Adam Smith's theory of sympathy and contemporary culturally diverse society.

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Abstract

In this paper, I approach the question of how we can realise social cement in a contemporary culturally diverse society, with reference to Adam Smith's theory of sympathy depicted in his "A theory of moral sentiment." (First edition 1759, Sixth edition 1790) Smith thought that sympathy as fellow-feeling was a foundation of social relations and justice in society and this idea is still valid when thinking of relating to people of different cultural backgrounds in contemporary culturally diverse society. First, I outline Smith's theory of sympathy by focusing on its relevance to social relations. Second, I analyse the significance of Smith's idea of sympathy in a contemporary culturally diverse society and relate it to the concepts of recognition and toleration that have frequently appeared in the course of discussion of culturally diverse society. My idea is that sympathy with others is considered an authentic form of recognition at a sentimental level, and therefore sympathy as fellow-feeling in society should be more actively supported as a necessary element in a contemporary culturally diverse society than tolerance, although the latter is still another necessary element in a pluralist society. Based on these arguments, I analyse the conditions for realising sympathy as fellow-feeling in a culturally diverse society. I stress that negative images of "others" depicted in the mass media and more explicit expressions in public speech are hindrances to fellow-feeling in a culturally diverse society. I suggest resolving these problems by means of legal controls and media literacy education. Promoting communication among different groups of people in society is also recommended as another solution to moderate relations between them. The paper concludes with two case studies set in a contemporary culturally diverse society – Japan – from the perspective of sympathy. The first concerns the Japanese government's multicultural coexistence policy and Hamamatsu city's local vision, which is introduced as a positive case. The second is a recent chauvinistic hate speech movement against Korean and North Korean residents, which is critically examined from the perspective of a need for sympathy in society. I will also introduce counter legal measures against it that have been adopted in Japan. Active countermeasures in the light of the need for fellow-feeling in society are suggested.

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De Waal says that according to the knowledge of psychology and neuroscience, we are innately programmed to sympathise with others and reach out to them.（De Waal 2010, Location. 720-721）In De Waal's view, Smith's "invisible hand" does not indicate only the mechanism of the market economy that is driven by the self-interest of citizens, but also a mechanism of natural harmonisation of individuals' non-economic social behaviours that is driven by their sympathy toward others.（De Waal 2010, Location. 3553-3554）In his theory, De Waal shows an optimistic prospect on the possibility of sympathy in the human society as he believes that humans are, as other animals, innately sympathetic by nature. Because of this view, De Waal does not actively discuss policy proposals for realising sympathy in society. In fact, De Waal seems to believe that sympathetic state will be realised naturally in our society.

> We cannot just scatter in all directions. Every individual is connected to something larger than itself. Those who like to depict this connection as contrived, as not part of human biology, don't have the latest behavioural and neurological data on their side. The connection is deeply felt and, as Mandeville had to admit, no society can do without it.（De Waal 2010, Location. 3561-3563）

As De Waal says, we may hold the capacity of sympathy innately as a part of our instinct, as other animals do. However, in today's complicated plural or culturally diverse society, such a view of the fellow-feeling of society can be realised without specific efforts sounds too optimistic. The fact that sympathy can be discussed as a need of our society proves that in

reality, it has not been realised fully. This is because of the attitude of unrecognition or unconcerned citizens in society despite that the need of social cement may be acknowledged by the people.

In this chapter, I will discuss specific measures to realise fellow-feeling in society. In Smith's theory of sympathy, we can share the sentiment with the object by cognising his/her situation and imagining exchanging places. Here, there is a possibility of realising sympathy with others who hold different cultural backgrounds through understanding. Following are the specific ideas of its practices.

１．Revising negative prejudice or stereotypical views of cultural minorities/majorities in society that can be done by legal control, and educational activities of public and private organisations.

２．Promotion of communication that can be implemented through cooperative participation of public activities or assistance of intercultural communications by a public or private body.

These measures are compatible with other integration policies or multicultural policies whilst overcoming separation or antagonism of cultural groups in society.

１．Negative views of members of society through the mass media and public speech as a hindrance to fellow-feeling in society.

（1）The problems in building a view of others through the mass media

Possibility of sympathy with others depends on the image of the object. If negative images of the presence of people or their attributes such as ethnicity or religious beliefs is described negatively, visually or verbally, will risk the possibility of realising sympathy in society.

Today, most of our information and knowledge are obtained indirectly through mass media, through TV, radio, internet, newspaper or magazines. Gladys Engel Lang and Kurt Lang state in their work, "Politics and television" （1970） that along with technological development, the method of obtaining information or knowledge has been shifted from direct face-to-face communication to indirect information device mediated communication. Accordingly, the sort of knowledge that people acquire has been shifted to information that is provided by mass media in the absence of direct commitment to the object. However, transmitted information by mass media cannot become a perfect duplication of the direct knowledge of the object that fully reflects its complexity.

> The communication revolution, which has so increased the amount and the kind of information potentially available to every citizen, is not without paradox. The paradox is generated by the separation of experience and participation, two aspects of political life that had heretofore been linked. As the media brings the world closer, the more intimate acquaintance with-the product of direct involvement-is replaced by a more superficial

knowledge about things outside one's purview and beyond the horizon. The new knowledge is mediated knowledge; it depends on what the media systems disseminate yet under no circumstance can the picture replicate the world in its full complexity. （Lang, Gladys.E, Lang, Kurt. 1970, 189）

That we can implement decision making and act based on abundant information and knowledge well beyond daily lebensraum through mass media must be a great fruit of the development of civilisation. However, there is a risk that description of the reality depicted in the mass media can be biased, because the originator of the information, such as a journalist or broadcasting station can select the information and reorganise the events to make it consistent with their intention. （Lang, Gladys.E, Lang, Kurt. 1970, 189） Thereby mass media can draw "more attention to some aspects of a story than they merit while underplaying or totally ignoring others." （Lang, Gladys.E, Lang, Kurt. 1970, 192） Also, the fellow-traders may be sharing the information sources among themselves and there is no guarantee of their independence. Regarding the recipient of the information, reliability is judged by its consistency with other source and emotional suitability. In fact, emotionally fit information for the masses tends to be supported even if it is biased, and not completely accurate because of the low mental cost of its acceptance. （Lang, Gladys.E, Lang, Kurt. 1970, 190）

Although various things can become the objects of bias, descriptions of people or relations with them can also become the object of such bias. Also, the bias can be caused a number of things such as political, economic or social reasons. Although, the recipient of information tends to sort it out with simple categories such as good or bad, and as a result they cooperate with the originator of the transmitted information in creating an artificial view of reality. Regarding this, Martha Nussbaum （2010） points out and criticises the tendency of creating a simplified Manichean worldview, such as we the good fighting creed need to defeat the bad others. In this world, all societies cannot be pure enough for their members to postulate we versus others in terms of their race, culture or religion. Instead of taking the view between we and others in their relations, it is rather necessary to aim at a mutual understanding and harmonious relationship.

> The internal clash of civilization can be observed in many struggles over inclusion and equality that take place in modern societies: debates about immigration; about the accommodation of religious, racial, and ethnic minorities; about gender equality; about sexual orientation; about affirmative action. In all societies, these debates give rise to anxiety and aggression. （Nussbaum 2010, 29-30）

With regard to fostering people's views, the mass media takes an important role in making up the view such as we=good and others=bad because of their depicted images and information. One of the problems of a contemporary plural society is that a common and substantial bond is encroached by the arbitral politicisation of some particular culture or

difference of some people in society through exaggerated or selected negative images in mass media.

Censorship and regulation of negatively biased description of cultural minorities in society can be thought of as examples of public policy in relation to producing fellow-feeling in a culturally diverse society. Some say that such a censorship or control policy is not preferable in light of the principle of liberalism. For instance, Todorov says that legal measures such as restraining racist behaviours or censorship of discriminative expressions will instead bring adverse effects to the situation because some people expect value in the objects that are legally prohibited.（Todorov 2013）However, I do not agree with this opinion, because if discriminative or disdaining description of the people or their attribute are legally allowed under the excuse of freedom of expression, such an official attitude may signal that such behaviour is approved under the excuse of freedom of expression. Public organisations cannot be neutral by embracing a non-interference policy to such a biased and unfair recognition of the people unless it is agreeable to all parties in society. If there is a reality or potential of unfair recognition of the members in society, the public organisation has to take a decisive stance against the discriminative or disdaining behaviour that may damage the possibility of sympathy in society rather than showing an unconcerned attitude. In the case where non-respectful attitudes to a minority's culture, such as customs or religion is not controlled under the name of liberalism, a gesture that approves the inequality of unfairness is shown in the public.

（2）Arbitrary politicisation of we/they as a problem of democracy

In 19th century, regarding the pitfall of individualism in the democratic society and the requirement to bond in society in encountering intervention of political power into the private sphere, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote, "Individualism is a mature and calm feeling, which disposes each member of the community to sever himself from the mass of his fellow-creatures; and to draw apart with his family and his friends; so that, after he has thus formed a little circle of his own, he willingly leaves society at large to itself".（Tocqueville 2007, 446）Along with J.S. Mill, Tocqueville argued "the tyranny of the majority" as a danger of democracy in the sense that the mass follows influential power blindly and emotionally without critical arguments in making decisions of public affairs. This sounds like a warning to our contemporary situation where, *sans* ample critical examinations, we form political views in the private sphere with the information and mind map provided by mass media. As a solution to this problem, Tocqueville suggests the formation of associations between private and public spheres as a counter measure against the interfering power, and to promote local activities within this unit to avoid drawl to the private arena of family and friends, whilst training practices for democracy activities of society.（Tocqueville 2000）Various activities in local communities or NGOs in today's society are considered to be the implementation of solutions to the fallacy of democracy that Tocqueville pointed out. However, great differences compared to Tocqueville's time of 19th century are that influence of mass media in our life is incomparably massive, in recent years virtual communications through internet, and virtual

reality of mass media have come to be a considerable part of our reality. The risk of arbitral manipulation of information has to be acknowledged, because in reality, information is given from the media as the provider, unilaterally to the people, and the provider tends to be connected to political power and its intentions. (Lang, Gladys.E, Lang, Kurt. 1970, 199) There is a risk that the pattern of "we" and "they" is created with image or biased information for the sake of some political intention.

In regard to the distinction and relation between "we" and "they", some people say that their confrontation is inevitable and that is the core of political phenomena. The exponent of this doctrine Carl Schmitt (2007) insists this distinction and confronting of relations of "friend (we) " and "enemy (they)" as the peculiar distinction in political phenomena is different from other domains of phenomena, such as good and bad in ethics or useful and harmful in economics.

> The political must therefore rest on its own ultimate distinctions, to which all action with a specifically political meaning can be traced. … the specific political distinction to which political actions and motives can be reduced is that between friend and enemy. (Schmitt 2007, 26)

Although this friend and enemy relation is peculiar to political phenomena, this categorical relation is recognisable in any sort of phenomena in human life. Schmitt says that a plural situation in the state and the world is always accompanied by this nature of political and therefore, plural situations without the distinction and confrontation of friend and enemy is not possible in this world. More recently, Chantal Mouffe (1996) tried to reuse Schmitt's idea in understanding the nature of democracy and attempting to promote this confrontation of the friend and enemy relations in activating democracy in the public sphere. As another variant, William Connolly (2002) tried to include an even wider range of identity groups into the public arena of democracy and promote confrontation of friend and enemy relations of those groups. As well as Mouffe, Connolly's intention is grounded in revitalizing democracy through promoting confrontations of groups of people in the public arena. Their intention of revitalising democracy is understandable, even so, as far as I understand, democracy is not the goal of our society, but it is a reliable alternative of the political system that is likely to contribute to our happiness, even if each cultural group has different interests and possibility of disagreement or conflicts among them remain. Besides, even if democracy is revitalised, still it is uncertain that it will promote happiness for members of society. Rather, I think that one concern is the possibility that a culturally diverse society may be acknowledged as a wholesome society simply because of the presence of confrontation between different cultural groups that are comprised by various dimensions of the subjects, whilst the unit of the group is essentialised and politicised by the view that is spread through mass media. Even if confrontations between cultural or identity groups take place in the agon of democratic politics, such a conflict or dispute has to be based on equal-footing of those participants based on their status and such a democratic process itself should not be recognised as the ultimate

standard or excuse of the wholesomeness of actual culturally diverse society.（Nussbaum 2010, 27-28）I believe that the formation of a de-facto hierarchical order of the majority and minorities through stigma or a tacit discriminative image has to be revised as it is against the principle of equality of society and the practice of democracy.

（3）The problems of a negative view of others in society.

One of the main reasons of a negative view or description is objected against is in the fact that it violates dignity and gives mental damage to the object. In this respect Josef Raz （1994）writes, "One important interest which all people share is an interest in the character of their environment, cultural and social as well as natural and physical".（Raz 1994, 149-150） Also, there is a fact that our self understanding is dependant on the internalised view of ourselves that is projected by others. Because of physical constraints, we cannot see and value ourselves directly through our eyes. This is the reason why our self understanding relies on others' views and especially in early stage of our lives, the gazes of others, particularily from close relatives, takes crucial role in formation of the self and character. （Todorov 2001, 131-132）This means that the others as the subject of recognition of us can also become the subject of rejection or discrimination of ourselves. If negative image has been projected by some people in society in real human relations or through mass media, those people may come to hold a negative image as part of their own self understanding. Whilst showing his understanding of the destructive impact of discrimination through physical or cultural features, Todorov does not agree with legal restrictions as a solution. Todorov thinks that the most important thing in encountering discrimination such as racism is by improving social conditions of the vulnerable groups in society as they tend to be matched with specific ethnic groups that become the target of discrimination. According to Todorov, social divide along with the specific cultural or racial groups has to be resolved with dissolution of commonly perceived cognitive schema of "dominant group equals rich" and "minority group equals poor" as it will become untrue in society.（Todorov 2013） Similar ideas of a solution toward the racial or cultural divide in society is seen in Walzer's argument. Walzer calls such an idea of resolving social inequality with providing equal citizenship to disadvantaged social minority groups and strengthening their power as an "emancipation" model. However, as he notes, such an attempt is not sufficient to remove the negative discriminative stigma of disadvantaged groups.

> The deepest and most enduring inequalities are not primarily economic in their origins. They have their roots in cultural and racial/ethnic differences and in the political exploitation of these differences. Nor are they amenable to liberal emancipation in its standard version, because overcoming them requires something very different from the temporary pooling and then the wide dispersal of political power … neither classlessness nor individual autonomy, admirable as these ideals are, suggests an effective remedy for stigmatization and the oppression it commonly entails.（Walzer 2004, 29）

The ideas of Todorov and Walzer sound plausible in that more substantial and effective

policies are needed to improve social conditions of disadvantaged people to revise "cultural and racial/ethnic differences" in society. However, the other problem of how those negative stigmas of ethnic/cultural groups in society can be dissolved, still remains. Material or legal oriented approaches may not be sufficient in correcting the image of negatively perceived cultural minorities.

In contemporary societies, the differences and particular circumstances of cultural diversity and social relations with immigrants is one of the main issues encountered. In light of the need of sympathy, integration policies of immigrants including giving civil status, national language, civil education, and job training to immigrants does not seem to be sufficient. In addition, measurements to counter hindrances to realise social sentiment are necessary. For instance, policies against enmity, prejudice, or unconcerned views towards immigrants and other social minorities are considered even as preventive measures of the circumstances where those negative indications are not fully observed. Without the comprehensive framework of realising shared common sentiment in society, minority groups may be self-sufficient and coexist with others whilst retaining disharmonious relations with other groups of people. Therefore, even if specific activities for moderating relationships of different cultural groups are held by NGOs or some other private organisations, legal or institutional measures have to be taken by public organisations to indicate the direction of society.

（4）Restrictions on chauvinistic speech or on projecting a negative image to the members of society.

First of all, legal control to those who spread or agitate extreme or negative views of members of society such as towards minority groups, can be a solution to the problem of the division of groups in society. For instance, chauvinistic discourse, hate speech or negative depiction of social minorities can become the object of control and punishment depending on degree of behaviour. Raz writes that freedom of expression in general is favoured in a liberal society, but that freedom may infringe on other's rights.

> the importance of the right-holders' interest is a factor in assessing the importance of the right. But it does not establish it as the only factor. There can be no denying that other people's interests are often served by behaviour which respects rights, and harmed by behaviour which violates them.（Raz 1994, 132）

In order to avoid the risk of encroaching freedom of expression, the degree or criteria of restrictions of expression must be examined carefully. However, control and illegalisation of extreme expressions that may be damaging to some members of society either mentally or physically must be an understanding rather than a requirement from the point of fairness of social status as well as the need of fellow-feeling in society. In fact, this idea is even accorded with the following statement of "General recommendation No. 35: Combating racist hate speech" of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination of the United Nations.（2013）

Media representations of ethnic, indigenous and other groups within the purview of article 1 of the Convention should be based on principles of respect, fairness and the avoidance of stereotyping. Media should avoid referring unnecessarily to race, ethnicity, religion and other group characteristics in a manner that may promote intolerance. （United Nations, Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 2013, Para.40）

（5）The promotion of media literacy and education.

Secondly, as another countermeasure to unequal perception of some cultural groups, enlightening activities such as an education of media literacy program is a thought, in order to inform possibility of arbitrary formation of confronting friend and enemy between majority and minority or among groups of people through direct or indirect expression of negative stereotypical views in mass media. In contemporary societies where various media streams have been developed, and the view of we and they can be greatly influenced by the information and depiction through the mass media, media literacy is worth becoming a default subject of civil education for nourishing a critical eye to the image and information of we and they that has been selected or created by mass media, whether it is intentional or unintentional. This proposition is not only given from a requirement of fellow-feeling in society, but also from a requirement of autonomous subjects in democratic society. If we swallow the whole story that is transmitted by mass media based on our trust of the mass media, and we identify the objects as friend or enemy uncritically following their indication, we will no longer be autonomous subjects who are supposed to bear democracy. In the democratic society of the 21st century that is closely connected to messmate, analytical and critical views of mass media is necessary. On the other hand, it must be also necessary to form a solid foundation from which various provocative views are examined through different kinds of education and experience of communication with people from different cultural or religious backgrounds. In order to encounter stereotypical views of the people and the world that hinders mutual understanding of various groups or states, Nussbaum argues about the significance of education.

Knowledge is no guarantee of good behaviour. Simple cultural and religious stereotypes abound in our world: for example, the facile equation of Islam with terrorism. The way to begin with combating these is to make sure that from a very early age student learn a different relation to the world, mediated by correct facts and respectful curiosity. Young people must gradually come to understand both the differences that make understanding difficult between groups and nations, and the shared human needs and interests that make understanding essential if common problems are to be solved. （Nussbaum 2010, 81）

Also, Nussbaum insists on the crucial role of the education of literature and art that tend to be neglected in contemporary societies because of their thin connection to moneymaking. According to Nussbaum, these subjects are significant in nourishing our "inner eye" to recognise others not as the mere physical subject, but as the subject who also holds an inner

spiritual world.（Nussbaum 2010, 107-108）

What is needed in our culturally diverse society is not an arbitral categorisation of friend and enemy or willingness toward further conflicts among groups of people in the same society, but rather, critical eyes to analyse reality, and efforts to improve relations of different groups is needed to avoid disharmonious situations. As Nussbaum explains, on one hand, we are physical beings, but at the same time we are spiritual and emotional beings. We have many differences, but we share many things common in a rather invisible inner dimension. As well as the possibility of enmity and conflicts based on the differences, the possibility of common understanding and shared sentiment are also opened.

２．The promotion of communication
（１）The practice of communication as a condition for sympathy
Communications between cultural groups is necessary to realise fellow-feeling in a culturally diverse society. Counter measures of distorted images of others is necessary, but it is insufficient for the realisation of their sympathetic relations, because the possibility that views of others may be ended as unilaterally projected images towards them. It is possible to project one's groundless image to others, but such a unilateral image and corresponding sentiment to the object will not be stable due to the lack of communication and mutual understanding. Unreciprocated views and sentiments projected to the object are not sustainable. In order to realise stable sympathetic relations between parties, reciprocal understanding through communications is necessary.

On this issue, Max Scheler[1] argued in his "Nature of Sympathy"（1992）that sympathy is remained as a mere unilateral projection of the sentiment of the subject without participation（Teilhaben）to the object's behaviour.（Scheler 1992）It seems to be true that the observation of the object by participating in his/her behaviour is crucial to share the sense of the behaviour and sentiment toward the object. In our day-to-day life, we generally try to examine appropriateness of the sentiment through observation and communication with the object. Our life history is a series of feedback processes of hypothetical understanding and projection of the sentiment to the object and examination of its appropriateness through communication and observation. By doing so, we grasp a corresponding relationship between particular circumstances and proper sentiment. With this learning process, we come to share

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1 ）Max Scheler（1992）criticised Adam Smith's theory of sympathy by saying that Smith recognised supreme moral value in common sentiment and attempted to elicit moral value from it. In Scheler's account, Smith's overvaluing attitude of the common sentiment deprives and overlooks the possibility of value judgement based on individual's conscience by supposing an impartial spectator as an internalised common sentiment. Also, by giving an example of "witch hunting", Scheler emphasises that moral norm that is supported by common sentiment may turn out to be vicious behaviour in different times and therefore, common sentiment cannot become the ground of universal moral behaviour. In fact, Smith was aware of this difficulty and he inserted a part that discussed the possibility and importance of eternal virtue that is beyond of relative common norm of society.

sentiment with others. In fact, this is the very reason and condition of our sympathy with fictitious situations or characters in films or TV dramas. This means that implementation of communication with others who hold a different cultural background will promote mutual understanding and sharing of sentiment. Even between different groups that hold completely different sense of values and meanings of things, it is possible to realise share of sentiment reciprocally through a mutual learning process of the meanings of rules and behaviours of the other group. By our shared commitment and observation of others, with trial and error, we can improve expectation of other's sentiments corresponding to situations.

Moreover, a solid sense of recognising others as same beings that hold the same sentiments as he/she does can be acquired through communication in reality. Such a sense of the object cannot be gained through reading textbooks on communications or watching a TV drama. Hungarian Philosopher Michael Polanyi（1959; 1967）categorises our knowledge into "theoretical knowledge" and "practical knowledge". According to Polanyi, the practical knowledge is not the type of knowledge that can be gained through learning of theory. For instance, the skill of driving a car cannot be mastered by only reading its manual. In order to master practical knowledge such as driving car, practice in reality is necessary. Polanyi states at this point as follows;

> The skill of a driver cannot be replaced by a thorough schooling in the theory of the motorcar; the knowledge I have of my own body differs altogether from the knowledge of its physiology; and the rules of rhyming and prosody do not tell me what a poem told me, without any knowledge of its rules.（Polanyi 1967, 20）

As language cannot be mastered only through reading its grammar books or one cannot become a good football player of only by watching football matches, practices of communications with others are necessary for expanding the objects of sympathy. Because of this, actual communication is necessary to be sure of that different members of the same society are not only the objects of legal recognition, but also the communicable people who share some respects in common with the subjects.

（2）Communication as a need to gain a solid sense of recognition from others in society.

Todorov states that the nature of our inner self is formed through our "social exchange" and it should not be recognised as an offspring of the depth of autistic mind.

> The self exists only in and by its relations with others; intensifying the social exchange means intensifying the self.（Todorov 2001, 145）

The possibility of people's sense of belonging to the culturally diverse society is dependent not only on their legal status, but also on their solid sense that can be felt in real communication with other people. It is possible to realise that sense of belonging in a culturally diverse society through communicating with other members who hold different

cultural backgrounds whilst each retaining different identities. On the other hand, in the case a negative image of some particular cultural group remains as a rigid stigma in society, solidarity of the members of that cultural group will be enhanced because of the sense of victimization. In that case, sense of belonging to the whole society will not be realised. There, efforts of revising such an unfavourable view as well as promotion of communication have to be made.

> Our identity as members of some group is not essential beyond the context of relations with others. Realisation of sympathy as fellow-feeling is significant in a culturally diverse society as it prevents dis-unification of the groups of people caused by the politicization of cultural identity.

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