Toward an “Archipelagic Thinking” on East-Asia

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I am delighted and honored to be able to hold our first conference on East Asian Philosophy at Meiji University. I welcome you all from the bottom of my heart and thank you all for coming all the way to participate in this project here in Tokyo. When we first began this project, I never thought so many researchers—there are 83 of us here—would respond to our invitation from Meiji. Therefore, I feel very strong intellectual emotion and heavy responsibility today.

At the same time, I have also been preoccupied with a certain obscure problem these days. People in Japan typically use the term *Higasi Ajia* nowadays to refer to East Asia. But there is another word that indicates this area: *Tōa* (東亜). Around 1942, *Tōa* changed into *Dai Tōa* (大東亜) [the Greater East Asia] in order to include *Nantō* (南島), that is, the South Sea Islands of the Pacific Ocean. I do not know the percentage of Japanese people who know these words *Tōa* and *Dai-Tōa* today and could use them unhesitatingly. It seems to me that we Japanese avoid using them either consciously or unconsciously. Besides the fact that they may sound outdated, these words necessarily evoke their associations with the slogans proclaimed by Imperial Japan before and during the Asia Pacific War such as *Shin Tōa Chitsujō* [新東亜秩序] or the New East Asian Order, and *Dai Tōa Kyōei Ken* [大東亜共栄圏] or the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Zone. In other words, these terms make us inevitably face the ever-returning problematic of the war responsibility.

If we abstained from using these words and treated them as a taboo, we would miss an opportunity to resolve very serious problems they have continued to raise for more than eighty years. This is the reason why I first take the case of a Japanese philosopher who was profoundly involved with an envisioning of what was called the New East Asian Order. His name is Miki Kiyoshi (1897–1945). When Miki read Nishida Kitarō’s *Inquiry into Goodness* (1911) in 1916, he decided to be a philosopher. After serving as the chair of philosophy department at Hōsei University in 1927, Miki was invited by the Society of South Manchuria Railway to give lectures at various venues in Manchuria in 1928, which was only four years before Manchukoku, or the Japanese-orchestrated State of Manchuria, declared its independence.

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From 1933, Miki began to play an active role in Showa Study Group, a think tank organized by Konoe Fumimaro (1891–1945) who would his first term as Japan's prime minister from 1937 to 1939 and the second term from 1939 to 1941. Just like Miki, Konoe was one of the disciples of both Nishida Kitarō and Tanabe Hajime. Miki and Konoe maintained a close relationship during the war. There had never been and never would be such a closeness between a philosopher and a nationally prominent politician in Japan. Miki visited Manchukou again in 1940. In 1942, he was sent to the Philippines to work for the news department of the Japanese Army and spent ten months there. As I will discuss below, Miki began publishing many articles about the cultural construction of the New East Asian Order from around 1936 and more or less simultaneously started working on his great work *Logic of Einbildungskraft* in 1937. Such a parallelism is not a coincidence.

In this sense, the last World War posed and continues to pose a serious question concerning the essential relationship between philosophy and war. We may reformulate this question from the outset as that of “philosophy as war” and “war as philosophy.” This is hardly surprising if we are to recall the Fragment 53 of Heraclitus about “polemos” as the father of all things.

Martin Heidegger discusses this fragmentt in his *Introduction to Metaphysics*, which is based on the lectures given at the University of Fribourg in 1935. According to him, “polemos” cannot signify war in an ordinary sense (*Krieg* in German), that is, war as a human deed. Rather, it must mean a kind of “original sharing” or “cutting-connecting” of the world *as* the world. Heidegger uses the words such as “Ge-füge” (jointed) and “Fugung” (joint) to refer to this movement. I will take up this topic again below, but here I would like to merely point out that Emmanuel Levinas—a severe critic of Heidegger just as Adorno was—wrote the following at the beginning of his *Totality and Infinity* (1961), likely taking into account of this fragment and Heidegger's discussion of it: “Lucidity—an open access of spirit to the truth—does it not consist in a glimpse of the perpetual possibility of war?” (*Totalité et infini*, Levinas, 1971, p.5. My translation.)

1

Let us now begin to discuss the case of Miki Kiyoshi by reading the following passage which he wrote in 1940.

I cannot forget a scene on a train from Hilar to Halbin one day in last September. On our train there were many foreigners who were traveling in Manchuria. I heard that there were 170 of them. There were Jews who were expelled from Germany and most of them were with their families. Some were old couples and some were young couples with their children. Some ate bread in taking them out of their big trunks and some gave milk to their children from their thermos. Part of them would go to Shanghai via Dalian and part of them would go to the United States via Busan and Yokohama. It rained lightly outside. Worrying about their fates in a corner of the train car, I heard young Japanese officer say the following: “I feel very sorry for them. I wonder whether they'll get off somewhere in Manchuria. I think the founding spirit of Manchuria consists in settling these people safely.” Perhaps he remembered the slogan of the Harmony of Nations (民族協和). (*Miki Kiyoshi's Essays on Tōa-Kyōdōtai* (東亜共同体), [ETK], Kobushi-Bunko, 2007, p.141. My translation.)

The emigration of these Jewish people might have been made possible thanks to an extralegal visa issuance by Sugihara Chiune. Of course, I have no intention to justify the founding of Manchukoku by citing Miki's undoubtedly moving description of his encounter with the Jewish exiles. Nevertheless, at the very least I would like to keep in mind that such a small space of shelter did exist in the world at that time. Levinas would say that a "utopia" may have concretized there. Miki too emphasized the philosophical rationality of utopia or utopian imagination, regarding contemporary humanism as the very product of such an imagination. As Miki writes, "every Utopia is situated in an island of the ocean or separated from its surrounding by law or natural environment." I will take up this passage again later. But suffice to say for the moment that the small utopic space on the train car functioned as if it were an island.

If I could quote from Levinas again, he writes that everything exists in a small greeting: "Bonjour" (Shalom). Like Levinas as well as Alain, Miki takes up this same issue and reflects on the lack of politeness in Japanese people's behavior toward Manchurians: "Even if Japanese do not possess any national or racial prejudice, are they not often misunderstood because of their lack of politeness? Politeness is not only a sign of humility. It is necessary also in order to show dignity." Miki was one of the few Japanese philosophers who were genuinely concerned about the fate of the Jewish people. During his stay in Germany from 1922 to 1924, he had already been aware of the peculiar conditions of the German Jews. In fact, the slogan of national or racial policy of Manchukoku is "the Harmony of Five Nations" (五族協和): Japanese, Mongolian, Korean, Manchurian and Chinese (Han). I think Miki sincerely believed in this ideal and wanted Manchukoku to also welcome racially white people including the Jews. On the other hand, Miki did not misunderstand the social reality of Manchukoku.

A day after my return to Shinkyo [the capital of Manchukoku], I went to Kodama Park. There I saw Japanese, Manchurians, and Koreans. It is true that this sight moved me, and remembering the Jewish emigrants I had met on the train, I could not help but celebrate the future of Manchukoku. Next I began to observe in more detail the crowd in the park. Certainly, there were Japanese, Manchurians, and Koreans. However, the people who accompanied the Japanese were Japanese, and the people who accompanied the Manchurians were Manchurians. I could not find a instance where Japanese and Manchurians were comingling. (*Ibid.*, pp. 142-143. My translation.)

There was no crossing between the nations. Maruyama Masao would describe such a coexistence as one of "Takotsubo type," or the compartmentalization of people into the "octopus pots." Of course, this issue cannot be limited to the presence or absence of companionship in everyday life. Rather, it must also touch on the issue of biological hybridization between various nations. Arthur de Gobineau's famous essays on inequality among the human races established the theory of modern racism based on the Aryan myth. But very few have read his actual work. To tell the truth, his text begins with an affirmation of extreme diversity in human beings. During his world travel, Gobineau realized this diversity and found the ideal of equality of human beings merely abstract. We must keep in mind that the discovery of differences among human beings led him to posit the hierarchy of human races. Furthermore, Gobineau intensely sensed the very fragility of such a hierarchy because there were no nations or states which had

not perished in history. But he posits that a degeneration of superior race occurs not because of external reasons such as climate, bad politics, and moral disturbances. They arise from a mixing of alien bloods that occurs whenever superior races conquer inferior races. According to Gobineau, a superior race must cause its own degeneracy precisely because of its superiority. That is why Nazism adopted the body politics that aimed to protect the pureness of Aryan mother's healthy womb. But this is not possible, and it is the very impossibility of such a politics that made it so cruel and violent.

Unfortunately, we have not yet overcome the racist theory of Gobineau. As for Miki, he denied the existence of the "pure race" in any nation. Instead, his notion of world history valorizes inter-national contacts and crossings that may bring changes to both cultures and races. Nevertheless, I would like to interrogate Miki's thought concerning a mixing or hybridization of nations and the identity of a nation.

2

I would now like to read and discuss Miki's poem *My orchard*. Here is my attempted translation of a strophe from the poem into English.

I too would like to make my orchard
 With the German rooted deeply and widely
 I'll make a fruit tree-trunk extending leisurely
 With the Greek rich in beauty and taste
 I'll ripen a sculptural and animated fruit
 Grow grass with the lively English
 Put a fence with the rustic Latin
 I may build a windmill with the Assyrian
 Sometimes with the Italian
 I'll raise a warm and plump wind
 Sometimes with the French
 I'll raise the wind of *esprit* and *parfum*
 (Aozora-Bunko. My translation.)

It is not difficult to see in this poem the same structure of coexistence between languages that we identified in the vision of the harmonious nations in Manchukoku. This is an instance of multinationalism and multilingualism based on the theory of social organism. From this point of view, Miki contested the so-called Imperialization Policy (皇民化政策), which forced Manchurians, Koreans, and Chinese to speak Japanese. A linguist named Tokieda Motoki, professor at the Imperial University of Kyōjō (Seoul), was one of the leading proponents of this policy. In reference to this theory, Miki writes as follows:

At schools in Manchukoku, teachers teach Japanese as the "national langue" (国語). It seems that Manchurians do not always dislike learning Japanese because the knowledge of Japanese carries economic value and makes finding an employment even at the government offices much easier. However, apart from such an economic value, there is some doubt as to whether Manchurians take Japanese truly as their own "national langue." Insofar as a national langue grows by

keeping pace with the nation itself, and foundation of the nation-state in modern time in and of itself means foundation of a national language, Japanese as a national language has to change its meaning in Manchuria as the multinational state composed of several nations. For such a state, is it not appropriable to treat Japanese just like the Latin of medieval Europe? In other words, as the official language or scholarly language? Treat Japanese as the official language that is related to the political leadership of Japan in *Tōa*; treat it as the scholarly language that is related to the cultural excellence of Japan. (...) Nevertheless, teaching Japanese to Manchurians is not sufficient. We Japanese must learn Manchurian too. It is regrettable that there are Japanese people who despise learning Manchurian under the selfish pretext that to excel in foreign languages is a sign of ruination for the state. For Japanese, learning Manchurian is most important in order to maintain true leadership both in political and cultural sense. In fact, the men who have performed adequately in the area of real business can speak Manchurian without an exception. (ETK, pp.144–145. My translation.)

I do not know if Miki himself learned the Manchurian language. Miki put emphasis on both political and cultural utility of learning Manchurian. But his poem “My Orchard” underscores sensuous and aesthetic characteristics of each language that Miki seemed to have physically experienced through his learning of foreign languages. In this regard, I would like to mention the case of Tokieda Motoki. In his *Basic Theory of National Language Philology* (1941), Tokieda criticizes of Ferdinand de Saussure’s linguistic theory as “a constructive theory of language,” opposing it to his own “process theory of language” that is capable of explaining the becoming of a language. That is why Tokieda poses the “original place” from which a language forms itself. For Tokieda, such an “original place” of a language lies in “rhythm.” From where did Tokieda get this idea? Certainly from Nishida Kitaro. But I imagined that Tokieda felt certain physical resistance among Koreans, Chinese, Manchurians who were forced to speak the unknown language of Japanese.

In his report on the Philippines, Miki once again takes up the issue of language:

There are many dialects in the Philippines. Opinions about the number of dialects differ among scholars, but ordinarily it is said that eighty-seven dialects exist. Among these dialects, there are so many differences that ones who speak a certain dialect cannot communicate with those who speaks another. (*Complete Works of Miki Kiyoshi*[CW], vol.15, Miki, 1984–1985, p.546. My translation.)

It thus becomes necessary to rely on a common language in order to ensure communication among the dialects. In this case, Miki attributes this role to the Japanese language. If you take an example of the Francophone world, you would understand the actuality of what Miki discusses in relation to Manchuria as well as the Philippines. The case of the Philippines corresponds to the case of Burkina Faso, for instance. What Miki has to say about the role of the Japanese language in Manchuria reminds us of the linguistic situation of Senegal wherein the usage of French is almost limited to politics and to the university while ordinary people speak dialects such as Wolof.

If I might speak at a certain risk of being misunderstood, it seems that we often foreclose the question of problems and possibilities by *not* examining the Japanese

concept of Manchukoku and instead merely morally treating the historical foundation of the State of Manchuria an absolute evil or an unforgivable war crime.

As for the languages, Miki criticizes the notion that both Chinese and Japanese belong to the same species.

Although Japanese people use Chinese characters in writing a part of their phrases, our usage is totally different from the ways in which Chinese people use the same characters. It is true that many Japanese words are borrowed literally from Chinese words. Nevertheless, this trend has become remarkable only since the Meiji Restoration. As the Chinese words become Japanese words, it becomes fine to write them in *kana* or in Roman letters. The fact that the two languages are completely different from one another is more important than the partial similarity between them. (ETK, pp.14–15. My translation.)

In this respect, I invite you to refer to the work of a famous Japanese calligrapher Ishikawa Kyūyō on the cultural sphere of Chinese characters that encompasses China, Korea, Vietnam and Japan.

3

I would like to now discuss Miki's conceptualization of *Tōa* as a system. As you may know, Miki's first book was about Blaise Pascal. According to Pascal, a human being is a ship floating between the infinitely grand and the infinitely small. That is to say, a human being is a "milieu" or "betweenness." Miki too was a philosopher of "milieu" or "betweenness." He adhered to this philosophy even as he was engaged in his conceptualization of what *Tōa* should be. For Miki, *Tōa* occupied the middle place between the world and each particular nation or state. As such, *Tōa* can demonstrate its critical power toward both of these poles. That is, it prevents the world from being the principle of abstract universalism and at the same time also prevents a nation or a state from being the principle of closed nationalism or particularism. Drawing on the terminology of Hegel, *Tōa* can be conceptualized as the "particular universal" or "universal particular." By referring to Ferdinand Tönnies as well as Henri Bergson, Miki described *Tōa* as both *Gemeinschaftlich* and *Gesellschaftlich*, or the communities that were both closed and open.

Now that we have defined Miki's *Tōa* as a median or intermediary community, we must move on to analyze the structure of *Tōa* itself. *Tōa* is not simply an economic bloc. Rather, it constitutes a "whole." However, unlike so-called "totalitarianism," such a "whole" respects a particularity of every part. Miki writes: "Even when we consider the East Asian Community as a whole, we take into account not only the particularity of Japan but also the particularity of China. What we need is a logic according to which each part keeps its particularity while being necessarily enveloped by a whole."

As for "the unity of Orient," Miki denies its presence in any sense. If there were such a unity, it must be the "unity of the problem to be solved." It is nothing but a possibility that one has to actualize. And, as such, this absence of the ready-made Oriental unity gave a paradoxical unity to *Tōa* because all the parts of this *Tōa* must unite in order to solve the problem. What we call a whole is not and cannot be a substance. Miki critically discusses how a lack of "functional thinking" in so-called "Japanese thought" makes it susceptible to a "substantial thinking." According to Miki, "functional

thinking” regards a thing in its “relation” and considers it as “transformation in each relation,”

If it were the case, the East Asian Community composed by Japan, China and Manchukoku must be considered a dynamic process of interrelations or of interactions, and such interactions are thought to cause transformations or reforms in each of its part. These double transformations cannot help but transform the relationship between the East Asian Community and others parts of the world.

Miki finds a “thought of nothingness” (無の思想) in the center of traditional oriental culture. We cannot discuss here the very intricate relation between “nothingness” (無) and “emptiness” (空). But in light of the fact that nothing is substantial according to the “thought of emptiness,” Miki certainly implies the notion of “emptiness” when he speaks of “functional thinking.” What is more, if you connect three points with straight lines, you obtain a triangle. That means relations produce “forms” (形). Therefore, every transformation of relations brings about transformations of form or events of metamorphosis. As Nishida Kitaro and Paul Klee concur, “Gestalt ist Gestaltung.” Here is the central conception of Miki’s *Logic of Einbildungskraft*: form cannot be given, nor does it accept passive changes. It is the actions of human being that produce forms and change them. That is why Miki considers his *Logic of Einbildungskraft* not only a science of form and transformation, but also that of action. Miki here surely has in mind the notion of “action-intuition” as spoken of by Nishida.

From what does “produktive Einbildungskraft” produce forms? From what does it *not* produce forms, leading to an instance of the formless or *informel* in French. Every form implies differentiation inside and outside, left and right, up and down, in parts and as a whole, and etc. Therefore, “the formless” means “indifferenciated.” Here is the original meaning of “nothingness” as it was discussed by Lao-Tse and Chuang-Tse: it is a chaotic excess rather than nothing. Nishida calls it “absolute nothingness.” I can understand why Miki was so afraid of “the anarchistic trend” ascertainable in the “thought of nothingness.” Because of such an indifferenciated excess, a process of producing forms becomes endless. Forms do not cease to transform themselves. This is the role played by *reproduktive Einbildungskraft*. In short, it is “mimesis.”

It is at this point that Miki’s work meets that of Gabriel Tarde, often known as the sociologist of imitation. Not only Miki but Nishida, Wstuji Tetsuro, and Tosaka Jun showed much interest in Tarde’s theory. Let us listen to what Miki has to say about Tarde’s work.

A heterogeneity is confirmed in the movement toward homogeneity. Monadologic sociology of Tarde can elucidate only the genesis of heterogeneity in imitation, but it seems unable to elucidate the movement toward homogeneity. It cannot explain why and how a fixed form could be constructed from the reciprocal imitations of original and inventive human beings. According to Tarde, social life is nothing but intricate intersections of imitative rays radiated from each human being. Nevertheless, how can a unified form be constructed from these intersections? Tarde did no more than say interferences between imitative rays are countless, but a society must have a unified form. Meaning of institution consists in being such a unified form of society. (CW, vol.8, p.127)

Miki seems obsessed with a unity or unifying, but does a society have indeed a unified form? Contra Emile Durkheim, Tarde would say no. What we call nationality and national mentality as a collective representation is nothing but illusions that occur through an elision of the micromovements of imitation which paradoxically are nothing but incessant differentiation according to Tarde. Imitation crosses the national borders on one hand, and it destroys every individual identity on the other. “I” is nothing but an endless auto-reflection or auto-imitation. Among the Japanese philosophers, only Nishida could understand the profound implication of imitation as Tarde theorized it.

In France too, Tarde has been forgotten for a long time. It was Gilles Deleuze and his *Difference and Repetition* (1968) that pulled his work out of oblivion. This passage from *Anti-Oedipus* (1980) by Deleuze and Guattari shows how Tarde’s microsociology may destroy our deep-seated prejudice according to which a whole that unifies all parts is said to exist.

A whole is produced as a part besides other parts. It does not unify or totalize (in French); it opens extraordinary passages between incommensurable parts, and institutes transversal lines between elements, maintain all differences in their own dimensions. (*L’Anti-OEdipe*, Deleuze & Guattari, 1972, p.51. My translation.)

For example, how would you imagine a gestalt of Japan? If you imagine a figure composed by four relatively big islands, this figure is thought to represent Japan as a whole. Even if you know countless islands that exist inside and outside of this figure, you may still believe this is a unified form of Japan. But in reality, the four relatively big islands are mutually juxtaposed along with numerous other islands. I must say the same thing about the relation between the gigantic Eurasian continent and a myriad of very small islands. “Island” is not the opposite word of “continent.”

Okamoto Taro, a famous Japanese artist, visited Okinawa under the U.S. military occupation in 1954. Five years later, he published a book entitled *Forgotten Japan: Treatise on Okinawa Culture*, Okamoto, 1997, in which he asked a pertinent question.

We Japanese people comprehend Japan only from the vantage point of the Japanese mainland. Nevertheless, there is a blue sea and the countless islands which enclose us. We cannot feel them as the distinctive parts of Japan. We must get out of the abstract and fixed ideas of Japan and regain in our body a sunshine that bathed our ancestors, the smells of wind from south to north and their rich atmosphere. (Chuo-Koron, 1996, p.10. My translation.)

As I have shown above, Miki relates the notion of utopia to an island. Besides that, he writes as follows to seek the origin of the idea of Orient or the East-of-Ocean (東洋):

The term *Tōyō* [the East-of-Ocean] came from China. At the beginning of the Ming dynasty or at the end of the Yuan dynasty, people distinguished *Tōyō* and *Seiyō* (the West-of-Ocean) according to the directions of ships that sailed in southern sea. In general, the region around the Philippine archipelago were called

Tōyō, and the costal zones to the west of the Philippine archipelago and the regions in the direction of the Indian Ocean were called *Seiyō*. (ETK, p.15. My translation.)

Furthermore, Miki also writes the following about the Philippine archipelago.

Why do Filipinos love sad music so much? According to a Filipino scholar, this preference is motivated by their traditional nostalgia for their homeland. Long ago, their ancestors immigrated into these islands by crossing the sea. (CW, vol.15, p.479. My translation.)

Whence did we come, where are we, and where will we go? As you may know well, it was Pascal who asked this question. I imagine the young Miki repeating this question in Paris. Did Miki ask the same question to Japanese, to Chinese, to Manchurians, and to Koreans who lived in Manchukoku? Not only Jews and Filipinos but also Japanese, Chinese, Manchurians, and Koreans were emigrants and immigrants. Did Miki know that a professor of philosophy at Imperial University of Tokyo named Inoue Tetsujirō had intervened in the controversy about the origin of Japanese people around 1890? I think Miki was not sufficiently conscious of the fundamentally archipelagic character of his *Tōa*. Neither did he think profoundly about the extensive emigrant roots, either by land or maritime, of our and their ancestors. On their ways, what happened? Miki does not mention the Okinawa archipelago or northern islands. I'm not crying for the moon. I only think that Miki's own concept of *Tōa* forces us to elaborate a philosophy of archipelagos, that is, that of a "principle sea" which historically referred to the Aegean Sea where philosophy is said to have begun.

4

In his essay on Herman Melville's novella "Bartleby, the Scrivener," Deleuze describes how Melville extends the transcendentalism of Ralph Waldo Emerson:

Melville already designs the outline of a pragmatism which goes to extend this transcendentalism. First of all, it is an affirmation of the world as a process or archipelago. It is not even a puzzle whose pieces adjust one to another and form a totality; it is rather a wall composed of stones without cement, each stone being valuable by itself but also in relation to others. They are both isolated and floating relations, both islands and inter-islands, both mobile points and winding lines. Because the Truth has 'jagged edges.' (*Critique et clinique*, Deleuze, 1993, p.110. My translation)

Affirmation of the world as a process and as archipelago. What does this specific mode of affirmation mean not only for the philosophy of Deleuze or for philosophical pragmatism but also for the currents of Japanese philosophy and even for each of us who lives in the world today? When Deleuze mentions "pragmatism" in relation to Melville, I think he is thinking of a specific thinker: Jean Wahl (1888–1974) whose doctoral thesis *The Pluralistic Philosophies of England and America* was published in

1920. Here Wahl describes the pluralistic universe (pluriverse) conceived of by William James (1842–1910).

Arbitrary, buffeted, discontinued, swarming, tangled, muddy, difficult, fragmental (...), it is in employing some of these adjectives that James tries to describe his universe. The world has something rude and clashing. We see everywhere breaking up of the barriers which make a river become a continual current, so that turmoils form out of raging waves. (*Les philosophies pluralistes d'Angleterre et d'Amérique*, Wahl, 1920, pp.174-175. My translation)

In reading such a passage, I cannot help but think about various lives of islands in the ocean. It is possible that Deleuze himself may have been inspired by them when he describes the world as a process and archipelago. As I am sure you are aware of, James calls his own philosophical method “radical empiricism” for which “the relations that connect experiences must themselves be experienced relations, and any kind of relation experienced must be accounted as real as anything else in the system.” The relation between the terms (“and” for example) is as important as the terms (either A or B) that it relates or separate. In other words, it is not the terms which dominate the relations; on the contrary, it is the relations that form, transform, erode, and destroy the terms. But we must also keep in mind that the relations remain exterior to the terms, even as these relations can form the terms.

That is the main point of Bertrand Russell’s idea concerning “the exteriority of relation.” Like James, Russell inherited it from a French philosopher named Charles Renouvier (1815–1903). Renouvier was a philosopher of discontinuity, against whom Bergson, for example, stressed the continuity of duration. In this respect, James was the inheritor of these two French philosophers. For him, discontinuity is compatible with continuity. I think “archipelago” is nothing but an avatar of such a “compossibility,” to use the term of Leibniz.

As an eminent professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne, Jean Wahl had many disciples. Among them, we find Edouard Glissant (1928–2011), the Creole poet and thinker born in Martinique Island of the French Indies archipelago. Like another Martinican thinker Franz Fanon (1925–1961), Glissant was also a student of Aimé Césaire (1913–2008), who had edited the monthly newspaper *Black Students* and *The Anthology of New Black and Madagascar Poems* (1948) in collaboration with the future president of Senegal Leopold Sedar Senghor (1906–2001). After arriving at Paris in 1946, Glissant attended the lectures given by Jean Wahl, Gaston Bachelard, and many other notable thinkers of the era.

It is evident that the deterritorialized vision of the world as conceived by James/Wahl is reflected in Glissant’s texts such as *Poetics of Relation* (1990) and *Poetics of Diverseness* (1995), and in what he more generally calls his “archipelagic thinking.” Due to the time constraint, I cannot give you a full picture of Glissant’s thinking. I resign myself to quoting only one passage from his *Treatise of All World* (1997). “Archipelagic thinking” is diametrically different from both the Continental thinking and the Mediterranean thinking that brought forth the three monotheistic transcendental religions.

Archipelagic thinking matches the paces of pluralistic worlds. The former borrows from the latter something ambiguous, fragile and derivative. Archipelagic thinking loves detours, but detour is not an escape or abandon. It tries to associate with the diverse, which is always stretching itself as archipelagoes. We are aware of the Continental, its thickness hanging over us all through various magnificent systems of thought that have dominated the history of mankind. And such a way of thinking is not suitable at all for our shatterings nor our plural histories. (*Introduction à une poétique du divers*, Glissant, 1996, pp.42–43. My translation.)

Glissant asks us to “share or cut waters” as if it were the very motto of archipelagic thinking. How can we share or cut our waters? In this, Glissant places utmost importance on the art called “translation” or “interpretation”. In his view, in the art of translation, there can be no duality between the original *langue* and the *langue* it translates. What we call a “langue” is already and always a hybrid or a mixture, just like water, and that is why everyone, including those who are monolingual, is open to all *langues*. Each wave, however minuscule it may be, must ultimately be produced by the water as a formless whole which is not a whole.

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