

# Ontologia of Kairos: Reflexion on Education and Transcendence

Satoshi TANAKA

*The University of Tokyo*

## Abstract

The aim of this Article is to distinguish the transcendence from "Idol" worship, to describe *alternative as a pedagogical desire* based on the premise to transcendence. *Pedagogical desire* is in the conflation state that *willing to reform better activity* in accordance with ordinal meanings and values and each one *trying to live a better life* specifically and singularly. Transcendence that is disconnected from the "Idol" worship is the *call of conscience*, the prototype of it is shown in Kairos of St. Paul. So the commitment to Kairos of St. Paul is the oldest representation of the thought of *trying to live a better life*. The Kairos is to enable to imitate the essential of education as activity responding to the "call of conscience". *Taisho Shin Kyouiku* (Tisho New Education Movement in modern Japan) as the historical alternative will be able to conceive as the activity supported in the responding to the "call of conscience", that is, as the thought of *trying to live a better life*.

## 1. Activity and Ideas

### Implicit references to transcendence

Pedagogy, as a discipline, has repeatedly sought to improve itself, or, to create a better method of education. Further, the vector for this improvement has often been associated with faith in God's transcendence as an Absolute other (the infinite inherent distance from man). In other words, in envisioning a better education, what is important is the power of faith that people generally have, or connecting the active ability to remake reality with the receptive ability to face "transcendence" (listening to and follow "revelations").

For example, Shuji Wada's "authority" is essential for improving education and is supported by "faith." Wada said in 1963 that education is the process of "molding of humans," so they may become "complete human beings." Further, its maxim is "ultimate

reality," that is, "God," and when God appears as "ultimate You," a person becomes "Me" and accepts this "God." The source of "authority" in education is the acceptance of this "God", or "faith," and learning is supported by the behavior of "a believer who stands before God in search of the archetype of this authority" (Wada 1963: 22–3).

For example, the "Ontological Security" (Geborgenheit) of Otto Friedrich Bollnow is an essential element of superior education and is the "grace" of God (Gnade). Bollnow says, "The conviction that is fundamentally protected even in all hardships, being at peace, is based on a person's faith (Gläubigkeit) which comes to man through grace, rather than possessing it." It is the theology that speaks of "grace" and philosophy that speaks of faith. "Faith" is "the essential human state that is purely and inherently equipped" (Bollnow NG: 66, 65). In other words, talking about philosophy without talking about God (as a reference term) is a deviation from the nature of philosophy. This philosophy can be called "pedagogy."

Given that the origin of modern educational thought—pedagogy—was based on Christian thought, we can consider that the reference to the transcendence of God in the context of "better" education, is conventional. This tradition goes back to Augustine. In his book *Of True Religion*, which was probably written around 390 AD, Augustine stated that "Philosophia is not inconsistent with religio" (AO, DVR: 5, 8). Needless to say, this "religio," or religion, is a reference to Christianity.

### **Criticism of "idol" worship**

However, this "alternative as a pedagogical desire" is in jeopardy as long as it is spoken of in association with so-called "transcendence." The "transcendence" could lead to "idol" (Idole) worship, as once discussed by Friedrich Nietzsche, and argued in recent years by Jean-Luc Marion (Marion 2010).

"Idol" worship in religion means that the values (norms) of the founders of the religion or the doctrines are worshipped as God. In a broader interpretation, it defines virtue, country, race, truth, authority, usefulness, ability, etc., as being the most significant values (Canon), and puts "faith" in them for self-interest. "Canon," for example, in the case of Christianity, is the Apostle's Creed (Credo/Symbolum Apostolicum) created in the 4th century as the state religion of Rome, and "Meritocracy" or Japanese "Nouryokushugi" (ability/capacity oriented-ness) maybe one in the present day. Such "idol" worship is fundamentally a violent self-contradiction. This is because "idol" worship is the justification of established meaning and values that overlooks the specific and individual call, as is reconfirmed later.

However, my aim is not to exclude transcendence from education but to place

original transcendence in education while excluding "idol" worship. To do so, I first divide the state of better existence into two kinds. The first is the activity of bringing improvements in humans and societies according to the predetermined "objectives or ideals," which have become a determined *signifié* with assigned meanings and values. The other is the desire to try to "live better" with each individual's specific "telos," to which no meaning or significance is attached: in other words, nothing more than a *significant* that is constantly questioned. Both are elements that make existence "better," but at least the "better" in the latter may not lead to "idol" worship. We will elaborate on it further in the subsequent sections.

### **Better reformation**

"Better reformation," whether for tools or people, is an artificial operation to surpass the existing limits. It has been formerly embodied in Plato's and Plotinus' "Eros," and in modern technology as Bergson's "Homo faber". The concept of "molding humans" (*Bildung*, cultivation) in pedagogy, and "ability formation" and "capacity development" in modern education theory both comprise this artificial operation. Even if such an artificial operation speaks of transcendence, it might be popularly comprised of the intention, expectation, significance, and value of people.

In modern society, this "better reformation" activity seems to have been accelerated not only by the development of technology but also due to the social structure. This is because the chief modern social structure is functional distribution, in which the distribution of status and fortune is determined mostly through ability and achievement, and the standard of distribution has almost been reduced to one's "usefulness." This usefulness is a value that cannot easily be ignored within the context of globalization, or the economic competition between individuals, organizations, and nations that is intensified through networks on a global scale.

Amidst this emphasis on usefulness, our abilities/capacities, as well as various life activities, are reduced to the means to some other ends, which is to say, objects for manipulation. For example, childbirth is already being manipulated by reproductive technology—the selection of superior sperm, performing in vitro fertilization, reverse calculation of conception date from the time of birth, and artificial insemination. This is to avoid giving birth to children with disabilities, avoid disadvantages of being born between January 1<sup>st</sup> and April 1<sup>st</sup> in the Japanese fiscal system, and prevent job loss. This is not limited to medical procedures, as various forms of technology are entwining in complex manners worldwide, creating a "cluster of technology."

### **"Trying to live better"**

The idea of "trying to live better" is often forgotten within this "cluster of technology." We can say that this idea certainly has "telos" but not "purpose/ideal", and not even "significance/value." It is a reflection made only after the twists and turns and is unique to each person. Therefore, this idea, when viewed in its entirety, is a diversified transformation.

This idea will be reflected in what can be summed up in one word as "human potential" in modern educational thought. Some examples are Baruch de Spinoza's "Conatus", Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz's "spirit" (esprit), John Locke's "human perfection", Jean-Jacques Rousseau's "Perfectibility"(perfectibilité), Immanuel Kant's "human nature" (menschlichen Natur), Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's "spirit" (Geist), and Johann Friedrich Herbart's "Pliability" (Bildsamkeit).

I would like to clarify that these ideas, though metaphysical, were originally derived from the concept of "perfection" that early Christianity spoke of. For example, it is "perfection" as Thomas Aquinas defines it in *Summa Theologiae* as when human seeks the "perfection" of God (ST: I, Q. 35,a.2, ad. 3). Further, it dates back to the transcendence of Paul's "Teleios" (τέλειος), or "Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 13.10 Colossian 1.28). In other words, it is "agape", clearly distinct from "eros".

### **As seen in the difference between responsibility and blame**

The distinction between "better reformation" and "trying to live better" is evident in the difference between "responsibility" and "blame". "Responsibility" is having both the correct legal and commonsensical response from a person's judgment and action. This "responsibility" is the value created by a person's "will/intention," as seen in the pairing of "freedom and responsibility." On the other hand, "blame" does not require a response legally or using common sense, but it is an internal "sense" rising for an ethical response. This "sense" of blaming oneself is the "call of conscience" that we will revisit later. This "sense" is distinguished from "will/intention."

As mentioned earlier, to talk about education while assuming transcendence, I would like to trace the idea of "trying to live better" by returning to the origin of modern educational thought. In other words, I would like to take up the idea of transcendence that early Christianity, especially Paul, spoke of on the notion of Kairos, separate it from "idol" worship, and understand it ontologically. That is, even according to Paul, it deviates from "transcendence" and "faith."

## 2. Receiving Transcendence and the "Call of Conscience"

### Receiving Transcendence

First, let us return to Nietzsche. Was the transcendence of "Jesus" in early Christianity premised on "idol" worship? At first glance, Nietzsche, who advocated "Antichrist," seems to have found idol worship in Jesus' transcendence. Nietzsche says that Christian "faith" (Glaube) is the idea of exchange for self-interest: earning the reward of "forgiveness" and avoiding the punishment of "sin" (KS 6, A: §25, 33), and to have such "faith" abandons "establishing purpose from within [= call of conscience]" and makes one the "mere means" to protect one's existing value, making faith a "throwaway" to defend this value (KS 6, A: §54).

Surprisingly, however, for Nietzsche, such Christian "faith" is not a requirement for the existence of Jesus' transcendence. Nietzsche appreciates the "works" of "Christ" shown by Jesus while acknowledging himself to be an "Antichrist." He states, "In truth, there was only one Christian and he died on the cross... Therefore, original Christianity is... not faith, but works" (KS 6, A: §39). The last expression, "works, not faith," may be a refutation of Paul's "it is faith, not works, that are valued in this world, that justify people", but the two talk on similar lines.

The "works" that Nietzsche finds in "original Christianity" is a person "receiving" the transcendence demonstrated by Jesus. It is the belief in him (credere in eum) that Augustine distinguishes from "believing him" (credere ei) regarding Jesus in *Tractates on the Gospel of John*, although Nietzsche does not mention this (AO, IEvI=1993 (2): 29). According to Arai, "ei" means "him" and an accusative case that means a stationary object, while "eum" means "to him" and is a dative case, which means the direction that the subject is facing (Arai 1997: 304). In my understanding, "to believe Him" is to trust "Him" for good reason, that is related to Augustine's "use" (uti)—"usefulness" (utilitas) — — and "believing in Him" is "Me" "receiving" (frui) "his Word" — — to "Receive"(fruitio)—(AO, DC: I. 3. 3, 4. 4, 5.5).

A stepping stone toward separating education-based transcendence from "idol" worship ("faith") can be found in this "receiving" transcendence. Here, rather than Nietzsche, we refer to Nancy (Jean-Luc), who elaborates on this "receiving" transcendence. For Nancy, it is the *foi*, which is distinguished from "faith" (croyance, belief).

### Listening to and following the "Call of Conscience" that is "Faith"

Nancy's "faith" is to live anew beyond self-interest as well as the meaning and value

of any kind (Nancy 2005: 120). It does not seek "definite things" like "miracles," "revelations," or "salvations" sought by after Christianity became the state religion of Rome or the "arguments of the existence of God" that the theology of the Middle Ages refined; rather, it is to feel the transcendence and live anew under the "works" through the words and life of Jesus. Therefore, "faith" is equal to "transcending." "Faith, strictly speaking, is that a person is connected to the name of God (which is to say, love), even when God and his love are not exactly present or do not manifest" (Nancy 2005: 221).

Nancy describes this act of "faith" as "sincere" (*fidèle*), which is to listen unconditionally to and follow the "call of conscience". In other words, Jesus' transcendence appears only as a "sense" of "calls of conscience," and "faith" is merely listening to and following this "call of conscience." For Nancy, the sense (*sens*) is what connects people (bind them together), which is clearly distinct from meaning and value, from intention and expectation; and a "call of conscience" is its ultimate state. Nancy said, "Faith is not believing in [God] without evidence, not believing beyond the evidence. It is the work (*acte*) of a sincere person, and this work is the testimony of the conscience within their heart"(Nancy 2005: 221).

### **The Ethical Sense of a "Call of Conscience"**

In other words, this "call of conscience" is a sense of ethics. That is, it is not the possibility of neutral and universal meanings and values that the general public can choose from, but the fact that comes and is understood only when "I" is against "You." Moreover, once it comes and is understood, no matter how the times change, the sense of ethics remains in the mind. This is because only listening to and following the sense of ethics fulfills a person's time. In other words, the existence of the self and the world can only be affirmed not by rationality but by emotion. That is, the "call of conscience" comes and is understood only in this world or situation, but persists or sustains beyond them.

This "call of conscience" is also the basis for objective rationality, which is extrinsic. This is because life will be fulfilled through listening to and following the "call of conscience," and as part of that fulfillment or "virtue," people will be able to sacrifice without grudging, and strive, concentrate, and exceed themselves in their schools or workplaces to realize their future potential. Effort, whether in sports, commercial activities, or academia, can be described using any number of common and relative meanings and values, but for the person in question, it is peculiar, unique, and irreplaceable. In other words, "self-overcoming" and "self-transcendence" occur when a person listens to the "call of conscience" and follows it.

### **Receiving in the "Nearness" of "Distance"**

In order to listen to and follow these "calls of conscience," one would have to have already felt, if faintly, "separation" from their transcendent. In other words, the opposite and common dimension (continuity) of the transcendent—people will have to be opened, as the "call" will not be audible otherwise. In other words, finite people adhere to meaning and values listening to and following the "call" of the infinite God that transcends them to connect a human—already in the "nearness" of the primordial "distance" from the transcendent—and the transcendent while being far separated.

This transcendent-human connection is similar to the human-to-human connection. Indeed, unlike the transcendent-human case, the human-to-human live together in meaning and value, but it is similar to the case of the transcendent-human, as it originates fundamentally from "distance" and "nearness." Furthermore, the fundamental trigger of the "nearness" is not the similarity of form but the similarity of feelings. Without the overlap of this desire, the word "believing" becomes extremely sorrowful. In other words, it is a word that refers to the "broken heart." In any case, the reason that people care about others as if they were themselves may be that they find obedience to the "call of conscience" in others. It is a person's listening to and following their "call of conscience"—even if sometimes—that resonates with that of others.

Incidentally, this "nearness" of "distance" may overlap with the "closeness" (Nähe) of Heidegger. For Heidegger, "nearness" of person-to-person assumes that the people are "far apart, that is, far separated as the earth and the heavens, where God and man are involved." (GA. 12, WsS: 199). "Nearness" is that people, like God and man, or man and man, who are fundamentally separated from each other, try to connect to each other in that "distance." Moreover, "nearness" as this "distance" is also the true form of "existence" (Sein) that Heidegger says, that is, the essence or nature of "co-existence" (Mit-sein) (SZ: 114).

### **Connection of men, through the "call of conscience"**

Laying such obedience to the "calls of conscience" as the foundation of talking about education that assumes transcendence is not to have an education based on mystical experiences such as "revelations" and "conversions" or new religious values models, and make it a ground for criticizing education. Listening to and following the "call of conscience," while giving truth to the deep and rich implications of Christian thought, is the shelving of "faith," and is an element of "emotion" that probably everyone experiences. For example, the word "heart" in everyday expressions such as "wholehearted" and "from the heart" may, though not always, be connected to this "call

of conscience."

The noteworthy point here is that such a "call of conscience" can be heard only by actually being with other people and by facing "You"—moreover coming from a place that transcends "You." The fact that this "call of conscience" comes in confrontation with man is also found in an ontological understanding of the "Kairos" of early Christianity. Subsequently, we will have seen that "Kairos" is the oldest word that expresses the idea of "living better."

### 3. From the Ontology of Kairos

#### Time of the Ontological Kairos

The term "kairos" (καιρός) used here is St. Paul's concept of time in the New Testament, which is distinguished from "Chronos" (χρόνος). Chronos is the quantitative time that flows and can be measured, while Kairos is a qualitative time ("now") for "I" to act and determine. In the book of Romans, Paul calls Kairos "now," and it is mentioned as "now is the time that has already come, [is time] for you to wake out of sleep" (ὥρα ἤδη ὑμᾶς ἐξ ὑπνου ἐγερθῆναι [hora ede hymas ex hypnou egerthenai]) (Roman 13.11). The theologian Paul Tillich describes it as "the time to start taking important action" (Tillich 1967; 8: 1). The difference between Kairos and Chronos is clearly shown in the difference between how the idea of "now" is perceived. Chronos's "now" is an infinite number of points on the linear chronology of past, present, and future, when various things happen, whereas Kairos's "now" is the particular instance of each person's life, when only one thing can happen. In other words, it is "parousia".

This "parousia," which is the heart of Kairos, has conventionally been given meaning by the "eschatology" (Eschatologia). The concept of "Apocalypse" (the theory that Christ will reappear on earth at the end of history for the final judgment of people) in Christianity refers to Kairos at the "future time" that begins with Christ's "Second Coming" (Parousia), and simultaneously, it has meant the time to "wait" for the "second coming" (see Welborn 2015:12). This apocalyptic concept of Kairos shelves the idea of "time that has already arrived" given before by Paul, and instead, attaches great importance to "waiting" at the time of the "second coming." Kairos as this "long-awaited" time is one in which the heart rejoices with the approach of the "second coming" of Christ. It is the time of breaking the cycle of life and death, so to speak, the time of Pantarei, and moreover, it is time for their lives to shine beyond the time dominated by rational purpose. However, during this time, people only see ahead and do not look at "You" before their



eyes.

On the other hand, the ontological concept of Kairos presented by Heidegger leads to transcendence as "faith." This is because Kairos is "here and now when I turn to you." That is the "presence"(parousia) of Jesus man feels, that Jesus is already with him, and "Here and now, I will love you as Jesus does." Heidegger says, "The root of the parousia is said to be long-awaited, but that is completely wrong!" (GA. 60, PrL: 102). Heidegger's interpretation of Kairos is in consonance with Paul's, "Now is the Kairos of salvation" (νῦν καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος [nun kairos euprosdektos]) (II Corinth 6.2). Even in *Being and Time*, although he does not refer to it as "love," Heidegger states, "what 'parousia ...' implies as 'presence' (Anwesenheit) is that an entity is living in confrontation with someone in its existence. In other words, existence understands itself in the peculiar time pattern of living 'face-to-face'" (SZ: 25)\*.

### Kairos of Paul

Indeed, Paul speaks of the time of the Messiah's "Second Coming" in the Book of Romans (Romans 3. 26; 8.18; 11.6), "[I tell you] be transformed by renewing your mind (ἀνακαίνωσει [anakainosei]) without conforming to this age (αἰῶνι [aioni]). To prove what is the will of God, good and acceptable and perfect (τέλειον [teleion])" (Roman 12.2). Specifically, it means "loving thy neighbor." As Paul says in the Book of Galatians, "belief works by love" (πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη [pistis di'agapes energoumene]), the purpose of "loving" is the "works" of "faith", that is, its "actualization" (ἐνέργεια [energeia]) (Galatea 5.6).

However, the apocalyptic concept of Kairos would not hold if Paul's theory of Kairos was followed. For example, as Agamben argues in *The Time That Remains* (Agamben 2000=2005: 115), Paul did not mention anything about the future there. When he speaks of the Messiah's "Second Coming" in the Book of Romans, he refers to the

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\* The relationship between Heidegger and Christianity has been argued in various ways, but it can be considered quite close. Heidegger said in his *Letter on Humanism* (1946), "If a person proudly declares God to be the "highest value," this is a degradation of the essence of God. Thinking while evaluating ... is the greatest blasphemy imaginable against being"(GA. 9, Hum: 349, 351). Further, 20 years later in a 1966 interview with *Spiegel* magazine, Heidegger said, "The only thing we can do is to hope for and prepare for the coming of God." (GA. 16, RZL: 671). This "God" may be the Christian god. Indeed, Heidegger says, "The underlying existence is never God's own rule. The underlying existence is what God needs to be God (Götterung) and is wholly distinct from God"(GA 65, BP: 240. However, Heidegger states that despite being the "most primitive," "God" was "long removed from [thinking]" (GA. 65, BP: 416). Does this not mean that the "works" of "God" that give life to the creatures are hidden by metaphysical perception? Heidegger also says that "existence is a straightforward transcendent" (SZ: 38), and that it is "transcendence" (Transzendenz) when a person listens to and follows the "call of existence" (SZ: 440. 440). Is this "transcendence" not equal to "belief" through the "works" of "Christ"?

word "Kairos" to involve one's heart with his neighbor in the "nun" (νῦν [nun]); in other words, it means "towards you, here and now." In other words, Paul's time for Kairos is not "after the Day of Judgment," but "towards you, here and now."

Moreover, Paul associates Kairos with "time that has already come" (ὥρα ἤδη [hora ede]) in the Book of Romans. In other words, "towards you, here and now" is connected to "when Jesus has already come." "When everything has come" is Paul's "Day of Salvation" in "The Second Corinthians." That is, "I saved you on the day of salvation" (ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας ἐβοήθησά σοι · [en hemera soterias eboethesa soi]), which is "the day of salvation" (II Corinth 6.2). In other words, the "when everything has come" is the "presence" ("coming") of Jesus which has already occurred. Therefore, the Kairos referred to by Paul is "towards you, here and now" by "remembering the truth" that Jesus has already given, that is, the time for our lives to shine together.

This alternate reading makes it apparent that Paul's Kairos is transcendental and internal. Kairos is "now and here" in the sense that he knows what to do "here and now." In other words, it is inherent in "I". However, it simultaneously transcends the "I" that is "now and here." This is because Kairos is heading for the transcendence of Jesus who "is present."

### **Time of Kairos that begins with resonance and determination**

The word of Jesus who is "present," which is a requirement for the existence of Kairos, is described in some detail by Paul as "the word of Pistis" (τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως [to rhema tes pisteos]) in Romans. Paul said, "The word (of Jesus) is near you. In your mouth, and in your heart. That is the word of Pistis" (Romans 10.8). In other words, Pistis's word is a person innocently expressing the words of Jesus that rise in himself.

These words of Pistis, the word of "present" Jesus, demonstrate the same "work" as Nancy's "call of conscience." This is because Jesus' words (that is, "unconditional love for neighbors") invites one to "obey" (Gehorchen) without being "commanded" or "persuaded." It means that people live in their way while being inspired by "works" of Jesus as "Christ," ontologically speaking, to live in a unique singularity while resonating with the existence of Jesus' "love" (Paul's "indescribable inward groan of Pneuma [= spirit] itself" (Roman 8.23) is probably this "resonance"). In other words, "loving" a person before you resonate with the transcendence (declaring "unconditional love")—in a transcendent entity who "exists"—and they themselves are transcendent, "trying to live better."

Paul does not specify, but I would like to explicitly state what Heidegger implies through the words "what they have already listened to" (Zusammengehören) (GA. 65,

BP: 78), and what Nancy states with "shared" (partage) (Nancy 2005: 179). It means that when a person "loves" another person before them, they also want to "live better," in other words, an unconditional assumption of listening to and following the "call of conscience"—even if it is dangerous. In fact, though there are others who do not (cannot) do it, at any rate, we can say that the face-to-face coexistence of people is premised on the continuity of the self and the other (counter-polarity) by the "call of conscience."

I verify here that Kairos, which begins with listening to such "calls" of Jesus, is uncertain. Heidegger says, "There is no certainty in a Christian life. The life is always uncertain" (GA. 60, PrL: 105). Honestly, "believing" despite this uncertainty requires "determination" because the "call" of Jesus (via Paul), "Kairos of salvation is now," is not an instruction or a persuasion but an invitation, as mentioned above. Along with the desire "to live better," people can accept parousia, and if they live in Kairos, they may reject it. The time of Kairos is the person's choice.

### **Listening to and following the "call of conscience"**

When a person follows this "call", they sense the "nearness" mentioned above. This has been discussed in Christian thought in various ways. For example, the two "functions" of the "soul," are what Thomas calls the ability of acceptance (potentia passiva), and the ability of obedience (potentia oboedientialis) to the "order of God" (ST: III, q. 11,1 a. 1). It is like a receptacle prepared for human beings to accept the divine attribute of "integrity" (incidentally, the "ability of acceptance" of another soul is called "potentialia naturalis" because it is in response to the "natural order" (ST: III, q. 10, a. 4). Further, Heidegger considers this act of listening as "the activity intrinsic to thinking." That is, "All pursuit of the essence of thinking is supported by calls from what is to be questioned [of thought]. Therefore, hearing this voice is an inherent, original activity of the thought necessary here and now. It should not be performed by asking [True / False] (GA. 12, WsS: 169).

Whether it is Thomas's ability to listen to and follow or Heidegger's thought, listening to and following a call is always an unending process lasting for an eternity, or, in ontological terms, will be connected to "existence." Further, this "eternal existence" implies that "I" is something "separated" from the great "existence" and that "I" is given to "existence." That is what Heidegger has shown with the word "presence" (Da-sein), that is, an "existence" limited to "I".

Through listening to and following the "call," one opens up the circumstances of reality around him toward a peculiar telos specific to himself and transforms it into the place that goes to telos beyond scientific understanding. The telos is given to each person

in a specific situation. Violence is part of the action toward telos, as long as it is unavoidable, as certain circumstances necessitates violence. Freedom and hope are not facts but arise at this time. Regardless of how troublesome and alienating the circumstances, a person finds freedom and hope there from finding a specific Telos through listening to the "call of conscience."

### **Imaginary Focus of the Incessant Response to "here and now"**

The listening leads to the place of the imaginary focus (focus imaginarius). This is *dunamis*, and not fully realized. This was given as a trace, and does not probably reach actual "fulfillment" (πλήρωμα [plērōma]) (Galatia 4.4; Roman 13.10), without reaching "completeness" (τέλος [telos]) (Roman 6. 12, 10.4), that is, it is the one that repeatedly lays the foundation and is abandoned. This imaginary focus, however, will not only create awkward illusions and violence but also bring the greatest breadth and cohesion to the humanitarian ideology.

As an image, the time that heads toward this imaginary focus is always "here and now," so to speak, the "eternal present." This time is not something that accompanies a linear time that is purposeful and rational as a bonus such as "leisure." This time breaks up the linear time to drive people's emotions and feelings to "here and now." For example, it manifests itself as an aversion for those who value their vanity by slandering others and pride themselves to be intelligent. This emotional or sentimental impetus is not the "emotions" of a psychological state when thinking about Christian thought in the Middle Ages but a past made present through type or antitype (typos or antitypos). That is, what has been shown in advance manifests itself in "here and now" by confronting what is not.

### **Education from the Ontology of Kairos**

Heidegger states that such determination to Kairos is necessary even in modern society. For Heidegger, people usually live in a world given meaning and value by using "language" intentionally and artificially, not by listening to the "call of conscience" ("the call of God" and "the call of existence"), because people have an existence that can naturally escape from this "ordinary people" (Das Man) state, listen to and follow the "call of conscience" (Stimme des Gewissens), and "be able to exist most as something existential going to" (eigenste Seinkönnen) (SZ: 286-7, 296).

What Heidegger repeatedly said in *Being and Time*—but what he does not describe as "telos"—is "the most unique possible existence" (eigenste Seinkönnen) and "inherently possible unique existence" (Eigentliche Seinkönnen). It is embodied by a person listening to the "call" and listening to the voice who wants to "live better" and

following and supporting that voice to realize that. In other words, when a person strongly feels that he is irreplaceable, it is time for the person to respond to the call of someone who is unique, and it is when it feels most important to do so.

The determination to head toward Kairos will be indispensable when we live in modern society, even if it can be unfairly criticized as "deterministic." Especially in education and learning, a person's receiving the "call of conscience" is the most ethical activity in that people fundamentally separated from each other can feel their common ground by communicating with each other through their voices, and connect with one another. In that sense, the primary form of education is teaching by teachers and learning by children—calling for authority and power, and defining meaning or value, etc.—not a subject (sujet) causal relationship, but a continuity (counterpolar) of self and others—creating "faith" and "love" and inventing co-creation and cooperation—may be a "persona" (ὑπόστασις [hypostasis] ) or responsive relationship. The Book of Hebrews says, "If we continue to hold the first persona (ὑποστάσεως [hypostaseos]) to the end, we will be the ones who share Christ (μέτοχοι [metochoi])" (Hebrews 3.14).

### **Times to receive the "call of conscience" and times to ignore it**

If we overlook this "call of conscience," transcendence will lead to an almost exclusive and oppressive situation. The reason for this is that transcendence will instantly attract "idol" worship, and the discourse of education driven by "idol" worship will create a division between those with "faith" and those without, to compel those with "faith" to follow the rules, and to reject those who are not. Whether that "idol" worship is obedience to any religious doctrine or obedience to meritocracy, it constitutes a rejection of specific characteristics of every one of us.

Conversely, if we listen to and follow the "call of conscience," the transcendence within education leaves open the question of its meaning and values and will become a *signifiant* that continues to be questioned beyond the assignment of meaning and value. This is because the "call of conscience" is an ethical urge that intensely shakes both the mind and body and occurs when "I" have to face someone accidentally. In other words, there is no significant meaning or values prescribed by ethics and moral theory. This leads to the protection of each of our specific characteristics.

To put it concisely, I locate transcendence that education should presuppose in listening to and following the "call of conscience" as a sense that transcends authority, power, intention, expectation, meaning, and value. That voice is a call without a message that comes in face-to-face relationship but beyond it as well. What can be more liberating than this call? We all have "desires" (intentions and expectations) supported by some

meaning or values and are accustomed to seeking "better" education; however, those desires are also premised upon the "works" in which every one of us will continue to head toward the peculiar and specific "telos" by receiving the "call of conscience." In short, the condition for the existence of transcendence in education (education on the premise of transcendence) is not the active desire of the individual subjects, which tends to converge to the activity of "better reformation," but is a joyous response to the "call of conscience," which is one with the "desire to live better."

#### 4. To the Ontology of Taisho New Education

##### **Kairos and Contemporary Thought**

To recap, the theory of Kairos was the central concept of the Christian "regeneration" (παλιγγεvesία [paliggensia]) theory developed by Augustine, Bonaventura, Thomas, Luther, Calvin, and others. This "regeneration" theory formed the matrix of modern educational thought mentioned at the beginning. However, with the development of modern education, the theory of Kairos seems to have fallen out.

In any case, the theory of Kairos plays an important role in the contemporary thought. For example, in *Difference and Repetition*, Gilles Deleuze described Kairos as an "occasion to precipitate all of its uniqueness," that when it physically connects people and shakes reality hard and transforms it." (Deleuze 1968: 246). In addition, the "here and now" ((ici et maintenant) that Jacques Derrida repeatedly speaks of in *Specters of Marx* may be an adaptation of this Kairos (Derrida 1993)—that is, the "event" that is to be engraved in words precisely because it is drowned by a repetition of words, listens to and follows the "call" (Derrida 1986: 73).

##### **Kairos and Taisho New Education**

Finally, I would like to present a hypothesis that listening to and following the "call of conscience," the desire to "live better," and the determination to head toward Kairos, which have been described so far, are related to Japanese Taisho New Education (Taisho Shin Kyoiku).

The primary motivation for this was that "Christian ontology" according to Heidegger, Tillich, Bultmann, and others were introduced to Japan during the Taisho era through the Kyoto school by philosophers such as Kitaro Nishida and Hajime Tanabe. For example, as Kobayashi's research discusses in detail, Nishida's "eternal present" is Kairos (Kobayashi 2010: 25). Nishida, in 1932's *The Self-awareness and Determination*

*of the Nothingness*, hinted at Paul's Kairos with the term "eternal present," and the reason for that is found in "the voice of conscience," which is "the voice of a spirit at the bottom of the flesh." That is to say, "The content of self-restriction for eternal present appears as a voice of conscience" and "the voice of conscience is the voice of God" (Nishida 1979, 6: 230). Further, what the "voice" asks from people is "absolute love" or "self-limitation of love," which means "discover yourself by abandoning yourself" (Nishida 1979, 6: 231, 257).

It seems that the authors of the Taisho New Education were familiar with the "Christian Ontology" and similar "Ontology" that the Kyoto school accepted and developed. Indeed, the idea of Taisho New Education tends to discuss "life" rather than "existence." However, the "life" referred to here is not biological, but rather, it may be a word for "great love" that connects each life. If so, is it not a word that corresponds to Heidegger's "call of conscience" and Nishida's "voice of conscience? Whether it is Takeji Kinoshita (1872–46) of Nara Higher Normal School, who was devoted to Dewey, or Heiji Oikawa (1875–1939) of Akashi Women's Normal School, who had a great esteem for Dewey and Bergson, was the "life" they spoke of not colored by a Christian ontology, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson's theory of "inner life" for instance?

This should be verified in the future, but it is my conjecture that Taisho New Education will be found to contain the idea that each and every person listens to the "call of conscience," goes beyond specific intentions, expectations, meanings, and values, and "try to live better" for others. This conjecture of mine is neither novel nor original. The ontology of the idea of Taisho New Education overlaps with the historical image of ideas that Fumio Ono used to understand the "new education" of Europe. Already in 2009, Ono found "church, institution, theology" or "artificial indoctrination" behind the "old education," while there was "faith from the overall inner life of the individuals" found behind the "new education" (Ono 2009).

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