

PAPER DETAILS

TITLE: Integration of Technology and Life in the Dimension of Being

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down the fossilized crust of the traditional feudal societies. But the problem is that, among the traditions expelled by modernity, there were essential elements connecting us to Life and Being. The immature modern reason dichotomized the world affairs too simply and superficially. As it could not read the invisible interconnections, it could not dig deeper the true reality. As a result, it confined us in another artificial dogmatism of dichotomy, let alone attaining the dimension of the Being. In social life, such blindness brought about the *Seinsvergessenheit* and inversion of values.

The Identity Principle and logic of exclusion underlying the western philosophy up to modernity were well criticized by Post-modernism. Its emphasis on the variety, multilateralism, decentralism, protection of minority, and complex structure of dispersion and specialization as the direction of future societies makes possible the coexistence and tolerance between others. But, still there remains far distance from Post-modernism to the essential integration needed for the harmony and mutual encouragement of World Community. The essential integration between different civilizations, between different religions, between science and religion, between man and nature, between technology and humanity can be achieved only in the ultimate dimension where the Being recover its original unity of verity, beauty, and divinity as the universal love itself.

The history of philosophy shows that the evolution of civilizations has attained in this dimension. In this context, the fundamental transformation of Western metaphysics in H. Bergson is very significant. He rightly pointed out the fact that the history of Western philosophy, from its origin, was dominated by the hidden illusions concerning the Being. This fundamental problem has made the history of Western philosophy a series of endless debates and refutations rotating in a confined circle of hidden faults.

This fact has great significance for this paper, because we can see that those metaphysical illusions are underlying the modern confusion between instrumentality and essence which disturbs the desirable relation of technology and human values. Born from this confusion, the paradigms of modern philosophy closed the way to the essence of the Life and Being, driving themselves to self-oblivion and finally to inversion of values. Because, as the instrument, technologies can serve good or for bad, if they

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zation by the fusion of Eastern and Western civilizations. It is possible to save the stray techno-scientific civilization menaced by inhumanity and total collapse. In the globalization age, each civilization will contribute to the humanity with its own merits developed during long history. The Western civilization has brightened the world with science, technology, and democracy, and the great Awakening of the Being which has permeated in Asian cultures from ancient times will open a road to the true World Community. The light emanating from the high dimension of the Being will illuminate our problematic field of knowledge and education. It is in this dimension that the philosophy of the high-technology society should be based, not in the prevalent customary positivism.

We see in history that, even if a new dimension is opened by some pioneers, the inertia of the previous one is so strong that the society still continues to be dominated unconsciously by the old fossilized paradigms or customs for a long time. To overcome this mental limit or obstacle, we should know how it blocks our way to the verity of reality and finally deforms our life. When a state artificially cut from a becoming is fossilized to be an eternal form or principle, its self-oblivion will confine it in a closed circle of literal analysis or simple mechanical efficiency. Positivism is such a case. It drives technological society into a more desolate land.

Inertia of Modern Reason

In the present techno-scientific society, the most widely spread paradigm of conceptions dominating the ordinary way of thinking is to be summed up as positivism. It is natural that the ordinary education is under the influence of this positivism. The crucial problem is that, as the final product of *raison moderne*, positivism inherits its very superficiality and uniformity that are blocking the way to the Being. In this unhappy one-dimensional state of mind, the original unity of verity, beauty, and divinity is broken, and they will be represented in mutual isolation. Just as science and religion confront each other, art and religion have lost their same original ground. In modern times, with the division of art and religion, the essential unity of beauty and divinity has been forgotten, and we worry that, even if art is becoming more and more refined in its techniques, its spiritual

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neous othernesses of the world. Their metaphysical fault made it impossible for them to enter into the true meaning of life, at the same time closing the way to the community of mankind. In this respect, the western rationalism was transformed surreptitiously into an instrument of exclusion and domination of the otherness. The so called Western modern reason declared itself as the ideal model of the evolution of all civilizations, underestimating other civilizations as the savage, barbarous, or undeveloped. Such an error of extremely linear interpretation of history was a natural result of the superficial *raison moderne*.

The unconscious tendency of the absolute deduction, the monistic reduction, or the uniform totalization makes the Philosophy of Identity fall into the dichotomical way of thinking. The world affairs are divided by two sides, one within the boundary of the definition, and the other outside the boundary of the definition. According to the Identity Principle, the latter should be excluded, expelled, dominated, or annihilated as heretics, or irrationals. The principle or ideology of the Western medieval society is a good example of the mistake of the Philosophy of Identity. Its ideal was to integrate religion, politics, law, economy, arts, culture, and morality into one closed coherent circuit, while excommunicating and extinguishing the others which exist outside that circuit as heretics. The medieval society was a perfect model of a totalitarian society. Such a historical fault did not stop with the end of the medieval age. In modern philosophy, the totalization of knowledge reappeared in the form of Cartesian rationalism, mechanism, dialectical materialism, communism, positivism, etc. And our contemporary techno-scientific society is seriously exposed to the danger of one-dimensional uniformity. Describing history as a battle between totalitarianism and liberal democracy, Karl Popper indicated that identity philosophy encourages a totalitarian mode of thought.⁴ And Jean-François Lyotard called the danger of totalization as “terror against life.”⁵ Fundamentally, it is the false conception of the Being hidden in the root of the Philosophy of Identity that deforms life in the world in various ways.

The history of philosophy shows that the Western traditional rationalism did not recognize the reality of the world. Today, we see that the

4 Karl Raimund Popper. *The Open Society and Its Enemies: Hegel and Marx* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), 2: 395.

5 Jean-François Lyotard. *La condition postmoderne* (Paris: Les Edition de Minuit, 1979), 8.

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being astonished to see that such false conceptions and paradigms have led education and social development planning as the basis of knowledge. It is natural that such conceptions have reproduced false attitudes and deformed relations in social life.

Technology and Religion

Because the dangers menacing the techno-scientific civilization come from the deformed value system like oblivion of the Being or inversion grown from the confusion of instrumentality and essence, the problems cannot be solved solely by the advance of high technologies. That is why the future education should recommence with the new philosophy of the Being. We should completely read again the contents and meaning of experience as the origin of science and religion. On this point, Bergson wrote:

*Yet we may admit that mystical experience, left to itself, cannot provide the philosopher with complete certainty. It could be absolutely convincing only if he had come by another way, such as a sensuous experience coupled with rational inference, to the conclusion of the probable existence of a privileged experience through which man could get into touch with a transcendent principle. The occurrence in mystics of just such an experience would then make it possible to add something to the results already established, whilst these established results would reflect back on to the mystical experience something of their own objectivity. Experience is the only source of knowledge.*⁶

One of the most important missions of contemporary metaphysics is to decipher the contents and meaning of this privileged experience. Even if it is a very rare special experience, attained through a long and hard spiritual mortification, nobody can deny that it is a given fact. It is the experience of the highest dimension of the Being. The word 宗教 which means religion in Korea, Japan, and China has this implication. Translating the Sanskrit word Siddhanta, 宗 (summit) means the highest dimension

6 Henri Bergson. *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, trans. by Audra and Brereton (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1954), 247-248.

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science is not a true science, religion not a true religion. Here, the old Asian cultural tradition that gives warning to the technique used solely for technique should be reevaluated. In this respect, the Islam tradition in which there is no trouble between science and religion is a good example of the great spirit of integration into the whole.

This spirit of integration coming from the great awakenings of Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam will be the new philosophical basis of the future education. Inheriting this great open mind, the future generations will be able to share together all the merits developed in the different civilizations, encouraging each other. This education will open a road to the true world community. The world will advance toward a new ideal of the unity of philosophy, art, and religion. We call it new only in the sense that we find our original self after a long history of oblivion and wandering.

Awakening of The Being

Jorge Luis Borges, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Ken Wilber, Aldous Huxley, Huston Smith, Thomas Merton etc., affirm that in spite of outer differences of surface religions there is an astonishing sameness in the mystical experiences of in-depth religions. In this ultimate dimension of Being, the verity, beauty, and divinity coincide. The essential integration is attained. The awakening of verity will come with great emotion from the deepest part of our self. This emotion of highest beauty and divinity will reveal us that the essence, meaning, and purpose of life are love.⁹ The true Being underlying all our concepts and values is love itself. Freed from the illusions, confusions, oblivion, and inversions concerning the Being, if high technology civilization is guided by this awakening, we can expect the promised future.

It has been noted by great religious teachers that the experiences and awakenings which have generated the open religions are same. In the state of ecstasy or enstasis,¹⁰ there emerged the following awakenings that

9 Bergson wrote: "Une émotion de ce genre ressemble sans doute, quoique de très loin, au sublime amour qui est pour le mystique l'essence même de Dieu", *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*, op. cit., 268.

10 Ecstasy and enstasis are the two different interpretations of the same reality *Samadhi* (三昧).

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The knowledge of the methodology and Faith means that we are on spiritual vision and that we are necessary. I said that "I am lame." I incorporated languages and observations. I can be different. I am a famous scientist. I am an ancient Greek. I am moving a stone. I am the force of the time. I am introducing physics and Ancient Greek. I am reason. I am making assumptions. I am experiencing. I am strictly professional. I am in wrong and