



Title: 20 August 1988 Personal Correspondence on Community Culture Healing, Spirit and Science

Author(s): Dr. Shigeru Kounosu

Published by: Worldwide Indigenous Science Network

Publish date: 31 August 2013

Disclaimers:

The information and all content provided herein by the Worldwide Indigenous Science Network (WISN) are provided as a service and are for general informational and educational purposes only. Original creator(s) of materials contained herein retain full copyrights. Although WISN uses reasonable efforts to ensure high quality materials, WISN does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of content. Neither WISN nor any party involved in creating, producing, or delivering this information shall be liable for any damages whatsoever arising out of access to, use of, or inability to use the materials, or any errors or omissions in the content thereof. Users assume all responsibility for the access to and use of these materials.

Translations of any materials into other languages are provided as a convenience, and translation accuracy is not guaranteed nor implied. Users may refer to the original language/official version to ensure accuracy.



wisn.org | 573 Waine'e Street, Lahaina, Hawai'i 96761

Aug. 20, '88.

Dear Pam

I write to you again. For your laugh, I quote a joke.

"A famous physicist worried about Library space projected that, at the present rate of increase in the number of articles published in Physical Review, they will soon reach a rate which will have to fill library shelves with the Speed exceeding that of Light. However, this does not violate the Principle of Relativity, for the journals contain no Information.

[Physics Today Aug. '88. P. 9.]

- - - - -

I have a proposal to make, and I would like to discuss the matter. How about writing a paper on European and Native Community/Culture Healing as a Therapy/Medicine? I know I am trying to push you to do an Academic thing. But, now that you moved, there is nothing much I can do anyway. So perhaps it is safe to make a proposal. Besides, I do not know how "Community/Culture Healing" would fit with what you do on the job. Please let me know the situation.

The idea came from reading an article by William K. Powers "Alternatives To Western Psychotherapy: Modern-Day Medicine Man" mentioned before [In Beyond The Vision U. of Oklahoma Press 1987. Psychotherapy has Psychoanalysis as a theoretical part, though the relation of "Theory" and "Practice" contains problems. Likewise, Native Medicine has Native Science, though the relation between them may be different from that in European system. But the Science ought to be relevant and helpful to practice of the Medicine. In fact, we have been deciphering Native Science from the Medicine in the traditional culture, as the Science existed there to deal with problems in life.

The comparison of the complex of science-therapy in Western Culture to one in another Culture is interesting enough. But I am not just proposing to make a comparison. Something new is added. Native Community/Culture is facing new problems stemming from its encounter with Western Ideology and Technology. The new problems require new responses. It means more trouble, but that also means a new development in Science for both sides. As a "Wisdom", Native Science needs not to change, but its expressions have to reflect the changed environment in order to be helpful to the people. You have been on that task. But if you wish to elaborate on Native Science at higher and deeper level of

Native Science, working out "practical applications" is one of the ways to do that. Comparison is a mere entry device.

As "Spirit" is revealed through manifestations, the Science is learnable through "working it out" (praxis). Writing a paper is a way of helping people who face up to the problems and looking for ways of healing. The paper may look "theoretical", but it is (i) a report on experiences, and/or (ii) elaboration of "strategy". It is not "Wisdom" itself, but it is an intermediate "translation" in a sense of being an "approach to", or a "way to". Just as we cannot prescribe "Vision", we cannot describe "Wisdom". We can, however, talk about experiences or the procedure leading up to it.

And, to the extent the problems are brought by "European" things, what we write have to contain "European" things. That is the necessity of the circumstance, and also from the work being "translation", "interface", and "praxis in the present world".

There is an element of "Beating European Intellect at its own Game". We might say "If Europeans brought Guns to Natives, Native Science can shoot the same guns better", or "If Christians talk of Love, Native Science does it better". It is not that competition is the aim, but the pains and suffering of the people under "European Power Science" is real --- unfortunately we in bourgeoisie academy do not immediately experience them --- and a way of Medicine/Therapy must be proposed now.

Actually, for this, it probably matters little if it is called "Native Science", "Marxism", or "Born-Again Christianity". There are "Natives" colonized all over the World, even in Europe. In some degree, I have a special interest in Japanese affairs which do contain "Native Problems", and you have "Native Americans" in the center of your heart, and in that we are "Racists". But I do have something beyond that, which has to do with "People", "Humans,", not "Race". I am not helping Native Americans as a Race. It makes me feel sad to think, but I stand outside "Native American Science" --- She is your baby. I adore her, but that is all I can ---. At least, I try to avoid becoming a "Fake Indian". [I saw an NFB film on Long Lance: "Chief Buffalo Child".]

It does give me a pain of being an "Outsider", forever segregated and cast away from the happy community of people whom I care, but I hope I have a spiritual strength to withstand the alienation. The danger of the alienation becoming a bitterness and then intellectual arrogance is great. But that is where devices, strategies such as Participatory Research come in. It is an intellectual thing to do, and as such, it perhaps is not quite genuinely

satisfying. If Alcoholism is a problem, Intellectualism is also a problem.

However, I think that there is a "meaning" in both Alcoholism and Intellectualism. Rejecting or rather pretending that one is staying clear out of the problems, with righteous contempt, is not an answer. I would much rather have you drinking and suffering than being like an angel. For the pain can also be source of creative energy. The period of Colonialism is not yet over, and if we are comfortable in the World as it is today, there is no reason for us to do anything about it. At least, in that way I can talk with you.

I said the above, because if you are "Perfect Indian", "Noble Savage Philosopher", you would not play with an academic game like writing intellectual paper. A Japanese proverb has it that "Great Man is a Useless Man" --- nobody can use him, nor does he use anybody ---. But, I would like to drag you down to a lesser being who suffers pain like "ordinary" people do and could, at the best, be "useful" to people as such. If there is no problem, pain, malaise, there can be no Science. Both Intellectualism and Alcoholism are product/expression of suffering. I would dare further to say that Spiritualizing is a "moral equivalent" of Alcoholism.

Now, that has been my excuse to you to make a proposal. For you to judge whether it is helpful or not, you would ask what it involves. So I shall explain.

One important thing Powers missed in the article is that Native Medicine is done as "Communal Affair", if not "Ceremony", whereas Western Psychotherapy is highly individualistic ritual. That stems from Psychoanalysis being an analysis (theoretical construct) about the Individual. Freud's paradigm is to "adjust" deviant individuals to the given Civilization (*1). C.G. Jung saw this defect/limitation in Freud's works. He went to "Collective Unconscious" etc. to correct the ignorance/ignoring, and made "Psychoanalysis" useful in "Social Psychology", "Anthropology" and "Linguistics". Jung's works were closer to Hegelian Field Dynamics, as a contrast to Newton-Kantian Mechanics of Freud. And it opened a way to "Cultural Analysis", supplementing "Social Analysis/Criticism" of Marx et al. You might say it is "Environmental Science" in contrast to Individualistic/Atomistic Science of a single Tree.

(*1) [To be sure, Freud did write *Der Zukunft einer Illusion* 1927, *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur* 1930. It is interesting to note that the English translation of the second book is "Civilization and Its Discontents". Freud knew better than confusing

Civilization with Culture. But the title was approved by Freud. The reason become clear if one reads the book. The "culture" of Europe in the 20th century is nothing but a "Civilization" --- i.e. Technopolis ---. Freud, in his zeal to establish his science to be an Eternal Truth, totally ignored History of European Social Technology. (Jung failed in this respect as well.) It is surprising to see this in an intellectual circle in which Hegel and Marx were well known. Perhaps, it was Newton-Kantian blindness to History. Or, it is because European chemistry (Atomism) was A-Historical (Non-Dynamical).

It is also interesting to note that, the term "Unbehagen" is equivalent of French "malaise", that is more like "disease". "Discontent" came from the first title Freud gave, which was "Das Unglück". The translation of the title is not quite right, but from the content of the book the English title is just right. That is, Freud failed to treat the "Disease" of the modern European Civilization in which he was a part. European Science has had this peculiar posture of as if God was looking at problems from outside. Scholars talked as if they themselves had no problem of their own. A.A. made one progress in this respect in that they talk of "My problem". What I like to see is a Science of "Our problem".]

However, even Jung did not come to think of "Therapy on Community". Social Psychology, Anthropology, or for that matter, Sociology, Economics, did not think of practice of "Therapy" in relation to them as "Science". Marx, Keynes were exceptions. It was not that Social Scientists did not attempt to influence Social Policies, or Psychologists did not interfere with Educational Policies. The relation between these Sciences and Practices were not only obscured by pretended "Scientific Objectivity", or "Value Neutrality", but also ignored, perhaps, from their "Static-ism" (inactivism), if not incompetence. They did not have the degree of relation that physics had with Industrial applications, and Medical Science had with Clinical Practice.

I imagine "Social Work/Welfare" uses existing Social Sciences as its theoretical grounds (metaphysical axioms and Rhetoric-Jargons). Yet, I wonder if the relation is clear at all. Suppose an Economist proved that in a pluralistic society, "the Value Maximum does not exist", what change then social work/welfare as a discipline of practice would undergo? In fact the proof was given by Arrow in 1940's (*2), but I am afraid Scholars in Social Work/Welfare behave as if they are totally ignorant of implications of Arrow's Impossibility Theorem, just as the

most Natural Scientists are oblivious to Godel's Incompleteness Proof. If the Science means anything, one would expect certain effects from changes in the science to changes in the practice, at least something comparable to that from Medical Science to Clinical Practice.

I am not saying every "theory" has to have direct and immediate effects on practices in therapy/healing. For the case of Native Communities, even the identification of problems is a problem for itself, let alone talking of Healing. But then, I would expect that Native Science is relevant and useful in the identification (diagnosis/analysis). I also expect the Science to provide a "Language" by which the problems can be described, communicated, and efficiently understood, so that people can make an effective co-operation.

Now, I am quite aware that there are difficulties, say in the relation between Western Sciences and their therapeutic practices. There exists no such thing as "Sociotherapy", so that I cannot comment on what Social Science does. Incidentally, Gellner mentioned before [The Psychoanalytic Movement. Paldin 1985.] discussed the problems in Psychoanalysis/therapy.

Gellner, however, took a rhetorical posture of comparing "Psychoanalysis" to other Sciences, and pretended that other Sciences, particularly Natural Science, have no such problem. It is false. There is no "Science" that is free from troubles. Every one of them has one degree of trouble or another. In fact, Natural Science escapes the trouble by ignoring --- only deals with simple linearized models ---. Even our "Logic" has troubles when it tries to deal with "dynamics", beyond its traditional "static" and "atomistic" territory. [Russell's Paradox, etc. see The Mathematical Experience. P.J. Davis, R. Hersh. Penguin 1984 for example.] It appears that Gellner is ignorant about these problems in Western Science. Unfortunately, this ignorance, or rather ignoring, about Logical foundation is rather universal among English speaking "philosophers of science".

[I picked up from the New book section of our library a book; Philosophy, Science And Social Inquiry, by D.C. Philips. It is a neat summary of "British-American Philosophy Of Science". There is no mention of the problems in Logic. It has a chapter on "Neo-Hegelian Critique", but there is no discussion of Hegel's "Logic of Science".

On the other hand, if we read, say, Paul Ricoeur's Lectures On Ideology And Utopia, the whole 19th century German Philosophy, covered by Marx's German Ideology, was a struggle on "Science". But it is

not recognized by British-American Academia. It appears that there was an implicit censorship by those who were in the academic "Empire Building". They appear to be no different from Racists and Colonialists.]

What is interesting, however, in Gellner's book is that despite his implicit rhetorical assumption, the troubles of Natural Science come out. His criticisms against Psychoanalysis being not a science are applicable to Natural Science just as well. That is why it is worth reading

Of course, Freud failed to achieve his ambitious goal. Rather, he went back to the level of Newtonian Mechanics, and treated "Civilization" to be a "State of Technology" in a society. His therapy was a technology of adapting individuals to the society dominated by the Technology. It did not come to Therapy on the Technology itself. Besides, he was a self-centered S.O.B., of which many books had been written. That was very common, Ego-Inflating effect of the Competitive Intellectualism that we are under. I hope efforts such as Participatory Research would take care of the problem of Intellectual imperialism (or rather Judeo-Christian Superiority-Persecution Complex) in Science.

In this respect, it is interesting to note that Powers reports on "Abdication" (p.137 point 7). European way of seeing this is "Loss of Power". But, I suspect rather it means "retiring from responsibility obligation". "Power" in Native lingo probably means "Function". One who "has" a Power is obliged to perform the function. I wonder, in this sense, what "power" university professors have.

I ought to mention here that Marx also failed in reaching a "Science" --- Marx had never come to elaborate what he meant by his "Science", though he was very proud of saying "Scientific Socialism", "Proletariat shall have Science to Liberate themselves", etc. ---. Marx failed to do "Philosophy of Technology", but did only "Mechanics of Power", and consequently failed to help the construction of the "Science" that was expected for the Oppressed to develop.

What you want to do in the name of Native Science is what Marx, Freud, Jung et al. failed to achieve. Therefore, if you make mistakes here and there, you have nothing to be ashamed of. Mistakes will hurt you, but that is all. The important thing is that you pointed the direction, a Vision/Dream/Prophecy.

[You might think I am unduly hard on you, but

actually it is you who picked such a difficult task. It is as if you are saying you like to jump into a volcano. I push you over the cliff, because you are standing at the edge. Afterwards, I and friends of yours will erect a gravestone there, inscribed as "Here once stood a brave soul".]

I would go on further to say Native Science is a way to "Wisdom", not the "science" of the European sense. And if it is "Wisdom", it has to be in a Community/Culture, not property of one individual, however genius you are. It can only be developed by "History". All we can do is the task of Midwife. And you need co-operation of many people, and communities (Participatory Research?). What I am proposing you to write is not Native Science itself, but merely one among many "about Native Science --- something like "Comparison of What Native and European Sciences would say about Community Healing/Therapy." ---.

Richard Gwyn, writing on the crushed "Prague Spring" 20 years ago, says: "The real cost of that smashing of a mailed fist into a gentle smiling face has been an intangible one. The Czechoslovak sickness of today is neither economic nor political but is psychological; it can only be described as institutionalized immorality". [Leth. Herald. Aug 23.] If one says this about Czechoslovakia, what must one say about The First Nations of America? Is it Institutionalized Immorality? And if so, how does one go about Healing it?

Yours

Sam K.

(*2) As to K.J. Arrow's Impossibility Theorem, see Social Choice And Individual Value. John Wiley 1951. Cowles Foundation Monographs vol. 12.

My Economist friend referred me to Q. James, Saposnik, and Ruben. General Equilibrium And Welfare Economics but I have not read this.

The main point of Arrow's Theorem is that "Values" cannot be ordered in a linear hierarchy (in Boolean Lattice). If a set of propositions does not form a Boolean Lattice, the Classical Logic cannot be applied. For Non-Boolean set, the Probability Calculus becomes unworkable, Quantum Logic is Non-Boolean. It creates linguistic situations where The Principle of Exclusion of the Middle breaks down (Uncertainty

Principle). A Dutch mathematician E. Brouwer talked about this problem in 1920-30s.

But, as far as I know of, there has been no Social Science built upon explicit basis of Non-Boolean Logic. There have been suggestions that Zen philosophy is non-Boolean, but I have not seen any serious writing about this. There is also such a thing as "Fuzzy Logic". But I see no sign of it applied to Social Sciences.

I would like to ask you, or to Woody, if Quantum Logic (Non-Boolean Linguistic Structure) can be found in Native narrations. I am looking for cases where "Either/Or" propositions get into clear trouble.

As to Quantum Logic, I enclosed some references. But they perhaps require some more explanations and elaborations to make it relevant to Cultural talks.