

Intelligence toward Truthfulness:

A Perspective Based on Rancière's Educational Theory

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Abstract

What Jacques Rancière requires teachers to do is to hold an attitude of "ignorance." This is a roundabout way of stimulating the "intelligence" of the students themselves. This intelligence means the ability to understand the "truth," and it is assumed to be the same for all people. However, in contemporary Japanese society, education is expected to lean heavily toward "competence formation"(qualification and socialization), and is far from the intelligence that seeks the "truth." Though, if we value properly our natural sensibilities in a proper way, we can stimulate our own intelligence. The "truth" here means "truthfulness without truth." It is one's own destination ("telos") where the "inner other" is heading toward. The activity toward one's own telos is limited to what one testifies = expressing oneself. In sum, the education proposed here is to position one's own intelligence toward truthfulness as the indispensable foundation of education. Therefore, it can be said that education is a new type of human formation.

Key words: competence formation, human formation, ignorance, Jacques Rancière, intelligence, sensibility, telos, testify, truth, truthfulness.

1 Envisioning education

In order to envision "education" as a new type of human formation, I would like to use the French philosopher Jacques Rancière's conception of teachers' activity as a foundation of this discussion(JR, MI). What Rancière demands of teachers in his educational theory is, above all else, to be "ignorant." Of course, this "ignorant" does not mean in a literal sense, but rather refers to the behavior that teachers act like "as if" he/she does not have much knowledge. It is the prerequisite for teachers to carry out the act of "teaching." In

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short, it is the basic attitude. The teaching act based on this premise is "teaching without explication." In other words, "teaching" is equal to "stimulating the intelligence" of students.

At first glance, Rancière's theory of teachers seems to emphasize students' "self-learning" rather than teachers' "teaching"(GB, RT). However, if we remand Rancière's concept of intelligence to the history of European thought, as Rancière himself suggests, the excitation (activation) of intelligence may be caused by not only a concrete other person, but also by someone who can be called "inner other." For example, the inner other is what Augustine called the "inner person" (*homo interior*)(AA, C: 10. 6. 9; DVR: 39. 72). If we think of Rancière's theory of teachers in this way, even though at first glance it may seem like "learning by him/himself," it actually means "being taught by the inner other. "

However, what is considered here is not whether education means teaching-centered or learning-centered, but education is becoming increasingly tilted to competence formation (qualification and socialization) and moving away from the "will to truth." This "truth" includes not only the truth of natural science, but also the *telos* that a person desires. Moreover, that "will" is not only inherent in oneself, but also derives from one's "inner other" (deep "self"). To put it simply, the basics of the education proposed here are that competence formation should be carried out based on the "will to truth" that is unique to oneself and responding singularly to the "inner other."

2 Will of Intelligence, Equality of Intelligence

1 Intelligence penetrated by the will to gain truthfulness

Let us summarize the two characteristics of Rancière's concept of intelligence. The first is that Rancière's intelligence is not so-called intelligence, such as "academic knowledge" or "educatedness," but rather "power to understand oneself [*puissance de se faire comprendre*] through the verification of others [*vérification de l'autre*]"(JR, MI: 123). In other words, Rancière's intelligence is "the ability to think" that is permeated by "will" (*volonté*) toward the "truthfulness" (*vérité*) of oneself and others (the difference of "truth" and "truthfulness" will be mentioned later). Basically, Rancière says that a person is a "will" subjugated to an intelligence"(JR, MI: 88).

Let us elaborate a little. Rancière, relying on the 18th century French poet Jean François de Saint-Lambert(1716–1803), writes: "It[=Will] is the divine intelligence, already written as the norms gifted to human beings by Divinity, as the very acts of

language. It is not original [human] nature or human skill, but a gift of Divinity" (JR, MI: 89). In other words, a person's "will" does not belong to him/her, but to God, and is a dynamic movement towards God.

The second is the assumption that intelligence is equally endowed to all persons. Looking back at the history of European thought, Rancière's intelligence is, for example, the "*intellectus*" or "*spiritus*" as "*humanitas*" talked about in ancient era by Aurelius Augustine(354-430) and in the medieval era by Thomas Aquinas(1225-74). Rancière himself writes "intelligence" as "*esprit*" (JR, MI: 85). Intelligence, which has been talked about in Christian thought since at least the ancient era, is a gift from God to all persons, and is another name for the "inner other"("inner person") mentioned earlier.

Let us elaborate on this. In the case of Thomas, the activity of the "*anima*" that overflows in human hearts can be divided into two abilities called "*potentia intellectivae*" and "*potentia appetivae*" (TA, ST: I, q. 78, pr.). "*Potentia intellectivae*" is the intellectual activity of "understanding" God (*intellegere*), which is accompanied by the "will" (*voluntas*) that originates from God and returns to God(TA, ST: I, q. 79). The "*potentia appetivae*" is "the ability to seek sensual comfort and escape from what is harmful." The ability to seek sensual comfort is called "*concupiscibilis*," and the ability to escape from what is harmful is called "*irascibilis*"(TA, ST: I, q. 81, ad. 2, co).

2 Sincerity toward truthfulness

Now, the "truthfulness" to which Rancière's "will" directs is sharply distinguished from the language to describe things. That is, the "will" is not something that can be described. The truthfulness becomes envisagement and felt. Rancière said, "Truthfulness does not speak of itself. Truthfulness is one thing(*une*), language activity is scattered. Truthfulness is necessary, and language is arbitrary" (JR, MI: 102). In other words, "significations" that people make are manifestations of will [which are diverse but come from one divinity] " (JR, MI: 95).

However, the truthfulness that Rancière refers to is not the metaphysical "substance" talked about in medieval theology, but rather the destination that each person uniquely heads towards with "sincerity"(*vérité*). For Rancière, "truthfulness is not to be found in models that are represented by or transformed to [concrete] shapes"(JR, CM: 26). In other words, what is described(defined) as such-and-such is not truthfulness. "Thinking does not describe [something] as truthfulness(*vérité*); it is [naturally] expressed as sincerity(*vérité*)"(JR, MI: 106). "Truthfulness exists by itself. It exists and is not something that can be told [by human consciousness or intention] " (JR, MI: 99). "Nothing has any bearing on truthfulness, it is in [someone's] unique [thinking]

trajectory." "Truthfulness is only a friend of one's own thinking"(JR, MI: 101-2).

The reason why I translate Rancière's word "*vérité*" as "truthfulness" is because I use the word "truth" to describe(= to predicate) something that is not known. Also, the reason why I use the word "truthfulness" is because I wanted to express(= to appear by itself) something that is intelligible(*intelligibilis*). The word "*vérité*" which Rancière uses positively means truthfulness. It is shown by the fact that the "will" he refers to is the intention that proposes the method of conjecture(JR, MI: 106). "Sincerity" is "each person's privileged way of thinking of the truthfulness" (JR, MI: 98), and this sincerity is called "fictional truth" (*«vérité» de la fiction*)(JR, CM: 105).

3 Intelligence as subject

If we strengthen our imagination to some extent, this kind of intelligence toward truthfulness can also be found in "factuality" (Martin Heidegger(1889-1976)) and "activity" (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe(1749-1832) and Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)) in the sense of the thinking power that is naturally generated. Rancière said, "The intelligence is attention and inquiry, which precedes the combination of ideas; and the will [of intelligence] is the force that moves oneself, acting by peculiar movement(*propre mouvement*), preceding [the ego's] choice" (JR, MI: 92). This "choice" is probably indicating "free will" (*liberum arbitrium*) that does not exclude human arbitrariness and self-righteousness.

In Rancière's claim, "will" is described as "rational force"(*pouvoir rationnel*), "rational being"(*être raisonnable*), and, simply, "self" (*soi-même*)(JR, MI: 92-3, 97). The "self" that Rancière refers to is the "self to which I return" (*retour sur lui-même*), so to speak, the inner other(JR, MI: 97). This "self" is the universal immanence that was often talked about in the history of European thoughts, and can be found, for example, in Goethe and Nietzsche, as well as in Augustine and Thomas.

For Rancière, the "root of evil"(*le principe du mal*) is equal to "unfaithfulness to oneself"(*infidélité à soi*)(JR, MI: 98). In brief, this indicates the a lack of sincerity. Rancière said, "Evil is wandering around, straying from the path [that the "self" leads to], paying no attention to what those [who follow one's "self"] say(*qu'on dit*), forgetting what it is **to be a person**(*qu'on est*)[who is fighting toward ons's own "self"]. Therefore, [you] must go your own way(*Va donc ton chemin*) ". Being true to one's "self" is being "sincere"(*véracité*) and "being a person" in one's own way" (JR, MI: 98 bold is by quotor). That is, to be human is to continue to face the telos of one's own "self" with sincerity. Rancière says, "People think, because they exist"(*l'homme pense parce qu'il existe*)(JR, MI: 105).

3 (Lost) intelligence toward truthfulness

1 Being Explicated and Understanding

As mentioned earlier, Rancière's intelligence does not require "explication" by teachers. For Rancière, "teaching" does not mean explicating something to students. This is because explications put students' intelligence into doze mode. Teachers who stimulate students' intelligence are "ignorant teachers." In Rancière's theory, teaching is to teach what teachers do not know (JR, MI: 100). It is about encouraging students to use their own intelligence and to move toward their own unique and singular "understanding." Each student's unique and singular "understanding" is something that teachers cannot grasp. In Rancière, "explication is a myth of pedagogy" (JR, MI: 15). The explication is not really "teaching". This is because explications can create "accepting it as it is" and "impression"(worship) of the person who is giving the explication.

For Rancière, the "driving force" of education is the human desire to "understand"(*comprendre*). Indeed, it can be recognized that the desire to understand, that is, to "want to understand what we do not understand" is universally found among all human beings. However, if a teacher tries to make his/her students understand in the same way as he/she understands (isomorphically), that is to make their understanding foolish. Keeping in mind the uniqueness(othersness) of each person's thinking, Rancière describes this desire as the "power of translation"(*puissance de traduction*)(JR, MI: 108), and he makes "improvisation," produced by this desire, the center of his educational method(JR, MI: 109). It is a unique idea, trial, and invention that occurs together with the "other", even if they are modest or small. And if we infer from Rancière's expression "the silent dialogue of the soul"(*le dialogue muet de l'âme*)(JR, MI: 116), the "other" shall be considered to include the "inner person"(="self").

2 Truthfulness without Truth

Elaborating Rancière's thought in my own way, Rancière's intelligence toward truthfulness has an inclination toward European theology and metaphysics, so, even if it were introduced into modern Japanese pedagogy, it would not take root and would disappear. Although this is just an impressionistic outlook, the background of this inference is the social spread of utilitarianism and ICT in contemporary Japanese society. In addition, the social tendency to prioritize the pleasure principle in decision-making

may also be mentioned, as the background. Among these factors, the utilitarian orientation is most conspicuous.

I also think that, in this social trend of utilitarianism or prioritizing the principle of pleasure, the emotion as the irreplaceability of a singular life would be lost. The emotion comes from the ephemerality of a life's transience that once was expressed in the word "*Schein*" (appearances) by Goethe and Friedrich von Schiller (1759-1805). This is because "*Schein*" is the opposite of "*Wahrheit*" (truth), the eternal and universal "Life" (because a life is an "appearance" (*Schein*) of "Life"). Incidentally, Nietzsche said, "we have also lost the world of appearances [*scheinbare*], along with the world of truth [*wahren Welt*]" (KS 6, GD: 81). The "will to power" (*Der Wille zur Macht*) that Nietzsche sought beyond the distinction and association between truth and appearance was something that Nietzsche earnestly sought "without faith." It can also be described as "truthfulness."

Anyway, if we lose interest in the truth, as a result of this, we will also lose interest in the truthfulness, and the intelligence that Rancière refers to will be lost too. In other words, intelligence, although somehow assumed, will be virtually forgotten. Intelligence will become, so to speak, just a "margin" (*marge*), and the world of education will overflow with ordered and justified knowledge and skills that can be taught through accurate explications. As a result, teachers (as instructors) will set up "individually optimized" student learning.

What governs school education, in which ordered and justified knowledge and skills are taught effectively and efficiently, would be "competence" in which the content is defined by the main social trend (for example, OECD's "agency"). The competence is certainly important, it can be thought of as "truth" (meaning justified knowledge and skills). However, the competence formation would make difficult to hope for some kind of "invention" while moving toward truthfulness. Simply put, some kind of "chaos" is necessary for the emergence or arrival of truthfulness. For example, as Nietzsche said in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, "In order to produce dancing brilliance, a person must have chaos within himself" (KS 4, ASZ: 19).

4 Intelligence that testifies to oneself

Even if intelligence toward truthfulness is forgotten socially, it would be remembered empirically in each individual. "Empirical" here refers to sensitive and perceptive original experience ("primary experience") of external things that gives rise to inner "reality." It is a raw "thing that is the sensible" (*le sensible*) before being incorporated into Rancière's

"regime of sensibility" as "the sharing of the sensible"(partage du sensible), and "the aesthetic experience"(expérience esthétique)(JR, PS; JR, ME).

If we think of our experience in this way, what philosophy of education should tell us is that each person is intelligent in their own way. It is not something that can be told to others or verified as an objective fact, but something that each person says to oneself. It is the imagination of aesthetic reality, and it enriches one's own mind. To be intelligent, as it were, means to bear witness to one's autopoiesis (self-creation) of truthfulness. It can be said that each person is uniquely and singularly "being a person"(existence). This "existence" is likened to a skillful physical technique. A skillful physical technique embodies a fleeting and unsatisfactory endeavor, but it also constantly creates a self with a unique and singular purpose. Just as a person who continues to make extraordinary efforts is simply beautiful, the functionality of a physical technique which has been enhanced to the utmost is beautiful. In any case, as mentioned earlier, what is proposed here as a new conception of education is to place "intelligence toward truthfulness," as the foundation of competence formation.

However, this kind of support for intelligence(or existence) toward truthfulness is not a universal(meaning "all the same" or "uniform") school lesson being enacted in our national educational policy, but rather the foundation of each individual's thinking. It is to reserve for each one's each intelligence that is permeated by each one's own will to truthfulness. Perhaps the will to truthfulness helps each person's unique and singular struggle in the real world. Some persons with a sincere self will struggle with their own foolish ego, and we can imagine that some beautiful wonders will shine faintly in the gloomy real world. In sum, the task of philosophy of education that I propose is not to extrapolate some plausible and specious educational policy (for example: "individually optimized learning") but rather to bring about a "thinking environment" that encourages each individual's intelligence to be stimulated by him/herself." he goal is to secure a unique and singular realm of thought in educational practice, and to support the struggle of the "self" against the real world; the "self," behind the "ego," which is one and only one.

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