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## Memory and Dialectics: Critique of the Political Economy of Memory and Imagination, Part I<sup>1)</sup>

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### Abstract

This article is the first (Part I) of a series of six to eight parts. Alloying philosophy, social theory, psychoanalysis, and cultural studies, this series seeks to articulate the relationship between Western philosophy's metaphysical method of dialectic and the general structure of memory in human beings. Covering Western philosophers from ancient to modern times, such as Plato, Socrates, Augustine, Descartes, Kant, Heidegger, Hegel, Lacan, Derrida, and Jakobson, this series endeavors to elucidate the nature of memory in the neurotypical (NT), i.e., the so-called normal. The series also quotes social, cultural, and psychopathological materials such as *Sarashina Diary* (the daughter of Sugawara no Takasue in 11th century Japan), *Funes the Memorious* (Jorge Luis Borges), *Norwegian Wood* (Haruki Murakami), and a 1984 Apple Computer television commercial, autism spectrum disorder, late capitalism, and even the Quest Atlantis boom. It is only in comparison with the so-called abnormal that the so-called normal can be defined. I conclude that it is 'the otherness' which always and already permeates the normal and stable working of memory and frames the structure and content of the ego. In other words, I depict the heteronomous nature of the capability of memory and imagination of typically developed individuals.

In part one, I begin my quest by questioning why it is that we feel our futuristic utopia already existed in a super-ancient era, and/or that we are somehow repeating this present moment in a state of déjà vu. This sense of a disturbance of time is a common theme in popular media, such as manga, anime, and film, especially in contemporary Japan. The mass appeal of these representations is significant. According to Fredric Jameson, cultural symbols are the imaginary resolution of unsolvable contradictions we are experiencing at the level of 'the real,' i.e., history. This means our tendency to consume these representations of micro-time-turbulence

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as pleasure, our daydreaming, is a resolving mechanism of larger structural problems we are experiencing at a deeper level of historical and socio-economic dynamism. This is problematic.

I then return to Augustine, famous for his obsessive odyssey into the nature of human memory. His brilliant achievement was the discovery of an exogenous factor in the depths of our memory. Something great motivates our memory function and boots up our 'self'. He was sure that it was the touch of God. Was it really God, though? I argue we should adopt Augustine's quest and go even further. Augustine dismissed visions in our daydreams and dreams as false content, irrelevant to true faith, yet after his discovery, people in the Middle Ages seemed strongly interested in both waking and sleeping dreams and visions. The research of Jacques Le Goff and Yusuke Maki, shows that people in the Middle Ages believed that dreams and visions were another kind of truth, both in the West and the East. Descartes, from his vantage point between the Middle and Modern Ages, was a person who had many remarkable dreams. For this very reason, he felt he had to strongly reject the content of dreams as untrue. His strange argument on the possibility that our entire reality could be a dream, that an evil god is deceiving us, is well known. Yet in so arguing, Descartes again repressed, following Augustine, the content of our dreams, and isolated the pure function of imagination as a vacuous and self-referential circuit, that is, the Cartesian 'cogito'. (To be continued.)

Key words: memory, imagination, dialectic, Hegel, Derrida, autism, neurotypical

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*We knew something important.  
But we have forgotten it.*

## 0. Premise

The creation of “futurism” and “intersubjectivity” is just one result from a fundamental perspective. Perhaps it is more appropriate to call it an illusion or misconception, or a psychological mistake. However, something among the various human abilities certainly allows us to realize such an effect. This force produces what we call “society” as an effect in terms of space, and it produces what we call “history” as an effect in terms of time. Further, it creates them both to have a dynamic structure. This power allows us to understand the “other” as the self, and this illusion or fiction of understanding creates our dynamics of reality. Our “reality” is fictional and imaginary. In this way, the misconception which is called “understanding” has produced a frightening effect, and that effect includes the self-identification of the “past” as the other. In philosophy, such power is known as the “imagination”<sup>2)</sup>.

## 1. The Challenge of Philosophy: Deconstructing Dialectics

We sometimes create the illusion that our future was in the distant past. Or, we may feel we have already undergone the present we are currently experiencing. Thinking that the future is the past or the present has already happened are contradictions. Such disturbances on the temporal or memory level may not be unusual as a micro-experience of human consciousness. However, when cultural representations that depict such sensory experiences gain widespread popularity and are mass-produced and consumed as commodities, it is safe to assume the involvement of a socio-historical structure. Such fantasies are often carried out in various aspects of modern Japanese popular culture, for example, and have gained widespread distribution without actually being said *as such* and without being identified through philosophical concepts. A person feeling strong and persistent disturbances of time and memory is diagnosed as having “dissociation,” which is treated as a sign of psychopathology. However, if many people prefer to consume cultural representations that express such feelings, it is not called a pathology. First, pathology is used to refer to minor issues. Second, if people prefer and adhere to illusions over the pain, confusion, or difficulty in their lives, it is an adaptation. Fredric Jameson theorizes that symbolism in cultural representation is the imaginative solution for the unsolvable contradictions we experience at the level of *the real*. In other words, our tendency to prefer and consume representations of micro time-and-memory-disturbances; our daydreams, is the expressions of imaginative solutions to the structural, historical, and socio-economic problems we are experiencing.

It is necessary to discuss their importance before delving into the specific aspects of these illusions. If discussed specifically, the importance of such situations may be contradictorily

overlooked because of the closeness of the case. This is why concrete examples only appear later in the discussion. However, the fact that this situation is commonplace and everyday also highlights its importance.

The idea that the future was in the past should be considered philosophically important. This is because of the contradiction inherent in the idea that what is to come has already happened: that what is not yet experienced has already been experienced. Why would we feel this?

In a sense, this is a true “dialectic.” If aspects of this idea are common in our everyday lives today, philosophically speaking, the modern age is terrifying. This is to say, the present is when “philosophy as situation” has been completed. We can call it every-day metaphysics. However, to understand the creation of these circumstances, it is convenient to return to the “beginning” where such circumstances were experienced as a novelty. If it is true that “philosophy as situation” already exists, then the next task philosophy should attempt is the possibility of dismantling that circumstance. In other words, we should aim to dismantle dialectics and conclude philosophy. Further, to think about the conclusion, we must examine the beginning.

## **2. Before back to the Beginning: Augustine**

However, before we return to the true beginning, let us detain ourselves and examine the time before that.

It is Augustine (354–430) and his theory of memory.

In his “Confessions” (approx. 400), Augustine talks about the “inner sanctuary” of “memory” [Confessions 10.8]<sup>3</sup>. He describes human memory as a “great power” and praises its mystery as a vast hall, treasury, a profound inner chamber. He calls it unfathomable, “a fearful thing, a deep and boundless manifoldness” [Confessions 10.17]. He also talks about the mystery of the “memory of remembering” and even “memory of forgetting.” On the other hand, Augustine believes that although the power of memory is great, reaching God requires us to surpass our power of memory. “I will pass even beyond this power of mine which is called memory. I will pass beyond it, that I may approach unto Thee, O sweet Light” [Confessions 10.17]. Augustine believes that since even beasts have the capacity for simple memory, we must go beyond this as human beings separate from beasts. He also considers ordinary memory as the memory of life on earth and of the “corporeal images” and “affections” of physical things, which make up the whole “I.” However, he does not believe it is possible to find God in such things. In other words, his task is to pass beyond into the inner sanctuary.

Furthermore, he must ask himself that if it is beyond memory, where is God, and where can he find Him? Once we know God, that is, once we have been converted and entered the path of faith, God will be in our memory, and we will never forget Him. We can always find God

in our memory. However, is this truly so? Where within the memory is He? “But where in my memory residest Thou, O Lord, where residest Thou there?” [Confessions 10.25]. His answer to this is interesting. He argues about happiness to reach the depths of the “inner sanctuary” of memory. Before that, however, Augustine introduces another small but interesting argument, namely the fact that we remember some things even when we have forgotten them; in other words, memories we have forgotten but not truly forgotten.

For example, if we lose something and have forgotten that we have lost it, we recognize it if someone offers it to us, thinking, “Oh, that is what I lost” or “That is what I was looking for.” Essentially, there are times we forget something, but not entirely. It is not uncommon to feel that we have forgotten something important, only to remember it when we encounter it later. “For we have not as yet utterly forgotten that which we remember ourselves to have forgotten. What then we have utterly forgotten, though lost, we cannot even seek after” [Confessions 10.19]. Thus, he states that we are beings who seek to remember what we have forgotten. This is a small part of his argument.

Next is his argument about happiness. We all seek happiness. There is nobody who does not seek to be happy. Seeking to be happy means we know about happiness, because we cannot seek what we do not know. To know, Augustine says, means that it is in our memory. There must be a memory of happiness within us, or we would not seek it. “That they do will [to be happy] is most certain. They have known it then, *I know not how, and so have it by some sort of knowledge, what, I know not, and am perplexed whether it be in the memory*, which if it be, then we have been happy once” [Confessions 10.20, emphasis by author].

If there is such a memory of “happiness,” is it retained in the mind in the same way the memory of Carthage was, the city of joy that Augustine once experienced? He thinks not. Everyone seeks happiness. Nobody would say no if asked if they wanted happiness. This type of happiness is universally sought after. However, not all human beings seek the same things for happiness. Rather, they seek their own happiness. In addition, although true happiness is the joy of knowing the truth, many people have drifted away from the joy of knowing God and the truth, and have fallen into various earthly pleasures in search of happiness. This is the fate of human beings, and Augustine tells us to break free from it.

In Chapters 30 to 39 of Book 10 of Confessions, Augustine enumerates and analyses in detail how human beings are tempted by earthly pleasures through the five senses of the body and emotions. Augustine’s argument has a confusing structure, but ultimately, he means that true happiness is not in any of those earthly pleasures, and therefore not in things that can be remembered in the ordinary sense. “With my outward senses, as I might, I surveyed the world, and observed the life, which my body hath from me, and these my senses. Thence entered I the recesses of my memory, those manifold and spacious chambers, wonderfully furnished with innumerable stores; and I considered, and stood aghast; being able to discern nothing of these things without Thee, and finding none of them to be Thee” [Confessions 10.40].

Happiness is not within my memory, and God is not within my memory. God was not in my memory, at least not before I knew Him and the joy of being with Him. Nevertheless, I was looking for happiness, and everyone was looking for happiness. This is a strange thing.

I knew God even though I had never met him. Somehow, I was experiencing God in a different way than I had experienced anything in the past. How is such a thing possible? Augustine's answer is that it depends on transcendental revelation, that is, God's influence on human beings beyond ordinary experience. "Where then did I find Thee, that I might learn Thee, but in Thee above me?" [Confessions 10.26]. Augustine's answer is thus terribly concise. He also says, "Nor was I myself, who found out these things. [...] Nor yet was I myself when I did this, i.e., that my power whereby I did it, neither was it Thou" [Confessions 10.40]. After saying this, Augustine's narrative concludes Volume 10 of the Confessions by praising Jesus Christ, the mediator between God and man, the "true Mediator."

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What logic can we read in Augustine's development of these narratives? I consider it as follows. First, it is certain that Augustine is deeply fascinated by the greatness and mystery of human memory. Without it, there is no basis for him to develop his narrative. Incidentally, in his other book *The Trinity*, he states that the human mind's capacity for memory plays an important role in our ability to know ourselves and thus fulfill the image of God and understand the Trinity in God<sup>4</sup>). In other words, Augustine recognized early the important role of memory, or the power of imagination, in forming the human psyche, which is structured as self-consciousness. He further intuited that it somehow functions as a force connecting us to God.

However, one characteristic of Augustine's thought is that it ascetically avoids the directness of the connection with God. Indeed, during Augustine's time, the theory of the Trinity as an orthodox doctrine was being established, and he himself wrote on it. Augustine carefully had to reject the idea of a *direct* memory of God or *direct* memories of a happy life with God. We all seek happiness; we all seek the truth. In other words, we seek God. However, that does not mean we have previously come into contact with God. If we fall into the idea of thinking that we have the memory of God, that would be heresy. Thus, God must be beyond memory. This seems to be what Augustine meant. A passage in Augustine's treatise is perhaps an attempt to disprove the notion of previous lives or us directly inheriting the biblical memory of Adam's (and Eve's) happiness in the Garden of Eden. "Whether it be in the memory, which if it be, then we have been happy once; whether all severally, or in that man who first sinned, in whom also we all died, and from whom we are all born with misery, I now enquire not, but only, whether the happy life be in the memory?" [Confessions 10.20]. His obsession with and discussion of the power of memory in human beings could be attributed to his fascination with that power, which is an important function of the human psyche, and that it already tended

to bring about heretical ideas such as memories of previous lives and pre-birth memories among the people of his time. Augustine is well known to have been devoted to Manichaeism when he was young. He later distanced himself from it after being exposed to Neo-Platonism and converted to Christianity. The Manichaean doctrine is believed to have ancient Greek, Buddhist, and Gnostic influences, and included ideas such as reincarnation.

For example, Augustine notes in his commentary on the Old Testament that the descriptions of the Garden of Eden and Tree of Life must be historical descriptions. Paradise was once real somewhere on earth. However, it is still important to Augustine to think of them as *spiritual symbols* [The Literal Meaning of Genesis 9.4-5]<sup>5)</sup>. Thus, in a direct sense, they have nothing to do with us. We must not think of it as a story of such a paradise where we lived before we were born, or of being happy in a previous life, or the memory of a perfect life before being born on earth. That would fall into heresy, which was probably one of the main points of his interpretation of the Bible. In The Trinity, he explicitly criticizes the Pythagorean school by name, rejecting the idea of life before birth. “We must not believe the story that Pythagoras of Samos recollected some things of this kind, which he experienced when he was previously here in another body. Others tell us about other people who have experienced something of the same sort in their minds. But it may be conjectured that these were untrue recollections, such as we commonly experience in sleep, when we imagine we remember, as though we had done or seen it, what we never did or saw at all. The minds of these persons, even though awake, were affected in this way at the suggestion of malignant and deceitful spirits” [The Trinity 12.15]. Thus, Augustine concludes that pre-birth memories are no more than daydreams. He also treats dreams during sleep as undesirable false visions. “When asleep, false visions persuade to that which when waking, the true cannot. Am I not then myself?” [Confessions 10.30].

Augustine’s theory of memory was a battleground against heresy. He may himself have once been fascinated by the idea of past life memories. Augustine’s theory of memory (i.e., the theory of imagination) was a persistent and meticulous self-analysis and demonstrated an elaborate process of analysis of the human mind unusual for ancient times; therefore, it had a range of influence that extends to modern ages. His discussion of the human mind is often noted to have anticipated aspects of the modern ego, particularly in his awareness of “individuality” and “interiority.” In the history of ideas, one can draw a concise line for the concept of ego from Augustine to Descartes to Kant. An unbroken line can also be seen in the theory of memory or imagination from Augustine to Descartes through the British Empiricists Locke and Hume to Kant.

Yasufumi Tomimatsu argues that in Augustine, we already see a modern aspect of the ego that reflects on itself, that is, the emergence of the “I” [Tomimatsu (2003)]. Tomimatsu’s interpretation of Augustine is unusual in that it draws on the findings of contemporary primate research on other-identity cognition and mirror-image cognition. However, interesting is that

Tomimatsu draws on the New Testament verse “Now we see a dim reflection in the mirror, but then we will see it face to face” from the “Hymn to Love,” viewing Augustine’s attempt to model the human mind as the likeness of God as *a return to oneself by encountering something beyond oneself*, or in other words, a reflection. Essentially, it suggests that Augustine’s thought had already anticipated Hegel’s “master-slave dialectic” and Jacques Lacan’s “mirror stage theory,” although this would be a premature consideration. For Augustine, the “other” with whom the human mind comes into contact and reflects back to itself is God. However, the God of Christianity is not the one God of Judaism. It is the God of the Trinity, the one who comes into contact with us. He touches us, but not directly. We cannot experience God directly, so we have no memory of God. Memories can call up representations of what we have experienced, but God is beyond the finite nature of our experience. This is why Augustine, marveling at the greatness of human memory, discarded its contents, which led to *objectifying* its capacity. Because of this objectification, Augustine concludes that he cannot reach God with the power of memory, so we should go beyond the power thereof. However, in this case, going beyond memory means focusing on the workings of the mind itself, not representations. In The Trinity, he sees the human mind as the likeness of God, overlapping the three natures of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in a trinity structure of memory, knowledge, and will (love). Here, memory plays the role of capturing wholeness. Memory is said to be the power of the mind to reflexively perceive itself. Memory evokes representations of the past, but the power of memory is the presentness of the mind: its ability to grasp itself as a mind. “And therefore, as that is called memory in things past which makes it possible to recall and remember them; so, in a thing present, as the mind is to itself, that is not unreasonably to be called memory, which makes the mind at hand to itself, so that it can be understood by its own thought, and then both be joined together by love of itself” [The Trinity 14.11]. Confessions discussed going beyond concrete experiences, that is, capturing what cannot be understood by the representation of memory and going beyond memory would lead to God. In other words, to reach the whole beyond the parts, the infinite beyond the finite, the power of memory must be transcended. However, in The Trinity, memory is perceived as the ability of reflection to know oneself, and the perception of the self as a spirit with Trinity is connected to the perception of the Trinity of God. In other words, the power of memory, when disconnected and purified from its content, is defined as the ability to come into contact with wholeness and to perceive oneself in a reflexive way. This is understood better in today’s terms, namely that we can only know ourselves through the perspective of others. Again, “the other” here refers to God. However, the Christian God is the other who comes into contact. Thus, it is an other, but it is an other as a self. It is a God that comes into contact with and permeates us through the Holy Spirit. It is not a God who appears to human beings as an absolute being who brings awe, sublimity, and sometimes even despair, like the Jewish God, but One who comes into contact with us with love. This kind of God stimulates our memory.

The following is a quote by the 20<sup>th</sup>-century thinker Mikhail Bakhtin. “Non-self-sufficiency, the impossibility of the existence of a single consciousness. I am conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for another, through another, and with the help of another. [...] To be means to be for another, and through the other, for oneself. A person has no internal sovereign territory, he is wholly and always on the boundary; looking inside himself, he looks into the eyes of another or with the eyes of another” [Bakhtin (1984) 250 in Japanese translation (1988)].

Fumi Sakaguchi believes that Bakhtin’s theory of the Trinity, in which the Holy Spirit (pneuma) was important to his ontology of contact, communion, and dialogue through Russian religiosity, was inherited by the Eastern Church and continued to the present day [Sakaguchi (1999) 109-112]. The Holy Spirit is placed higher in eastern theology than in the west, and was considered equal to God. Sakaguchi argues that the issue in the 4–6<sup>th</sup> centuries when the theory of the Trinity was established in the history of Christianity was the concept of the individual established through contact with the universal. In fact, Sakaguchi says that though the consciousness of the “individual” is considered to have occurred in modern times, the concept of the individual, or the self, existed vibrant and full of life through the interaction with the other as described above since before the Middle Ages. Through the process of modernity, life became drier and was reduced to mere “consciousness” [Sakaguchi (1999) 27-28]. The fact that the individual became drier meant that the universal became drier. This is because the Holy Spirit that flows between the individual and universal dried up. For example, to start from the place where the individual as an individual is an aporia in itself rather than the individual as a counter-concept of the universal, Husserl said, “... what emerges in the form of such a pure ego will be *particular*—in a sense, unconstituted—transcendence, *a transcendence latent in the immanent setting*” [Husserl (2002), 109-110. Japanese translation (I-I) 245]. Here, Husserl steadily admits confronting the aporia that the indwelling in representations inevitably leads to transcendence. To say that immanence is transcendence is a contradiction. However, Augustine already encountered this contradiction 1,500 years ago, seeing it as the secret of human memory’s power, as a switch that activates the concept of God as a trinity.

Specifically, the Holy Spirit did not become dry but was trapped in a structure that restricted its free and unrestrained activities. This is where modern “consciousness” was born. Consciousness is one who does not know the origin of itself. We saw the beginning in Augustine’s capacity for memory, which was devoid of content. In modern philosophy, this is known as “imagination” (Einbildungskraft).

As discussed later, imagination is the ability to connect the individual to the universal. As such, the Holy Spirit is alive there. However, the fact it has been objectified as an ability of the human spirit also means it has already become an ability built into the “individual.” It is no longer something that transcends the individual, is before the individual, and marks the

beginning of the individual.

Augustine had to solve the issue of the beginning of “I.” His solution was to go beyond memory to God, that is, *to turn the faculty of memory on itself* and through self-reflection, come to the concept of God as a trinity. For Augustine, the “other” that helps you turn your power of memory against yourself was God. This God is the memory of the depths of our memory, the bottom of our memory. It is the memory that activates a memory. *But was it truly God?*

### 3. Dreams, Daydreams and Imagination, and Time (1) : Middle Ages, Descartes

Here, we discuss dreams, daydreams, and imagination.

As seen above, Augustine tried to dismiss dreams and daydreams as false visions and irrelevant to faith. Here, too, Augustine is a pioneer for modern Western thought. In orthodox Christianity, since truth is in the words of the Bible as delivered by the Church, the successor of Jesus, the Son of God, it is reasonable to assume there is no truth in dreams and daydreams. Broadly, this is true.

This does not mean, of course, that the Christians ignored dreams after Augustine. Jacques Le Goff reported that in the early Middle Ages, people in Western Europe lived in dreams and visions. “Medieval men, men of contemplation and symbolic thought, were living in a world where the visible and the invisible, the natural and the supernatural, were intermingled inextricably, and tended to be masters of dreams” [Goff (1999) 38 in Japanese translation]. However, the Church strictly discouraged the dreaming of lay believers. The Church of Christ demanded that believers “drive away dreams and avoid committing such sins by not inquiring into the meaning of dreams.” Special permission was granted to kings, state dignitaries, and priests to deal with dreams for the purpose of finding messages from God in them or to overcome the devil. The monastic archives are replete with records of monks being possessed by fantastic visions. In the height of the Middle Ages (11–13<sup>th</sup> centuries), the pressure of dreams became too great to resist, and the Church began to recognize the meaning thereof as long as they were “good dreams,” not demonic ones, and people began to indulge in the contents of dreams and eagerly try to decipher them [Goff (1999) 38-39 in Japanese translation].

However, in the early modern period when Bacon and Descartes laid the foundations for new scholarship, dreams and daydreams (fantasies) were given a lower status, at least in the genealogy of knowledge. The early modern and modern periods in Western Europe may be described as the century of awakening from the dream. Examining human reasoning ability and establishing its use becomes a task of philosophy and natural science through which we dismiss dreams and daydreams as false. Here, the human capacity to dream is only *significant for its function in constructing cognition* in terms of imagination [Hirota (1970) 267-319].

The role of dreams is ambiguous to early modern Descartes. He was a “man of dreams” who left behind episodes about dreams. He had three dreams that made a strong impression on him the day he got the basic idea for his major work, *Discourse on the Method* (1637). In *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641), he doubts the unity of representation and existence, and considers the possibility that *all my experiences may be dreams*. He asks, how can he be certain that he is awake and experiencing what is before him? He also considers the possibility that what he thinks he has experienced or thought may have been falsely caused by an evil demon (a god-like being that can transcend human beings with malicious intent). “I shall then suppose not that God who is supremely good and the fountain of truth but some evil genius not less powerful than deceitful has employed his whole energies in deceiving me. I shall consider that the heavens, the earth, colors, figures, sound, and all other external things are naught but the illusions and dreams of which this genius has availed himself in order to lay traps for my credulity” [Descartes (2002) 31 in Japanese translation]. In Descartes’ case, however, this is methodical skepticism. Descartes’ description continues, and through proof of God’s existence, establishes the assurance of one’s own knowledge and acquires the clarity of consciousness (*cogito ergo sum*). With this as the fulcrum of Archimedes, Descartes constructs a method of acquiring truth through the rational mental capacity of human beings (pure understanding). Therefore, though his writings contain many references to dreams, it was to dismiss them as false and place them under his rational faculty despite his fascination with the power of dreams<sup>6</sup>). As for imagination, in Descartes’ philosophical writings, it is “secondary, and it is regarded merely as an auxiliary function of the cognitive action of pure understanding” [Hirota (1970) 304].

To Descartes, a dream is a dream, not a reality grasped by reason, but a “ground” to bring rational reality into solid relief as a “figure.”

The relationship between dreams and reality had a different way of thinking in ancient and medieval times in Eastern philosophy. In *The Butterfly Dream*, Zhuang Zhou of ancient China (4<sup>th</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> century BC) raised the possibility that reality could be a dream. “Once Zhuang Zhou dreamt he was a butterfly, a butterfly flitting and fluttering around, happy with himself and doing as he pleased. He did not know he was Zhuang Zhou. Suddenly, he woke up, and there he was, solid and unmistakable Zhuang Zhou. But he did not know if he was Zhuang Zhou who had dreamt he was a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming he was Zhuang Zhou. Between Zhuang Zhou and a butterfly, there must be some distinction! This is called the Transformation of Things” [Zhuang Zhou (1971) 88-89 in Japanese translation]. This renowned “Butterfly Dream” seems similar to Descartes’ Demon Argument in that it considers the possibility that *all reality in this world may be a dream*. Though they appear similar, they are very different. Descartes recovers the story of the dream to reason. Indeed, he may have been a dreamer or daydreamer<sup>7</sup>). However, the vector of Descartes’ thought is to not be misled by the falsehood of dreams, but rather to use them as a “catalyst” to move toward the construction of learning

through the ability to reason. This vector is inherited and strengthened in the subsequent development of Western philosophy. However, this vector does not exist for Zhuang Zhou. For Zhuang Zhou, dreams and reality are equal. More interestingly, he says that the distinction between dreams and reality, which are equal, is the Transformation of Things. In other words, the coming and going between dreams and reality or the overlap between the two is the essence of the movement of the world and human experience. Considering it, animals do not experience this distinction. One could say that animals live in perfect harmony with reality or that they live in their dreams and never awaken. Either way, it is the same. Only human beings make the transition between the dream and reality. The translator, Osamu Kanaya, says the essence is that “there is no causal relationship established... Zhuang Zhou is a butterfly, and the butterfly is Zhuang Zhou” [Zhuang Zhou (1971) 89 in Japanese translation]. Although different, they are at the same time one. *But how are they different and at the same time, the same?* This is the biggest question. This overlaps with the nature of memory or imagination Augustine discussed. The power of memory is my own power, but because this power relates to the formation of myself, the “beginning of me,” it transcends my own self. *Therefore, there is an opportunity to establish a situation being the same while being different.* I am what I am not, yet I am what I am is how the human “self” is generated as a dynamic structure with a three-dimensional outline different from animals. This is called dialectic, and here lies one of its roots.

Yusuke Maki cites the story of dreams in the 11<sup>th</sup>-century Sarashina Nikki and names the medieval mentality of interpreting and richly coloring real life through dreams the “spirit of coloration,” contrasting it with the “spirit of discoloration” of Western modernity. A cat wandered into the house of the author of Sarashina Nikki, and one night, the cat came to her in a dream and said she was the daughter of a noble family, lamenting the current situation. Thereafter, when she stroked the “noble” cat and talked to her, they seemed able to communicate. The dream gave a different color to the author’s daily life. Here, night dreams and daydreams are also continuous. The cat, of course, was likely an ordinary cat, but to the author of Sarashina Nikki, in reality, ordinary events were given meaning and color through dreams. On dreams, Freud’s way of thinking is the opposite of this. In Freudian analysis, dreams of chandeliers, fountains, and beautiful flights, and those of jewelry boxes, canals, and spiral staircases are treated as indicative of the mental mechanisms and physical parts of the real human world. Freud analyzes and considers dreams an extension of the everydayness of this unremarkable reality. However, in Sarashina Nikki, everyday reality is spoken of as an extension of the dream. Freud interprets dreams through reality, while Sarashina Nikki interprets reality through dreams [Maki (1977) 171].

In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, dreams were not yet confined to one’s “self” in medieval Japan. It may have been the same in the Middle Ages of Western Europe. It is not possible to discuss in detail here what happened in Western society during the transition from the Middle Ages to

the early modern period. However, it is certain that by the time of Descartes, who is regarded a pioneer of modern Western philosophy, dreams retreated to the background of rational human ability, and imagination was positioned as an ability that assisted the construction of knowledge.

In modern times, Western philosophers have devised ways to deal with imagination. The ability to remember, recall, and imagine, as Augustine had already noticed, is an ability related to the self-awareness of the human subject and thus tends to transcend the human being. It is, of course, a human ability. Nevertheless, it can transcend the self because of its ability to form the “self,” as it is involved in the beginning of the “self.” In modern times, it has become forbidden to seek the source of this power in the “Holy Spirit,” the link between God and the self. Thus, we have no choice but to devise it ourselves. (Continued in *II*)

### Notes

- 1) This article is a revised version of “Memories of the Future: An Essay on the Origin of Philosophy and Hegel’s imagination” in the commercial book *Battlefields of Philosophy* (edited by Seigen Nasu and Eiichi Nojiri, Koujin-sha, 2018), and reorganized into a series of articles for publication in the academic bulletin.
- 2) This article owes much to Naoki Sakai’s “Voices of the Past” [Sakai (1991)] regarding the idea of the appropriation of the past which is the other.
- 3) The translation “inner sanctum” can be found in the Iwanami Bunko Eijiro Hattori translation. Yoshichika Miyatani has translated it as “Hidden” in the Kyobunkwan collection.
- 4) On the relationship between Augustine’s “Confessions” and the theory of memory in “The Trinity”, see [Okazaki (2002) 109-123].
- 5) In this passage, Augustine sees the tree of life as a symbol of “wisdom.” The author previously argued that this is one of the beginnings of the overlap between the concepts of life and reason in Western thought [Nojiri (2010)].
- 6) Descartes’ discourse of false visions of the devil takes on a different meaning in our age, as we discuss later. Descartes awoke from his “Cartesian dream” and went on to study, but people in modern times remain obsessed with the “Cartesian dream.”
- 7) According to Genevieve Rodis-Levis, Descartes’ biographer, he was exempted from waking up at 5 am because of his frail health when he was at La Flèche. While all the other students went out to pray at the sound of the wake-up bell, he spent his time in a dreamy stupor and thus acquired the habit of meditating in a half-awake state [Rodis-Levis (1998) 42, 82 in Japanese translation].

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