from the distortions of the neurotic (in Lacanian view, all subjects who are not schizophrenic are neurotics) that unconsciously intersects the two others, the big Other and the small other. Dazai’s spirit might have not been one that was puzzled by the speed and ease with which the distorted structure was severed and reattached at the end of war, that is, the dismantling and reconstruction of the national “*object-a-structure*,”⁹⁾ and experienced dissociation for the first time there (Nojiri 2024a).

What I am trying to show here is a vision of how the issues of hope, historical perception, reconciliation, and representational culture in Japanese postwar society were connected in this way. Although Kato’s *After the Defeat* had the potential to penetrate through to this historical background, it was unsuccessful. If we universalize Kato’s theory of literature as a theory of representational culture, it becomes possible to use an analytical perspective captured by Fredric Jameson’s assertion that “symbolism in cultural works is an imaginative resolution of the irresolvable contradictions that we experience at the level of the real (history)” (Jameson 2010)¹⁰⁾. If we dig deeply enough, we can connect the cultural imagination to social and historical imagination, revealing a path linking issues of “reconciliation” to hope for the future.

7. THE LIMITS OF CRITIQUE

Drawing on Adorno, Slavoj Žižek advocated reading the most spiritually advanced theoretical products of a culture of a certain era together with the mundane, prosaic, and popular cultural products generated by the same culture in that era, making full use of Jacques Lacan’s psychoanalytic thought to construct a basic theory of representational culture using popular cinema as material (Žižek 1995). While inheriting Adorno/Horkheimer’s theory of culture industry, Jameson’s *The Political Unconscious* (Jameson 2010) combines the theories of the relationship between reality, imagination, and representation developed by Lacan and Louis Althusser with the structural semantics of Greimas to construct a basic theory of representational culture using novels (from Balzac to Kim Stanley Robinson) as material. Žižek’s theory is an upgraded version of Jameson’s theory by adopting the perspective of late Lacanian



Koyoharu Gotouge
Demon Slayer
2020

thought, which moved from “psychoanalytic ethics” to “sinthome theory.” In short, since the latter half of the nineteenth century, when psychoanalysis was born, all cultural representations created by human beings have become “symptoms” created by the psychopathology of “humans.” From this point of view, there is no distinction between high and low culture. On the contrary, it is in vulgar popular culture that one can apply the best theories and derive the truth of “desire,” with such pursuit no longer limited to cultural or literary theory. Reviewing the evolution of literary criticism theory in the twentieth century based on its influence on contemporary thought, Terry Eagleton argued that criticism deals with the problem of the social structure and expression in its subjects and that literary criticism and social theory can no longer be distinguished in modern times, especially since the emergence of structuralism and psychoanalytic criticism (Eagleton 2014).

The ethical message implied by contemporary critical and social theory can be understood as follows: representation is the only way to structure; therefore, we need to make the representations to be represented, analyze the self that consumes it, and discuss it with one another. Here, based on the insights drawn from this paper’s earlier discussions, *we can add our memories to representation*. Simply put, memory is not a substantial thing, but when it forms, that is an act of representation. It is what our mental mechanisms constitute in a particular sociohistorical structure. At the same time, its composition constitutes the contents of our ego. The process is unconscious and cannot be approached directly. This is why it is the foundation of identity, which is so important to us. The only clue we have to understand

this structure, that is, for us to understand our identity, is the “representation” that we create. According to Stuart Hall, representations are encoded by the creator and decoded by the receiver (Hall 1980). The style of individual decoding expresses forms of individual desire, but the paradigm of the encoding/decoding relationship in works that enjoy social popularity can also be read as that society’s specific type of collective desire.

To illustrate this, let us consider a recent example from popular culture. *Demon Slayer* (Gotouge 2016–20 [1–23]) became a massive hit in Japanese society the year that the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the globe. The structure of this work centers on the story of flesh-and-blood humans battling to destroy “demons (*Oni*),” otherworldly beings who possess abilities superior to those of humans and boast almost eternal individual lifespans under certain conditions (e.g., not being exposed to sunlight). Although the humans try to improve their ability to fight the demons through rigorous training, they remain overwhelmingly fragile and weak compared with the demons. In the end, the humans defeat the demon leader Muzan Kibutsuji, arguably a nearly perfect life form who has lived for more than a millennium. The weak and fragile humans drew strength from their feelings for their parents, children, siblings, and friends who had been killed by demons. Interestingly, the protagonist’s final weapon was “culture” in the form of dance passed down from his ancestors and “memories” inherited from his ancestors. The main character, Tanjiro Kamado, shouts “I will never forgive you!” to the absolute other, the demon Muzan Kibutsuji (Gotouge 2016–20 [2]). Kagaya Ubuyashiki, the leader of the Demon Slayer Corps (*Kisatsu-tai*), that is, the protagonist and his friends, says to the demon, “Eternity is human sentiment, and it is human sentiment that is eternal and immortal,” declaring the victory of humans as inheritors of memories and feelings (Gotouge 2016–20 [16]). Depicted here is the story of the triumph of the “collective memory” of mortal humans over an ultimate creature who is individually immortal.

Released in October 2020, *Demon Slayer: Kimetsu no Yaiba—The Movie: Mugen Train* was astonishingly popular with cinema goers. Indeed, by December 2020, it had surpassed the record set by *Spirited Away* to become the number one grossing film of all time in Japan. As many critics have pointed out, *Demon Slayer* is hardly innovative in terms of narrative structure or technique. It is easy to read, entertaining, and well structured, but lacks any novelty. That it is not an expression of esoteric artistry is partly why it became a national hit. As such, what we should pay attention to is why this work became a hit in Japanese society when it did. Here, it is worth highlighting the sense of mission of having to fight against demons as the Other belonging to a heterogenous ecology (although all demons were once human), the message that there is something to protect by fighting demons, the argument that the culture and memories we have inherited from our ancestors are our foundation and greatest weapon, and reclamation of intimate and peaceful daily life with our family and friends. When this kind of narrative representation becomes a hit in contemporary Japan, what kind of political unconscious is it resonating with in the audience? If it also becomes a big hit in South Korea, what opportunities does this synchronicity of desire open up for us? (online articles 7, 8)

Why is representation considered the *only* way to structure? For Lacan, the real (existence) and the symbolic (meaning) are inherently disconnected, making it impossible to find a linear and direct causal

relationship between them. To bridge this disconnect, the human mind creates images through the workings of the imaginary and then shares them via crossover. This is the mechanism that Lacan interpreted as “alienation” and “separation.” However, for Marx, once this interaction between the real, symbolic, and imaginary is formed, it gives rise to the real that is unique to human beings: that is, a structure of dynamic history. This dynamic historical structure is called capitalism. The workings of the imaginary (the image and its crossovers) are necessary for the creation of “commodities” that merge matter and ideas, but the “commodities” eventually come to define the workings of the human imaginary, after which capitalism becomes an autonomous system that expands and reproduces itself while generating its own operating conditions. At this stage of capitalism’s embrace of the imaginary, a penetrating late-capitalist cultural theory is completed, in which cultural representation is nothing more than a secretion produced by system operation for survival (Jameson 1991). At the same time, however, Jameson argues that since the workings of the imaginary function to resolve the contradictions between the real and the symbolic as being complex terms, we can see by dissecting them what kind of relationship we are experiencing between the productive forces (the real) and the relations of production (the symbolic): that is, changes in the mode of production. Jameson optimistically pursued a new mode of existence that human civilization might be achieving potentially in the dimension of the real, despite its many contradictions, in representations of utopia in science fiction literature. In contrast, Žižek pessimistically argued that the idea of democracy is nothing more than an image created by capital movements as a condition of its own operation, proposing a psychopathological view of civilization that relativizes political ideals and cultural representations side by side. Both require us to pass through the perception that such ideas as freedom, equality, and democracy are the products of the imaginary, created by the workings of the unconscious (the real and the symbolic). Jameson’s and Žižek’s modern critical and social theories thus provide reconciliation studies with suggestions from both psychoanalysis and civilization theory.

However, Jameson’s and Žižek’s critical theories share a common limitation, one I tentatively refer to it as the “Althusserian cage.” Norihiro Kato’s critique does not appear to have overcome this limitation either. In his cultural studies research, Stuart Hall used the concept of encoding/decoding to give the consumption of produced goods by individual subjects a positive creative significance. Consumers stagger the producer’s code by interpreting and using the products in their own ways (Hall 1980). In terms of contemporary representational culture, scenes of fan activities and fan fiction (fanfics) can be cited as examples. This aspect is missing from the theory of Jameson, Žižek, and Kato. Production is always the work of talented and authoritative creators who have a deep and intuitive grasp of the contradictions of social structures and create works in response to the public’s desire for imaginative solutions, while critics decipher this relationship, and so on. Both Jameson and Žižek claimed to analyze popular culture. However, whether science fiction literature or movies, their focus remained on works that can be gauged as so-called classical, literary and artistic works, with little to no attention to popculture works, such as Japanese manga and anime, let alone adjacent fan activities and derivative works. While this is understandable as an approach to achieve analytical universality, as long as we

follow this pattern, all we can do is discuss great works and decipher their correspondence to the social structure—trapping us within the sphere of the special activity of literary criticism.

Jameson was influenced by Louis Althusser's concept of *Überdeterminierung* (sur-determination/overdetermination), as was Žižek¹¹⁾. This concept was originally borrowed from Freud to describe the relative independence of the superstructure from the substructure. When Freud asserted that the symptoms of hysteria are determined in multiple layers, he meant that past experience itself is not a trauma, but acts as a trauma when it is revived as a memory after an individual has become sexually mature. In other words, the specific etiology of the past plays a role as an etiology only when it is linked to present-day co-etiology. Regarding this concept of posteriority (*Nachträglichkeit*), the direction of posterior meaning was reversed after the abandonment of seduction theory and the writing of *The Interpretation of Dreams*. In other words, it went from meaning that, although there existed a causal experience itself, its meaning is overwritten in the structure of the present experience, to meaning that the past cause is constituted from the necessity of the present structure. Consequently, "Freud shifted the center of gravity of his etiological theory *from the experience itself to the subjective response to the experience*" (Kataoka 2020: 666). Based on this way of thinking, Freud after *The Interpretation of Dreams* and Althusser tried to advocate the relative independence/autonomy of the subject from the structure. However, both treated the relationship between the symbolic and the real in the singular form. This also leads that the functioning of the imaginary is singular, suggesting that the workings of the imaginary cannot successfully achieve "separation" from the symbolic. In other words, imagination is always a reflection of the symbolic order. Even if the subject is constituted by the structure and the structure by the subject, this cycle creates a cage of mirror-image relations by logical compression, such that the subject confined in this cage cannot act as an individual subject. When the subject realizes that everything they believe or do is an ideological effect to reproduce the mode of production, they will likely become immobilized—the realization rendering them cynical at best, and schizophrenic at worst. According to Eagleton, Althusser rethought the concept of ideology by replacing it with Lacan's idea of "the imaginary," but with a serious omission in his understanding of Lacan (Eagleton 2014 [vol. 2]: 107, 108). Althusser viewed the relationship between society as a whole and the individual subject as a mirror image. This is why there is ultimately no room in Althusser's theory for the ideological struggle between multiple realities. Eagleton's point is valid, as Althusser himself used the expression "mirror-recognition" of the grand Sujet and the individuals (Althusser 2010 [vol. 2]: 242, 245). More precisely, Althusser saw the functioning of the imaginary in the singular form, making the "separation" via a mirror relationship with the small other (the personal other) impossible, prompting the entering into a mirror relationship with the big Other (society). If there is neuroticism (adaptive dissociation) and schizophrenia (non-adaptive dissociation) in the double binds as well, this would likely trap the individual subject in the latter double bind.

Essentially, Althusser sought to criticize Hegel's framework of expressive causality and unilinear time through the concept of "overdetermination"¹²⁾. Here, the key point is that the subject does not know the cause/motive/purpose of the phenomenon or representation that it generates or experiences. The

subject only ever has the “result.” The subject plays with the representation without knowing why it represents the world the way it does, or why they prefer such a representation of the world. According to Jameson, representation is an imaginative solution to the irresolvable contradictions that the subject experiences at the level of the real. In this respect, Jameson employed Lacanian terminology, with “the real” designated as the sociohistorical and physiological foundation in which the individual is rooted, which corresponds to Althusser’s “economic instance” as the “last instance” (Nojiri 2019). The law of the “rise of the organic composition of capital,” which Marx thematically depicted in *Capital*, forces the quantitative and qualitative transformation of the direct labor of individual subjects as the rise of the accumulation of productive forces through science and technology in human society increases. With the previously needed labor no longer required, demand for a new kind of labor arises. The individual subject takes this law as a call or command to adapt to society. However, if this change accelerates and is experienced not only as a generation gap but also in the short working life of a single generation, the subject will experience the double bind of “work, but do not work.” Imaginative solutions to this irresolvable contradiction are represented and consumed as variations of fantasies that depict a world where “you do not have to work in this way.” Representational culture as a daydream is created at the level of the imaginary to compensate for the gap caused by the delay in reorganization at the personal level with the progressive transformation occurring at the level of the real that the subject is experiencing alongside the corresponding reorganization of the symbolic order. As such, the “contradiction” is always and already constituted in the structure of the individual subject, while, always and already, the adaptive individual subject has imaginatively “solved” it. With this imaginative solution, the individual subject supports itself as a labor force commodity at the existential level, thereby providing the fuel that accelerates the transformation of the mode of production at the social level. Only by working backwards from this personal “solution” can the structure of the “contradiction” be revealed. However, in reality, there is no “contradiction” here. Contradiction occurs when identical things are not identical. In other words, there must be an experience of the identity of difference and identity. Such an experience can be experienced only by human self-consciousness—that is, the human self-consciousness that arises as something straddling the three realms of the real, imaginary, and symbolic. In this respect, self-consciousness appears only when a recursive and sustained relationship of change is constructed historically and socially between these three realms. Technological development creates a different experience and forces the individual to transform. Imagination that can be “reconciled” with otherness of this experience facilitates new “commodities,” making possible new labor force commodities. A commodity is a Trojan horse that invades the real of us with imaginative solutions and functions as a device that allows us to experience heterogenous spatiality and temporality. We welcome it, but the meaning of the experience is obscured. When we enjoy a commodity, we end up changing. Reconciliation erases otherness. The adapting subjects have become the other of their former selves before they know it. As Yumi Matsutoya (1984) sang, “People don’t notice what changes them at any time.” For surplus value to be continuously created, commodities as heterogenous but reconcilable others must be produced continuously. It is through this process that “history” is developed. It was this structure that Althusser

was trying to clarify in dissecting Hegel's concepts of history, time, and contradiction.

You can think of it as follows. Contradictions should not exist, but they do. Initially, there was only multi-layeredness. However, a mechanism arose by which this multi-layeredness was gradually arranged into a structure with a cyclical causal relationship, with the imagination (/memory) of the human subject providing the thrust to maintain and accelerate the flow of this cycle. Once this flow forms a sufficient channel of cyclical reproduction, the imagination becomes redundant and independent. When this surplus imagination is diverted to a mechanism of mutual recognition, self-consciousness is formed. The self-consciousness thus established further accelerates the cyclical interactions between the Lacanian three realms, whereby it acquires its own relative independence. The self-consciousness subsequently begins experiencing "contradictions," to which it generates imaginative solutions. It is unclear whether the development of "history" as imaginative solutions was superimposed on the places where change occurred, or, as Bultmann suggested, the development of history originated from the ethnic/universal religious imagination of Judeo-Christian eschatology. Either claim could be made. Imaginative resolution certainly makes possible historical processes, but it does not resolve contradictions. A contradiction does not exist from the outset. A contradiction is generated simultaneously with its resolution. While the subject wants to get out of the double bind, once they have escaped, they disappear. In this respect, the "freedom" of the subject is nothing more than understanding and accepting this unsolvable state of limbo as paradoxically being the prerogative of the subject. In this way, the "I" as a vessel of memory and imagination is generated. It was for this reason that modern Western philosophy was started by Descartes alongside the establishment of capitalism in the sixteenth century.

This kind of analysis provides a cynical view of the workings of memory/imagination, on which we currently rely for identity, and the products thereof. However, it would be premature to say that the products of memory and imagination have no positive meaning. Be it memory or imagination, the resulting representations provide libido to historical processes and shape the future. The future is a blank memory. This blank memory is not without basis because it is determined by structural causality in multiple layers. Where Žižek dismissed it as a "symptom," Jameson called it a "utopia." What we are trying to consider lies between Žižek and Jameson. It is not a rosy future, but it is not vacuous either. It is, after all, our future. Is it possible to translate this into a program of constructive action for "reconciliation"? What will it take to achieve this?

Interestingly, according to Althusser, this unifying structure, which can be described as the identity of difference and identity (i.e., the capitalist mode of production), is an overall structure comprising junctures of diverse temporalities. Althusser referred to this level of complex coexistence and intersection of heterogeneous temporalities as "synchrony" and what arises from it as "diachrony" (Althusser 1997: vol. 2, 62–87). Althusser criticized the understanding of historical events by means of diachronic/synchronic coupling in the secular sense: that is, the coupling of continuity/repose. Cognition based on this coupling is limited to the level of concrete events that have been shaped into visible linear continuity: that is, phenomena that have already been made conscious. With this secular understanding, "synchrony" is nothing more than stop-motion images of a flow formed in a diachronic state. In other words, it is

nothing more than a derivation from diachrony. However, according to Althusser, “synchrony” is the level where the flow of time/history originally occurs. True “synchrony” refers to the level of complex coexistence of heterogeneous temporal rhythms that cannot be perceived visually and can only be grasped through conceptual manipulation. It is from this complex of times that are the other of another that the flow of time/history arises.

Expanding on Althusser’s argument, “diachrony” is an imaginative product that arises when the subject expresses a conjugation of times at the synchronic level, and it is through this imaginative action that the subject creates the content of the self. In other words, the subject itself is a product of the junction of times of the synchronic level¹³). The more secular linear flow of time is established by the imaginative junction of these heterogeneous temporalities. The very junction of heterogeneous temporalities in synchrony gives rise to the subject, creating a feedback effect whereby the created subject strengthens the mediation for its own sustenance (the logic of Marx’s value-form theory describes this specific mechanism). Unlike its literal meaning, the diachronic state created in this way can be regarded as a representation and static image of a daydream or memory. When the “I” as a vessel that accumulates and incorporates these still images of the past and the future is formed, a narrative possessing a temporal structure about the self is created as a foundation of identity. It is in this sense that Althusser, in criticizing Hegel, claimed that history is transformed into memory in Hegel (Althusser 1994: 166, 187).

Althusser’s theory is consistent with Halbwachs’ theory of collective memory. Structured as a fundamental critique of Bergson’s theory of memory/time, Halbwachs’ theory of collective memory/time contends that there is no such memory/time that is produced, flows, and accumulates in unilinear isolation. For the contents of the self as flow to be constituted, it should connect with the consciousness of the other. This is how individual consciousness is structured from the beginning. Althusser’s theory fails to grasp the problem of the constitution of memory and representation at the level of the individual subject because of the omission noted earlier: namely, the absence of a phase of “separation” through the generation of Lacanian *object-a-structure*. The multi-layered nature of time in Althusser is only an overlap under the singularity experienced by the individual subject. For example, in various social situations—such as work, spending time with our family after returning home, and at leisure on weekends—we transition between different temporalities. However, an understanding of the roles of the small others in such transitions is missing. As a result of this singularity, Althusser fell into the hell of a mirror relationship with the big Other as he strove to reject Hegel’s “history.” In this hell, the individual subject cannot enjoy the products of their own imagination as their own pleasure because it is stolen by the big Other. To be able to enjoy their own fancies/daydreams, the subject must create a “vessel” where they can play out their own fancies/daydreams through the formation of the *object-a-structure*. It is a private screen, a place called “I” where one can comfortably relax amid the contradictory gravitational forces of the double bind.

Even in a single scene, multiple individual subjects create multiple temporalities, which then cross with and permeate one another. This is why Emmanuel Levinas criticized Heidegger’s time as pure self-

affection and considered the problem of time and the other (Levinas 1986 [1948]). Meanwhile, Maurice Merleau-Ponty elucidated the existence of an essential link between the interpersonal relationships of infants and the establishment of the past-present-future temporal structure, arguing that awareness of perspectival crossover is the basis upon which the subject “I” is made possible (Merleau-Ponty 1966 [1951]). Where phenomenology regards the junction of heterogeneous temporalities as the affectivity of intentionalities, collective memory theory regards it as the intersection of memory workings. Mikhail Bakhtin’s idea of dialog (dialogism) is also worth mentioning here. On the basis of the concept of dialogism, Michael Holquist conceived the generation of an empty and unfinished “I” through the incorporation of blind spots (negations) as a surplus created by the crossover of gazes. Through otherness, I “become my own author” (Holquist 1994: 42). Contact with others is a prerequisite for the formation of the “I” as a vessel of memory. This means that I need others to shape my future. Having made this long theoretical detour, we have finally reached a point where “reconciliation” can serve as a technique for weaving our future.

8. POETICS AND MICROPOLITICS FOR RECONCILIATION STUDIES

Our “mind” forms our identity while facilitating resonance between memory and empathy. While the twentieth-century nation-state can be regarded as the largest successful unit of its composition in human history, the current expansion of hyper-globalization is undermining its foundations. This has thrown the individual into the gap between the universal and the particular, created a disconnect between the historical perception of states and citizens, and highlighted the problem of “reconciliation.” In this respect, A. D. Smith’s identification of “ethnie” as a nucleus of nationalism and Norihiro Kato’s argument of national unity through grief and mourning in the Japanese historical subject debate of the 1990s were attempts to extract this primordial functions of the human mind in the new context of advancing hyper-globalization (Smith 1999). Identities based on memory and empathy tend to be structured on a relatively local basis. They form the fundamental nuclei of nationalism. Do these “nuclei” pose a barrier to international “reconciliation,” or can they be transformed into useful tools for reconciliation? In other words, the final question posed by this paper is how these nuclei should be viewed. Should we view them negatively as “symptoms,” as Žižek saw them, or transform them into “hope,” as Jameson suggested? Is it possible to expand them beyond the shadow of a utopia barely perceptible in the midst of commodity consumption, such that they might provide practical guidelines for life?

In this article series, I have sought to contribute to the basic theorization of the structure of the new academic field of reconciliation studies by expounding on the following themes: (1) the linkage between memory and empathy, (2) the structural equivalence between memory, representation, and symptom, (3) the historicity of the fact that memory became the basis of personal identity after the 19th century, and (4) the structural causality between personal memory representation and the state-capitalist (multilateralist) social construction from the late 19th century to the late 20th century. All of these themes are theoretical frameworks derived from theoretical analysis, and while they may function as

tools for psychopathological self-analysis as they are, some aspects do not fit with the challenges of reconciliation studies which require proactive commitments. Having passed through the Althusserian cage and Žižek's pessimism, where can we acquire what we need to advance forward? Here, I propose the term (5) "poetics and micropolitics" to hint at the connections between the theoretical perceptions of philosophical psychology that I have discussed in this paper and our daily lives and practices under the theme of "reconciliation." The concepts of "poetics" and "micropolitics" originate from the so-called "Open Dialogue" movement, thought to be at the forefront of psychotherapy.

Developed in Keropudas Hospital, Finland, in the 1980s, Open Dialogue is a psychotherapeutic method said to be effective in curing schizophrenia without the use of drugs, and has garnered significant attention and popularity in and from the Nordic countries. To address acute symptoms, the key parties—such as the client themselves, their family, doctors, nurses, psychologists, and family doctors—meet frequently and continuously. The idea is to create and maintain an equal and open forum for dialogue and decision-making among all parties, which can have a therapeutic effect on severe acute psychiatric symptoms. The psychoanalytic therapy envisioned by Freud and Lacan was based on a hypothetical theory of the mechanisms of psychopathological onset, with the doctor carefully controlling dialogue with the client to normalize their mental state. Open Dialogue rejects this structure of the doctor manipulating and controlling the client's mental structure, contending that equal and open dialogue can stabilize the client's mental state and promote healing, only implementing control for the full realization of such dialogue. In this context, "open" means that the client is free to talk about their pathological mental experiences, such as delusions and hallucinations. It also underscores the importance of attentively listening to them without criticizing or denying their experiences, while the medical staff and family members exchange opinions and make decisions about the situation and their responses in front of the client. As such, there is no one who knows something that the client does not, and no decision is made without the client's involvement. This approach creates a setting in which such assumptions and conditions are eliminated. The therapeutic practice of Open Dialogue is not limited to schizophrenia and has been used in the treatment of depression, PTSD, domestic violence, drug addiction, and so forth (Saito, Seikkula, et al. 2015).

Although curing psychosis through "dialogue" has been the dream of psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, and psychological care from Freud to Lacan, it was seen as difficult to realize as a demonstrable and generalizable method. Since the latter half of the twentieth century, drug therapy has become mainstream in psychiatric therapy. Indeed, in the century since Freud, it has generally been concluded that psychosis cannot be cured through so-called "psychoanalysis" (as a general reference to treatment methods based on doctor–patient dialogue). I think that would be the mainstream explanation. However, in the 2010s, Open Dialogue was advanced as an effective method, with moves to introduce this system in Japan. Incidentally, unconnected to Finnish Open Dialogue, Bethel House in Urakawa Town, Hokkaido, Japan, has attempted to practice open and advanced medical treatment not aimed at suppressing client symptoms since the 1980s. In addition to a substantial support program for medication control and clients' social participation, Bethel House has attracted worldwide attention and high praise for its

active client meetings, especially the “Hallucination and Delusion Conference,” where clients freely express and comment on one another’s hallucinations and delusions, which are usually treated as medical conditions to be eliminated or suppressed. Arguably, this is similar to Open Dialogue insofar as it emphasizes flat and free dialogue with no intention to suppress delusions and hallucinations. Although there are differences between the two, if we focus on the open attitude toward delusions and hallucinations as a common idea, it can be summarized in Tamaki Saito’s claim that “delusions are strengthened by monologues and eliminated by dialogue” (Saito, Seikkula, et al. 2015: 40). When it comes to the word “open,” we can discuss what is “opened” at various levels. For the therapist, in this case, being “open” means to overcome his/her fear that the client’s delusions and hallucinations might be exacerbated if expressed, as well as overcome the attitude of trying to gain a sense of security for themselves by suppressing or not dealing with them, while also accepting the attitude of the coordinator who patiently creates a place where the client’s delusions and hallucinations can be received.

A remarkable aspect of Open Dialogue is that the method hails from postmodern thought. According to one of its proponents, Jaakko Seikkula, Open Dialogue was inspired by various philosophies considered the domain of postmodern thought, which garnered attention in Japan from the 1970s, including Maturana and Varela’s theory of autopoiesis, Gregory Bateson’s symptomatology of schizophrenia centered on the concept of double bind, the systemic family therapy of the Milanese school, Berger and Lookman’s concept of “self in relation” in social constructivism, and dialogism drawing on the ideas of Bakhtin, Voloshinov, and Vygotsky, among others. I assume that they did not seek to construct a unified theory by conceptually synthesizing various other theories. Rather, they weaved a system of concrete methods while drawing on the aforementioned theories in searching for methods in daily clinical practice. The core ideas of this philosophy are as follows: (1) language and communication are the basic elements that make up social reality; (2) the self as a system and social reality as a system do not exist beforehand but are constantly created anew by the members making up those spaces, (3) aiming to create a shared language by which the meaning of individual suffering can be clarified in the intimate sphere; and (4) such effects occur only when limited to opportunities and spaces of face-to-face dialogue shared physically as “events of one-time existence” (Saito, Seikkula et al. 2015). In the Open Dialogue movement, the specific mechanisms of theoretical recognition and practice are categorized in terms “poetics” and “micropolitics”.

“Poetics” refers to the principles of how language and communication should be used in actual dialogue, while “micropolitics” refers to measures to maintain and manage the team structure for Open Dialogue therapy within the actual healthcare and insurance system. Poetics comprises three basic principles: “tolerance of uncertainty,” “dialogism,” and “polyphony.” In short, rather than preparing and drawing conclusions, this way of thinking treats a crisis as an opportunity for the client to create a new “voice,” to forge new meaning from within the boundaries of dialogue where utterances and responses are interpenetrating, and to give voice to what cannot be said and hear it in the polyphony of voices with the help of the network within the intimate sphere.

“Poetics” likely comes from Bakhtin’s “Dostoevsky’s poetics.” The idea that meaning is created

through speech act is an undercurrent of postmodern thought, which appeared simultaneously with the linguistic turn in the philosophy of language in the twentieth century, affordance theory in psychology, and the theory of autopoiesis in theoretical biology. This undercurrent resonates with French postmodern thought, spearheaded by the likes of Derrida and Deleuze which inherited continental philosophy from German idealism onward in a critical way. Although they form separate lineages, this paper points to an understanding of these two currents as constellations of concepts that unfold within a larger shared structure of memory, imagination, identity, and civilizational structure. However, as we have seen, among the limitations of critical theory, the flow from German idealism to French postmodern thought does not clarify how we might escape being recipients/consumers of representations, whether memories or narratives. In this respect, “poetics” and “micropolitics” are thought-provoking terms that can be used to tackle the theoretical and practical problems we encounter in our attempt to grasp the structure of human identity amid the hyper-globalization of the twenty-first century.

The Open Dialogue movement can be understood as a method of actively utilizing the constitutive actions of the crossover of otherness in treatment and healthcare system management. However, it is interesting to note that Jaakko Seikkula and Tom Arnkil, regarded as the central figures of the movement, have led their own initiatives in treating clients using an “Open Dialogue” and managing the treatment system through “Anticipation Dialogue” (Seikkula & Arnkil 2019). As noted, Open Dialogue can be regarded as the intensive, continuous treatment of severe symptoms of the client in the acute phase. Anticipation Dialogue—that is, dialogue about the future—can be considered a method for the management of networks in treatment settings involving a large number of stakeholders and institutions. As a part of the team dialogue, anxious participants find a brighter outlook and hope for the future by reminding their current actions from a backward looking perspective from the future, consider different ways of looking at their current hopes and fears, and reconstruct their reality. Although this is essentially a technique of planning and team formation based on a temporal vision, it is worth noting that it uses the Open Dialogue method and deliberately utilizes the crossover of otherness and the polyphonic interpenetration of imagination to reconstruct the temporality of the “future.” The approach of remembering the present from the perspective of the future is tantamount to a memorization of the present. It can be considered a representation of the present. Interestingly, it borrows the power of the site of dialogue with others for its active and creative execution. Arnkil even uses the expression “remembering the future” (Seikkula & Arnkil 2019: 136). Utterances in dialogue anticipate responses. There already exists a future orientation. The Anticipation Dialogue is about extracting this. After all, it generates an “I” as a “future memory”: that is, a “blank memory” (Nojiri 2018). It uses the fact that recollection (past) and imagination (future) are two sides of the same function mediated by otherness. In this respect, Anticipation Dialogue puts into practice the theoretical recognition that otherness is futurity. From the perspective of this paper, Open Dialogue is arguably a first aid measure for the *object-a-structure* to deal with psychotic symptoms in the acute phase, while Anticipation Dialogue is a measure to reconfigure the *object-a-structure* as a self-organizing system that incorporates the temporality of the future for more everyday team management.

TOWARD A CONCLUSION, TOWARD ASIA

What suggestions does Open Dialogue hold for “reconciliation studies”?

Perhaps it is nothing more than sending a deeper theoretical and practical understanding back to the premise of the reconciliation studies project at the starting point that reconciliation studies must have a different standard of awareness and practice to the practical skills of politics and diplomacy. For the time being, I have borrowed the terms “poetics” and “micropolitics” from Open Dialogue to express this awareness and practice in this paper. Policy and diplomatic negotiations at the national level inevitably belong to the domain of practice in the symbolic, the linguistic realm of the big Other. In contrast, this paper analyzes the weakened status of the nation-state as a linchpin of the symbolic that has operated over the past century, the relaxation of the incorporation of the real (economy) and the imaginary (imagination) by the state, and the drifting of individual imagination, as the civilizational aspects of the problem of memory and identity. To strongly connect the symbolic and the real, which should not be joined in the first place, it is necessary to encapsulate the functions of the imaginary into a single circuit of recursive reconstruction to that end, create a motor that holds nothingness at its center, and drive it as a dynamic structure that is identical yet transforming: that is, an economic mode that infinitely multiplies exchange value. Various theorists have pointed out the potential of poetic language as a way to break away from this so-called capitalist economic structure. For example, Lacan saw such potential in Joyce’s singular linguistic creations, Bakhtin in Dostoevsky’s poetics of dialogue, Kristeva in the semiotic revolution, and Naoyuki Umemori in Takuboku Ishikawa’s poetry (Umemori 2016). These were explorations of the possibility of inverting the micropolitics of capital, which produces the subject known as “I”, into our own micropolitics.

When the economic efficacy of the nation-state structure was stronger, poetic language could only be produced as a rare gem of genius indistinguishable from madness. However, such a pathological theory of genius is a far cry from reconciliation studies. Harootunian explored the act of writing poetry by workers’ clubs in 1950s’ Japan as an activity that opened up alternative temporalities (online article 9). Harootunian’s argument is noteworthy insofar as he demonstrated the possibility of transcending capitalism in elements of multiple temporalities and dialogue/polyphony, but this is a problem structure that seeks a base to resist the temporality of the centralized state, positioning it far from the problem structure of reconciliation studies. The problem that reconciliation studies try to depict in the twenty-first century is the fate of poetic language, which has been severed from the state and laid bare. The time of conceiving strategies to implode the state through poetic language has passed. It is time for poetic language to move away from being poetic language in relation to the state. In our view, where reconciliation is the issue, dialogue has already begun. In other words, the “site” is already being constructed. The existence of the “site” can be recognized retrospectively on the basis of phenomena of representational culture, created and consumed through the crossover of subjects of various countries simultaneously caught under the influence of hyper-globalization. It is no coincidence that many works

of representational culture, including deliberations on the problems of memory, have been produced in recent years. There is a structural reason for this, for which this paper has presented a rationale. Signs of this can be seen everywhere, even in Hollywood films.

In Guillermo del Toro's *Pacific Rim* (2013), humanity battles the *Kaiju*, the monsters invading the planet's surface from an interdimensional rift at the bottom of the ocean, using giant robotic weapons. To pilot such complex robots, two pilots must connect their consciousnesses, uniting across cultural and racial barriers, transcending ego boundaries, overcoming memory flashbacks, and confronting powerful enemies. A pilot distracted by memory flashbacks is admonished by a colleague who says, "It's just a memory" (Toro 2013). The message conveyed in this line is clear: we need to free ourselves from our trauma, form a collective spirit with those around us, and deal with the major changes that we are all facing. Alternatively, consider J. J. Abrams' *Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker* (2019). The protagonists overcome bloodline feuds and trauma caused by memories and, as inheritors of hope, embark on a path of carving out a future together. It is revealed that Rey, the new heroine of the saga, is not related to the legendary hero Luke Skywalker but to his enemy, Palpatine. Rey overcomes her bloodline, takes the name of Skywalker, and is reborn as Rey Skywalker. "You, just a memory," "Something is stronger than blood," "Where are you from? / I don't know. / Let's find out it" (Abrams 2019). The message conveyed by these lines scattered throughout the film is unmistakably an ethical one. Can we claim that Hollywood productions that contain such ethical messages are progressive, while Japanese works such as *In This Corner of the World* and *Demon Slayer*, which see identity in the inheritance of memory/culture and bloodline, are conservative? This may be true for political criticism of the works (although I do not know what is interesting about such criticism), but the latter works, which express unconscious desires without suppressing them, may have more of a therapeutic effect and may be more in line with the ethics of psychoanalysis and the poetics of reconciliation. Arguably, the morality contained in Hollywood productions has already been processed into political consciousness, thus removing the pressure of the political unconscious that opens up our dialogue.

Speaking of the expression and exchange of desires in East Asia, the influence of Japan's idol culture and pop music in Asia since the 1980s, the relationship of cultural influence and co-production through exchanges of human resources between Japan and South Korea in the rise of K-pop, and the rise of derivative works and fan communities in Japanese genres such as *yaoi*/BL (boys' love) have come to engulf Asia, creating a symphonic sphere of desire among Internet users in South Korea, Taiwan, China, Thailand, India, and Indonesia (Hori & Mori 2020; Welker 2019). From the outset, the genre of BL/*yaoi* culture emerged from a desire for derivative works (enjoyment from modifying existing commercial works) and exchange within fandoms.

It is also worth noting that a peculiar ethic on imagination has been formed with regard to this community. In the activities of BL/*yaoi* fans, the original work as a primary creation (e.g., manga works for boys published in Shonen Jump and other publications) is positioned as what Derrida called a "trace," and by reading the character relationships in the original work differently (i.e., homosexually), they can enjoy an expansion of fantasy and illusion in all directions. Exchanges of fantasies within

groups, which are naturally formed according to the type and direction of the reinterpretations, is another important element of their enjoyment. Moreover, having a fantasy that you like destroy the fantasies of others is considered a serious breach of etiquette, with strict ethics formed to avoid such situations. According to these ethics, as everyone fantasizes in this community, fantastical desires are not a disease but something that forms the self, which means they cannot be cured (i.e., eliminated). Enjoying these fantasies is thus enjoyment of me being me, rather than an object to be resolved by interpretation. Therefore, all people's enjoyment of fantasies should be respected and accepted. This seems to overlap to some extent with the psychoanalytic ethics that Jacques-Alain Miller presented as Lacan's final destination in his later years (Fleury 2020). Miller advocated the *jouissance* of speech (parole); however, modeled on the poet Joyce, this was oriented toward maximizing the speaker's effect via being autistic as a spokesperson for the real. In other words, it is the pleasure of the isolated speaker. However, the inevitability that the ethics of psychoanalysis must be the "ethics of the real" may simply be due to the curse of the "Althusserian cage" in which late Lacanian theory, Millaire and Žižek were trapped in common, which moved toward a dualism of the symbolic and the real while relegating the imaginary to the background. This parole can also be the parole of exchanging pleasure. As such, we have passed through the "ethics of the real" and are entering the era of "ethics of the imaginary"¹⁴.

While there are examples of BL/*yaoi* in Europe and the United States as well, its momentum in Japan is unequaled. It is precisely because Japan formed a uniquely powerful space of national imagination throughout the twentieth century that a non-heterosexual imagination emerged as a reaction to the impact of globalization on the state system¹⁵. Expressions of this desire are sweeping across East Asia, with some describing it as "cultural globalization from below" and a "global counter-public sphere" (Welker 2019). This phenomenon should be considered from the perspective of civilization theory¹⁶. From this perspective, East Asia is already becoming a space for sharing representational experiences that are not passive consumption: that is, there is place for what Hannah Arendt called "action", or could be potentially¹⁷. The possibility of "resistance" or "cultural comeback" to Western capitalist civilization, which Yoshimi Takeuchi observed in Asian poets such as Lu Xun and Tagore, and the concept of "Asia as a method" (Takeuchi 1981), which Takeuchi discussed in 1961, when it was still empty, may unexpectedly be fulfilled through the accumulation of such sites of "action." When that happens, we will probably exit "Asia" as defined by a mirror relationship with the West. Here, "action" is nothing other than the act of meeting those driven by the real, betrayed by the symbolic, and forced to expose the *object-a-structure* to the world as an unpolished gemstone, attracted by the sound of one another's voices and attempting to carve out a soul gem amid the intersection of voices and gazes. Those engaged in reconciliation studies should look at the latent readiness for the coming "dialogue" in such places. I used BL/*yaoi* as an example, but it can be anything: time loops, *Isekai-tensei* (another world reincarnation), *Naki-gē* (crying games), *Yuri* sci-fi (lesbian sci-fi), *Sentou-bishojo* (beautiful fighting girl), *Pokémon*, *Kan-musu* (battle ship girls), *Sensha-do* (Tankery), *Touken Danshi* (sword warrior boys), Hypnosis Mic, or omegaverse. Regardless, these representations do not possess hope or future in themselves. Representation is only an "imaginative solution"¹⁸. However, a future can be



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conceived from encounters with others facilitated by such expression as well as by the “dialogue” they initiate. Is it possible to construct a program of micropolitics based on the poetics of reconciliation to extract such a future? Arguably, this is possible in the field of education¹⁹⁾. Derrida’s concept of “dissemination” that is not bound by the productivity/reproduction of the state (fertility through reproduction) may well have pointed to this possibility of encounters and the future through a liberation of imagination: the power of memory and phantasy (Derrida 2021). It is the creation of Khôra woven by the polyphony of enjoyment paroles, a space of laughter where the sublime and the horrible as abjection are exposed, instead of people’s beautiful memories (Kristeva 1999). In fact, provided that the theme is reconciliation, it does not matter whether the resonance of the imaginary that is not subsumed by the symbolic order of the modern state weaves a story of rebellion in the rewriting of the symbolic order, as advocated by Butler (2021), or whether it is merely a function of the systemic change that marks the end of the twentieth-century nation-state system described in this paper. As we approach reconciliation, we do not have to solve the eternal question of whether structure or subject comes first. The goal of reconciliation can be achieved by the “ethics of the imaginary” elucidated in this paper.

It is worth reiterating that representation does not possess any hope or future in itself. The power to change reality does not lie in the representational contents but in the act of representation. In the

structure of the modern global economy and power politics, solidarity through representational exchange is key for those suffering under the shearing pressure and being forced to create representations. More specifically, the key is not the representational exchange but the exchange of representational desires. In the case of contemporary Japan, the nation-state acts as a vessel that prevents recognition of the global position of Japan as a nation²⁰). In Japan's case, is this not because the boundaries of the structure of dependence on the United States always confines the exchange of desires to an internal reflection and turns it into a monologue? Perhaps this is why it is necessary for Asia to be opened up as a place for our dialogue. Yoshimi Takeuchi believed that the contents of "Asia as a method" would inevitably become insubstantial. According to Takeuchi (1981), "During that comeback, you have to have something of your own within you. I don't think we have that kind of thing in substance. However, it might be possible as a method, that is, as a process of subject formation" (115)²¹). Takeuchi's intuition that the site for our subject formation needs to be opened up to Asia, which perhaps was ahead of its time, is confirmed by the argument advanced in this paper.

Ryusuke Hamaguchi's film *Drive My Car* (2021) is based on a work by Haruki Murakami. As is always the case in Murakami's works, something happens that forces the protagonists to confront an event sealed in the depths of their psyche. This has consequences, namely, the sacrament of rebirth. In the film, the main characters, Kafuku and Misaki, have long-harbored memories and feelings of guilt over the death of someone close to them. As they spend more and more time travelling by car together as driver and passenger, employee and boss, the dialogue they exchange begins to act like a catalyst, providing them with an opportunity to heal their wounded souls. Interestingly, Hamaguchi used exchanges with characters from East and Southeast Asia as the background for this dialogue. In the story, Kafuku is a stage director putting together a play for an international theater festival in Hiroshima, in which characters exchange lines in their own languages and do not understand one another. Hamaguchi's intuition led him to position such dialogue—which consists solely of speech-acts, lacks exchange of speech-contents, and exists in an Asian space—as the *element (ether)* through which the protagonists can confront the past. In contrast to many of the protagonists of Haruki Murakami's works, who try to discern the truth by diving vertically into the depths of their own psyche, Hamaguchi saw the need for a horizontal field and introduced "Asia as a method." This opens up a space of "synchrony" where heterogeneous temporalities intersect, as envisioned by Althusser; a space of "Asia as a method" or "blank Asianism" as the process of subject formation conceived by Yoshimi Takeuchi (Nojiri 2022b); and a space of "love" in the Lacanian sense, where subjects, who have already *traversed* representations of the self by being self-aware of the interactions between desires, face one another (Lacan 2015, Nojiri 2022b).

Reconciliation should be achieved through dialogue as "action." However, this dialogue is neither rational dialogue nor an exchange of semantic contents. Rather, it is a dialogue initiated by expressing fantasies. Reconciliation is not something that can be reached through rational negotiation. It will remain unreachable if you attempt to reach it through the workings of rational language, that is, the symbolic. This is the main insight presented in this paper. Politics can be conducted only in rational

language. It is precisely because of the oppression of the symbolic (politics) that the workings of the imaginary (fantasies) are increasing in response to the advancement of the real (economy). It is here that the site for dialogue is located. In this sense, the site of reconciliation is located on a different level to politics and develops in parallel with politics.

Notes

- 1) This paper is the second part of an extended essay titled “Beyond the ‘I’ as a Vessel of Memory and the ‘Nation’ as a Vessel of History: Poetics and Micro-Politics for Reconciliation Studies”, included in *Reconciliation and Politics as an Aporia: History, Theory and Concepts, Reconciliation Studies Series Volume 2*, Akashi Shoten, 2023 [in Japanese].
- 2) The research in this paper was carried out as a part of a broader theoretical study exploring the theoretical foundations of reconciliation in East Asia conducted by the Thought and Theory Group, one of the teams under the “Creation of the Reconciliation Studies: In Search of Just Reconciliation” project (Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research on Innovative Areas).
- 3) The section numbering continues from the first half (Nojiri 2024a).
- 4) According to Hiroki Azuma, that the advent of postmodernism has weakened the power of the symbolic order and that utterances in a common language based on the foundation of ontological semantics have become less powerful are matters of “criticism.” He argued that the symbolic’s linking of the real, symbolic, and imaginary as a structure has ceased to function, resulting in a division with the ontological rise of the real and the ethical rise of the imaginary, which is manifested in the cultural representation of “Sekai-kei” (world-type) and “Nichijo-kei” (everyday-type) manga and anime (Azuma 2011, etc.). With respect to perceptions of historical changes in the structural arrangement of the real, symbolic, and imaginary instances, this paper generally shares Azuma’s views. However, Azuma’s theory regards the function of the imaginary as no more than visual imagination and omits the element of empathy, severing a path to any discussion of collectivity based on empathy as a core of historical identity, as discussed in this paper. This is the same problem identified in the main text with regard to the singularity of the imaginary’s functions in Althusser. Derrida’s philosophy may have an advantage over Althusser/Lacan insofar as it touches on the plurality of the imaginary’s functions via the concept of “dissemination,” but Azuma’s theory is closed to this possibility as well.
- 5) The phrase “insensitivity to human emotion” was quoted by Kato as a criticism of leftists by Tetsutaro Kawakami.
- 6) Following the publication of Norihiro Kato’s *After the Defeat* in 1995, the Japanese Society for History Textbook Reform was founded in 1997. Among its members, Nobukatsu Fujioka published *What is the Liberal View of History? A View of History Not Taught by Textbooks* in 1997, Yoshinori Kobayashi published *The New Gomanism Declaration Special Issue: Theory of War, Volume 1* in 1998, and Kanji Nishio published *The People’s History* in 1999. Pointing out the positive impacts

of the Second Sino-Japanese War and the Pacific War, these authors moved away from the critical view of history spearheaded by left-wing intellectuals, creating an ideological trend known as the “liberal view of history.” For Ge Sun, who critically discussed Kanji Nishio’s *The People’s History* by comparing it to Yoshimi Takeuchi’s Asianism, the opposition between the internationalism of progressive/left-wing intellectuals and the nationalist view of history proposed by conservatives is akin to that between Shigeki Tohyama and Katsuichiro Kamei in the “Showa history debate” in 1955, as well as Fusao Hayashi’s psychology of ideological conversion in proposing his “Greater East Asia War affirmation theory” in 1963. According to Ge Sun (2005), “Progressive intellectuals have only pursued war responsibility and have failed to provide a proper site for Japanese complex sensibilities about the war and post-war sensibilities” (215). Ge Sun’s formulation is directly applicable to the “historical subject debate” that involved Norihiro Kato and Tetsuya Takahashi, among others, as well as the confrontation between the liberal view of history (called “historical revisionism” by critics) and the internationalism of left-wing intellectuals (called a “self-deprecating view of history” by critics) in the same time period. I believe it is possible to subject this “repetitive” structure to psychoanalytic scrutiny.

- 7) Influential TV programs such as NHK’s “Morning Serial TV Novels,” which first aired in 1961, and “Today’s Cooking,” which first aired in 1957, may have served as a significant medium reinforcing and reproducing the fantasy of the collective inheritance of cultural memories in the social space of postwar Japan. This topic should be pursued in the field of cultural research in reconciliation studies.
- 8) In a separate paper, I examine the phenomenon of narrative settings such as “time loops” and “*isekai tensei* (another world reincarnation)” gaining popularity in the Japanese subcultural domain since the 2000s, as representations that express a disturbance of our sense of time and space due to a general dissociative state: that is, as representations encouraging the enjoyment of fluctuations or disintegration in dialectical composition. It should be possible to analyze time loops as temporal utopian representation and *isekai tensei* as spatial utopian representation (Nojiri 2018, Nojiri 2024b).
- 9) Regarding the concept of “*object-a-structure*,” see Nojiri 2024a in the same series. The incorporation of Lacanian theory is explained in greater detail in it.
- 10) The Jameson’s formulation presented here, that “symbolism in cultural works is imaginative solutions to the irresolvable contradictions that we experience at the level of the real (history),” is extracted and summarized from *The Political Unconscious* (Jameson 2010) by author. For further details, see Nojiri 2019.
- 11) It has repeatedly been pointed out that Fredric Jameson’s theory is based on Althusser (Dowling 1993). Jameson’s formula that symbolism in cultural works is an imaginative solution to the irresolvable contradiction that we experience at the level of the real is a paraphrase of Althusser’s formula that “ideology is a ‘representation’ of the imaginative relationship that individuals have with their own real conditions of existence” (Althusser 2010 [vol. 2] [214]). Regarding the

relationship between Žižek and Althusser, it suffices to note that they share a disconnect between the symbolic and the real, mediated by the concept of overdetermination. Of course, Žižek criticized Althusser's theory as nothing more than a theory of "subjectification" and different from his own position of advocating "subjectification as desubjectivization." If Žižek's position can be framed as "ethics of the real" (Župančić 2003), what this paper seeks to pursue can be understood as the "ethics of the imaginary." As such, there are two ways to escape the "Althusserian cage" in which Althusser trapped himself by converging the symbolic and imaginary. One is an ethics that tries to penetrate through to the real by asserting that there always exists some remainder that cannot be symbolized; the other is an ethics that seeks to achieve relative independence from the symbolic through the plurality of the imaginary. Where the former corresponds to the autism model, the latter corresponds to the neurotypical development model. Although Žižek is credited with clearly generalizing the ideas of late Lacan and Jacques-Alain Miller and applying them to civilization theory, given how its "ethics of the real" (the so-called autism model) has developed so far, it ultimately goes no farther than presenting the consequences of relativizing all political and cultural acts as "symptoms." Therefore, while Žižek differentiated himself from Althusser by advocating ethics of the real, in the broader sense, he failed to break free from the Althusserian cage. Judith Butler similarly interpreted Žižek's thesis as a modernization of Lacan's theory but framed it as an attempt to make Althusser's theory work through Lacan, arguing that it is limited insofar as it relegates the function of the imaginary to the background (Butler 2021: 257–258). However, in an early work, *Looking Awry*, Žižek used the phrase "toward an ethics of fantasy" in arguing that fantasy is essential to human existence and that its dignity should thus be preserved (Žižek 1991). That said, Žižek does not appear to have maintained this line of thought in subsequent works.

- 12) Althusser's critique of expressive causality was directed at Hegel, but is ignored by most Hegelian scholars. Why? This is because Hegel himself seems to have discussed structural causality. This confusion stems from a kind of trap set in the composition of Hegel's works. In *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel depicts the movement of the mind through structural causality, and discusses how history arises therefrom. The Consciousness becomes the Self-consciousness through an mechanism of mutual recognition. However, the Consciousness forgets the process by which this self was born. It becomes the Reason that forgets its own life and observes natural life with interest. The diversity and unity of nature is nothing but representations generated by self-consciousness. In other words, although self-consciousness sees society in nature, it does not realize this until later. *The Phenomenology of Spirit* describes such an experience of consciousness (Nojiri 2010). In this regard, Hegel was ahead of Freud and Lacan. As a result of this pioneering aspect, *The Phenomenology of Spirit* possesses the ultimate appeal in modern Western philosophy, making it the most influential of Hegel's writings on later generations. Consequently, there is no shortage of people who regard *The Phenomenology of Spirit* as a gateway to Hegel's philosophy. As Hegel himself described it as an introduction (entrance) to his system, the trap is a clever one. However, did Hegel really set this trap deliberately? It is clear that Hegel focused his life's work on the

construction of a system (*Encyclopedia*). He may not have expected *The Phenomenology of Spirit* to be so highly regarded by later generations. The “phenomenology of spirit” is no more than one part of the later *Encyclopedia*. What is important is the opportunity for mutual recognition still contained in it. By passing through this opportunity, humanity becomes an entity with a single “memory” that is free from conflict. History as the self-unfolding of the Absolute Spirit is possible from here. For further details, see Nojiri 2018.

- 13) In *Comparative Sociology of Time*, Yuhsuke Maki vividly depicts the intrinsic diversity of temporalities in human beings by contrasting the linearized, abstracted, and quantified experiences of time in modern society with non-modern experiences of time in Africa, ancient Japan, ancient Greece, Hebraism, Christianity, and so forth (Maki 2003 [1981]). In this regard, he argued that non-modern temporalities can be classified as parallel time, stretching time, repeating time, circular time, and line segment time, among others. Maki argued that the function of money as a universal medium of exchange (exchange value) in modern capitalism and the mechanism of linearization, abstraction, and quantification of time are linked. Ahead of its time, this theoretical insight is comparable to Moishe Postone’s theory of capitalism (Postone 2012 [1993]), which focuses on social domination by abstract time. One aspect where Maki excels compared with Postone is his attempt to depict the intrinsic connection between modern temporality and the formation of a modern subjectivity (ego) alienated from communality through abundant quotations from literature and philosophy, presenting an essential intuition regarding the relationship between temporality, otherness, subjectivity, and imagination in a way that can be considered literary. Maki did not use many of the theoretical achievements noted in this paper, such as Hegel’s theory of memory, Marx’s theory of the rise of organic composition of capital, Althusser’s theory of multiple temporalities, Lacan’s theory of symbolic castration, Derrida’s theory of the Other, Halbwachs’ theory of collective memory, Bakhtin’s dialogism, and the latest findings on ASD and the Open Dialogue method. Arguably, Maki foresaw the grand theory that should be forged by connecting these elements, mostly through a literary perspective. Nonetheless, Maki’s pioneering work should be re-evaluated and transcended through a consideration of the achievements of philosophy, psychoanalysis, social theory, and cultural theory today. This paper is one such attempt.
- 14) See the first part of this article series (Nojiri 2024a), Note 7.
- 15) In an essay titled “BL and Nationalism,” Chapter 14 of *The BL Textbook* (Hori & Mori 2020), Kim Hyo-shin considers the imagination of BL/*yaoi* as an imagination that resists nationalism and heterosexism in modern nation-states, raising the possibility that transnational BL may parody and transcend the heterosexism prevalent in the international community.
- 16) The insights into BL derivative works (fan fictions) and the associated fandoms in this paper owe much to the research of students I supervise at the School of Human Sciences at Osaka University (Kitagoya 2021, Tsuji 2022). Kitagoya analyzes modes of communality in BL/*yaoi* fandoms using Lacan’s “formulas of sexuation” and “alienation and separation” schematics, while Tsuji attempts to apply the “discourse of the Analyst” from Lacan’s schematic of the four discourses to the

relationship between the authors and readers of BL derivative works. In particular, the latter provides insights for the development of reconciliation techniques by exploring a relationship enabling the emergence of a new master signifier (S1) and the formation of new social ties through a “discourse of the Analyst” approach that brings fantasies to the forefront rather than suppressing them through knowledge (Nojiri 2022a, 2022b). I hope to revisit this in greater detail in a future paper.

- 17) Naoyuki Umemori’s article “‘Reconciliation Studies’ as a Method: East Asian Foundations of Conflict Resolution Studies,” published in the first volume of the reconciliation studies series *Attempts at Reconciliation Studies* (Asano 2021), employs Hannah Arendt’s division of “labor,” “work,” and “action.” This paper describes these three dimensions of human activity in Lacanian terminology, that is, “the real,” “the symbolic,” and “the imaginary,” respectively.
- 18) As an expression of desire, representational contents contain much that is contrary to political correctness, a source of friction rather than reconciliation. This is only natural given that it is an expression of desire. Desire can be defined as what is politically incorrect. Furthermore, it is due to desire that political correctness can be connected to reality to create a dynamic structure fraught with contradictions and responsive to the needs of the economy. As such, to construct dialogue, it is necessary to have someone with knowledge of the poetics of reconciliation and micropolitical techniques to lead open dialogue in an educational clinical setting, in the same way that a doctor with knowledge of psychopathology guides open dialogue in medical clinical practice.
- 19) In an article in *Reconciliation Studies Series Vol. 2* (Akashi Shoten), Shukuko Koyama reports on the achievements of the “Campus Asia” program at Waseda University. Measures such as the “300,000 international students plan” led by MEXT and the “Campus Asia” Hub Formation Program under the Inter-University Exchange Project are initiatives that have been implemented by the state. According to Althusserian/Foucauldian logic, as these initiatives are conducted in the context of the school, which is an ideological apparatus of the state, it can be argued that they merely end up to reproduce subjects loyal to the state. However, subjects are transformed and reconstituted through the exchange of desires with subjects who have moved across borders: that is, a crossover of voice and gaze. It is possible that the university curriculum developed with these support measures will serve as a place to experiment with the poetics and micropolitics of reconciliation. In this sense, I think Japanese universities should envision becoming asylums in East Asia through human resources equipped with poetics and micropolitics. I myself gained a lot from experiences of discussing Japanese popcultures and unconscious nationalism in Japan with international students as a part of the G30 English course program at the university where I work. Such exchanges also elicited useful suggestions for this paper. Unfortunately, not many Japanese students actively take such classes. Subjects who have experienced such a site will eventually rewrite the symbolic order of the state. In other words, we are considering a rebellious effect from the imaginary to the symbolic here. Although rebellious, it is nothing more than a way for the state to change in response to civilizational changes. In Japan, the tepid extension of the life of the

nation-state economy, a relic of the twentieth century, has made it difficult for university students to develop a positive motivation to become “heroic subjects.” However, we can make steady progress in preparing for the next generation, who will soon arrive. Based on the poetics and micropolitics of rebellion presented in this paper, it is possible for intellectuals and educators to steadily implement and create sites where students can experience others as the future. This paper did not examine the radical possibilities of whether the state and capitalism should be abolished, whether the time vector toward the future itself should be dismantled, whether it is necessary to shift the course of the civilization for the typical developed itself, or whether reconciliation is unnecessary. I hope to return to these topics on another occasion. See the first part of this essay series (Nojiri 2024a), Note 6.

- 20) Satoshi Shirai’s *A Theory of Perpetual Defeat* criticizes the harmful effects of the “system of irresponsibility” maintained by a mental structure that continues to deny “war defeat” under the structure of Japan’s dependence on the United States, and attempts to visualize a postwar regime of “perpetual defeat” (Shirai 2013). The psychoanalytic structure that Shirai seeks to visualize is similar to the blocked monologue structure elucidated in this paper. I intend to investigate what concrete structural causality this area of subjectivity constitutes with the blockage of Japan’s socioeconomic and political system in a future study.
- 21) Takeshi Nakajima has discussed the need to break away from the structure of dependence on the United States and shares the view of this paper with respect to the ideological potential of Asianism. However, Nakajima has criticized Yoshimi Takeuchi’s failure to extract the contents of Asian thought as substance in the passage quoted (Nakajima 2017). In this respect, this paper adopts a different stance to that championed by Nakajima.

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