



Science and Religion from the Perspective of Post-Modernism --- Knowledge System and Religious System

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Abstract

All knowledge belongs to narrative knowledge, and also local knowledge. Post-modernism can be defined as “elimination of grand narrative”, so in the world of post-modernism, validity of knowledge has become an issue. Local knowledge emphasizes that generation and justification of knowledge has its local features, so it has no way to surpass the dilemma of cultural relativism. Theoretically, in this article, the author believes that the standpoint of “moderate relativism” is advisable, which, not only sufficiently respects cultural diversification and particularity of each nation, but emphasizes possibility and necessity of culturally mutual communication of all nations, which attains mutual understanding and recognition during participation and share.

Keywords: Post-modernism, Cultural relativism, Local knowledge, Validity

1. Validity issue of knowledge by Post-modernism

1.1 Lyotard: knowledge status of Post-modern society

The French philosopher Lyotard, who is well-known as “Father of Post-modernism” gave the sub-title to his masterpiece “Post-Modern State” “Report on Knowledge”. In the introduction, he declared at the very beginning:

The target of this book is the knowledge status in the most developed society, and I decide to apply “Post-modern” to nominate this status. This word is currently extremely popular among sociologists and critics in the American continent. Human being apply it to denote the cultural context for the time being: multiple revolutions since the end of the 19th century, and game rules from science, literature to art have all be replaced. This book tries to place the above revolutions into the scope of narrative crisis for review.

From this quotation, we can at least obtain three pieces of information: (1) “Post-modern” is both a cultural context and a general description of knowledge status in the most developed society; (2) Science, literature and art are different language games, which respectively abide by their own game rules, and, furthermore, these game rules are in frequent change; (3) Due to changes of these rules, the “narrative crisis” happens in the Post-modern society. It is obvious that, thinking source of Post-modernism is closely related to the knowledge status of a developed society. Accurately speaking, what Lyotard cares about is the validity issue of our knowledge in the changing Post-modern society.

Validity of knowledge has become an issue, which highlights obvious differences of Post-modernism and Modernism in terms of knowledge characteristics. In ancient traditional society and the modern society, validity of knowledge was either regarded as natural or shielded. However, it is only in the post-modern society that validity of knowledge is highlighted as a keen issue. Max Weber and Habermas both mentioned the “legitimation crisis” of Late Capitalism, while Lyotard revealed cultural predicaments of Post-modern society from the particular perspective of validity of knowledge. In order to have a better understanding of Lyotard’s description of knowledge condition of Post-modern society, we should at first straighten out the concept and classification of knowledge.

1.2 Validity of two varieties of knowledge

Knowledge is constructed by narration, but not any narration is knowledge. Only accurate or appropriate knowledge can be named “knowledge”. Narration can be divided into several varieties, including indicative and descriptive narration, and also order, stipulative, imperative, and exclamatory narration, etc. Therefore, knowledge can be correspondingly

classified into two varieties: scientific knowledge and narrative knowledge. Scientific knowledge is composed of by indicative and descriptive narration, and it has true and false differentiation in indicating and describing its targets. However, narrative knowledge is connected with tradition and culture, which altogether constitute a set of fixed pragmatic rules on social association. Lyotard borrowed the concept of language game by the later Wittgenstein, which believes that different narration or knowledge constitute language games of different varieties. Game is like a contest, and each speech is a different “trick”, which reflects and stipulates different social and cultural contexts of speakers. Here, whether “game” or “narration”, they are literally understood and applied, but not in the meaning of metaphor.

Whether scientific knowledge or narrative knowledge, they should both seek for a way that validates themselves, but the approach to seeking for this way is totally different. Validity standard of scientific knowledge roots in proof, falsification consensus, or appointment. Specifically speaking, there are two items in validity standard of scientific knowledge, namely, internal logic consistency and external experiential validity, which was the knowledge standard of logic positivism popular among western academic field in the early 1900s. Whether the Vienna school or Karl Raimund Popper school, they were both convinced about these two items. However, narrative knowledge seeks for its validity standard in its culture and tradition. Here, Lyotard’s definition of narrative knowledge originated from description of original society by anthropology, and he took Karshnarvas who like to tell stories as an example:

What we would like to talk about lies in folk narrative pragmatics of narration. For example, a Karshnarva who likes to tell a story always starts his narration in the same way, “The following is a story of ..., which is the same as what I have always heard. Now I would like to take turns to tell as story to you, and please listen carefully.” And his way of ending the story is also unalterable, “... the story ends by now. The one who tells the story to you is ... (name of a Karshnarva), and the buckra who listens to the story is ... (name of a Spanish or Portuguese)”.

This is a typical occasion of narration, and Lyotard analyzed it with great interest. Of course, we may make a little expansion on the analysis. An occasion is composed of by three factors: speaker, receiver and protagonists in a story (“denotation” in a language). The reason why the narrator can occupy the position of a speaker is that this story has been “heard” by him. And the narrator used to be in the position of a receiver, namely, validity of narrative knowledge originates from particular cultural heritage. This also implies that, by listening to this story, the receiver is also able to acquire similar authority, that is, validity of narrative knowledge is transferrable. Furthermore, there is one more important factor, namely, the speaker might at the same time be the protagonist of the story, who is denoted in the story, just because he has a name of Karshnarva, (which is a sign of clan consanguinity heritage), while the actual receiver (the buckra) at this time doesn’t have this authority. Therefore, the key whether the actual receiver can obtain the authority of retelling (speaker) by listening to the story lies in whether the receiver recognizes validity of narrative knowledge. If the buckra receivers judge the story by the validity standard of scientific knowledge, and negate validity of narration, then they will actually lose the authority of acting as the speaker (retelling) in the tradition. If we regard language as a game which contains social relationships, then “A set of pragmatic rules that constitute social relationships will get transferred together with narration”.

Here we are confronted with conflict of validity issues in two kinds of knowledge. From the angle of scientific knowledge, narrative knowledge is by no means a kind of knowledge, because these narrations have never been demonstrated. Through transferrable pragmatics, narrative knowledge gets itself trusted without debate and proposing of evidence. Scientific knowledge classifies it into a thought condition which is constituted by public opinions, convention, authority, prejudice, ignorance, and escapism, etc: barbarism, originality, lag, underdevelopment and dissimulation ..., while from the angle of narrative knowledge, scientific knowledge is not only incapable of acting as validity standard of other knowledge, like overrated logical positivists, but has never discovered its validity standard. Whether the internal logic consistency or external experiential validity, they are continually animadverted and doubted even inside scientific philosophy.

Lyotard opposed to regarding scientific knowledge (primarily natural scientific knowledge) as the unique knowledge, and to the tendency of excluding narrative knowledge. He believed that these two kinds of knowledge were different, and they differed from each other in the respects of functions, expressing way, and validation methods, so we couldn’t negate the status and effect of narrative knowledge just due to differences between these two. He also believed that scientific knowledge needs to validate itself in virtue of narrative knowledge, which enables scientific knowledge to obtain its deserved meaning and value. Scientific knowledge still needs to resort to narrative knowledge, tradition, culture and authority to confirm its validity. Both Kuhn and Feyerabend have revealed close association between science and culture of its era. In this respect, all knowledge belongs to narrative knowledge, and scientific knowledge is merely a special variety of narrative knowledge. As one kind of language games, development of new “trick” of scientific knowledge is just like correction of Kepler on the planet orbit theory of Copernicus; or it just alters the entire game by inventing new rules, just like relation between Einstein’s theory of relativity and the classical physics of Newton, which is the scientific revolution defined by Kuhn.

1.3 Post-modernism: elimination of “grand narrative”

It has been mentioned previously that, the purpose of Lyotard is to study knowledge status of a developed society, on the basis of which he developed his Post-modernism theory. He believed that, in order to validate itself, scientific knowledge of the modern society is accustomed to apply the metadiscourse with an integrative function. Once this metadiscourse is discovered, all sorts of knowledge forms can be integrated into a comprehensive narrative framework, which is “the dream of modernism”:

I use the word “modern” to refer to the science that has to resort to a certain type of metadiscourse with a large narrative framework to validate itself, such as Spiritual Dialectics, Meaning Hermeneutics, liberation of rational subject or labor subject, or creation of fortune.

Post-modernism can thereby be defined as “doubt about meta-narrative framework”. In the post-modern society, with deconstruction of “grand narrative”, validity of knowledge was in crisis. The way to resolve the issue lies in the “deconstruction” per se. In a post-modern society, we had to face diversity of discourse and different language games --- all decided by ourselves, not obtaining validity from the outside world, and furthermore, various narrative frameworks are not mutually reductive.

Narrative function is losing its subject, its great hero, its great adventure and target. It disappears under cover of narrative language factors --- narrative, referential, clairvoyant, and descriptive, etc, ... Whatsoever, we needn't establish stable language combination, and the features of language combination we establish are not necessarily communicative.

It goes without saying that, this is doubt and clearing up about rational spirit and subject spirit of human beings since the Enlightenment Era. In the field of scientific philosophy, Lyotard refused to explain science as expression of all actual knowledge. He advocated “narrative understanding” in science, namely, describing it as a perfect “small narrative” in the particular context appropriate to it. This doesn't necessarily mean that it is impossible to acquire knowledge. On the contrary, “it refines our sensitivity towards differences, and strengthens our ability to put up with incommensurability”. Feature of Post-modernism is not only diverse accretion of different words, but harmonious coexistence of distinguished cultures from a positive perspective.

2. Scientific relativism and local knowledge

2.1 Feyerabend: a scientific philosophy of Post-modernism

It has been mentioned previously that, the two validity standards of logic positivism about scientific knowledge are confronted with difficulties, which originate from self-development of scientific philosophy: (1) Falsificationism of Poppe's counter-induction and an experientially-observed thinking that negates the existence of “theory-free”; (2) Kuhn's thinking that metaphysics hypothesis and “incommensurability” were contained in the scientific normal formulas; (3) proposing of “incompleteness theorem” by Kurt Gödel. The above (1) and (2) collapse validity of external experiences in the scientific theory, while (3) suspects the consistency of internal logic in the scientific theory. With development of these thinking trends, demarcation between science and non-science has become obscure, and scientific philosophy has gradually started to lose its traditional theoretical field. By the time of Feyerabend, an extreme scientific relativism or scientific anarchism had come into existence, which claimed “opposition of methods”, and “valediction of sense”, and which integrated scientific philosophy and Post-modernism.

The previous validity issue about scientific knowledge and delimitation issue of science and nonscience both concern similarities and differences between religions and witchcrafts in the society of science (Occidentally) and disindustrialization. According to Lyotard, the latter two belong to “narrative knowledge”. Feyerabend believes that, since theorists always control an experiment based on their own favor, myths and witchcrafts can also endure confirmation and falsification. Those decisive adoptionists can always provide experiential proof for their theories, so that myths can also be based firmly on experiences just as the highly praised scientific theory. Myth is not merely outcome of imagination.

Myth is far from the imaginative thing that contradicts with the reality, but a thinking system maintained by several direct and persuasive experiences. Furthermore, through experiences, myths are more convincing than the complicated experimental results of the world prospect of the science nowadays on which they are based.

Feyerabend pointed out, similar to myths, once science becomes an ideology, it will be degenerated into a dictatorial religion. Nowadays, ideology of scientism has turned science into a sacred church. Myth is a bygone science and science is a myth today. This conclusion is not applied in its metaphorical meaning. If we look back to origin of science, we should discover that, science was not inborn “noble”: as is well known, chemistry originates from alchemy, and astronomy from the ancient astrology.

Astronomy benefits from pythagoras and preference of Plato towards the circumference, and medical science from Herbalism, psychology, metaphysics, physiology of a witch, howdies, and guileful people and mountebanks... Science is enriched by methods and achievements of nonscience everywhere, but procedures which are often seen as the essential part of science are abandoned or replaced without any notice.

Here another example: Evans-Prichard, the British social anthropologist well known for his inspection in African culture, mentioned that, Azande witchcraft has a cosmology, which can handle easily what might be “uncertain” for a layman. If one person tries to kill or hurt another man with a witch craft, but without any effect, then Azande witchcraft could easily explain the reason underlying. Or if one asks for instructions of gods, something unknown “happens mistakenly” at this particular period; or a curse of a ceremony is not correctly fulfilled; or this person has a witchcraft stronger than that of the one who tries to hurt others. Then, Pritchard questions: if there exists such a case, then in what meaning can the Occidental science declares that they understand the world based on more truths than Azande?

Here we come back again to conclusion of Lyotard: all knowledge is narrative, while validity of narrative knowledge should resort to its own cultural heritage. Therefore, each kind of knowledge can only be “truth” within its own cultural tradition. Here contains mystery of witchcrafts and many original mysterious phenomena, which we will go into detailed analysis in the case study in Part 3.

2.2 Locality and validity of knowledge

Local knowledge was proposed by the American Interpretive Anthropology master, Clifford Geertz and the philosopher of science, Joseph Rouse. The background of Interpretive Anthropology was that profound theoretical crisis which happened in the field of Anthropology in 1960s. Due to the popularization of cultural relativism, people doubted about the objectiveness and effectiveness of the work by anthropologists: if mutual communication is not possible between different cultural normal formulas, then is it possible for the description of a cultural sign and its research method to explain the culture? Do they still have any guiding meaning upon the methodology? Whether on earth is it possible for communication between different cultures? Some scholars even doubted about the field work by anthropologists fundamentally, and proposed the interrogation of “Is cultural sign really reliable?” Furthermore, some noted cultural anthropologists at that time came to opposite conclusions for the field work done at the same place, which further made the academic reputation of a cultural sign in a shaky crisis. The Interpretive Anthropology of Geertz resorted to the concept of local knowledge and the method of “thick description” to try to save this crisis. The so-called local knowledge means that, generation and justification of knowledge is related to specific context, which here includes value concept of culture and subculture groups formed under a given historical condition, and the standpoint and field of view determined by given interest relations. All knowledge is local, and the so-called generally applied knowledge is no more than an imagination. Spread and utilization of knowledge is also not an “exemplification” of general knowledge, but a result of “laboratory transplant” and “standardization”, namely, knowledge under one cultural background transplanted into another cultural background, and a re-production process of knowledge under the same condition. The so-called “thick description” just borrows the thought of the philosopher Gilbert Ryle. Taking the fact of a boy winking as an example, Ryle revealed the complicated features of social behavior and cultural symbols. Pure winking, winking to another person, winking of imitating others to mock them, practice winking in the presence of a mirror, and intentionally winking so as to let the third party mistakenly believe that there exists a special relationship between the other two that doesn’t actually exist.... All these behaviors with totally different implications are merely one action in the thin description like a camera --- nothing more than winking, and their respective rich social and cultural information can only be fully revealed in thick description. Even a simple winking is so complicated, let alone description of human behaviors with the characteristic of a highly complicated cultural sign. Geertz used the two concepts of local knowledge and thick description for two reasons. On the one hand, he followed the tradition of cultural relativism, admitted the local feature of knowledge, and placed emphasis on observation of a different culture “from the native’s point of view”, especially non-western culture. On the other hand, he used the method of description to reveal a certain objectiveness of the culture, so as to pioneer a way that would surpass extremely cultural relativism. Particularly, Geertz emphasized “to observe oneself from the angle of another one”, referred to the non-western culture as a reference, and reflected upon the cultural reality of anthropologists themselves, so as to eliminate “Occident-centered view” and “Cultural Hegemonism”. Geertz made great contributions to development of western cultural anthropology.

Local knowledge is obviously a narrative knowledge, whose validity originates from its cultural heritage. From the previous definition, it is concluded that, validity of local knowledge is not only reflected in the generation process, but in the justification process, while justification of knowledge is closely related to the validity issue of knowledge. If the “locality” of local knowledge is also displayed in the process of justification, then it undoubtedly equals to admitting that validity of local knowledge also has the feature of “locality”. In other words, local knowledge is only valid to the particular cultural tradition that produces it. And then, we come back to the original topic again: how one member in a cultural tradition to understand local knowledge in another cultural tradition? In this way, Geertz, who was deeply influenced by western cultural relativism, could finally find no way out of the dilemma of cultural relativism.

However, Geertz knew for sure that, paradox of a theory can sometimes only be resolved in practice. For these things, “the same as riding a bike, action is easier than words.” Geertz practiced what he had preached, and observation of the social and cultural meaning of cockfighting in Bali in his book entitled <<Deep Game: Description of Cockfighting in Bali>> has been a typical model of Interpretive Anthropology. In this article, Geertz recorded the transition process from his

being excluded to being accepted by residents in Bali just by a chance --- being dispersed by the police because of watching a cockfighting. Being recognized and accepted by this cultural system, he had the authority to retail narrative knowledge within the system, and his analysis of the social and cultural meaning of cockfighting in Bali then had its reliable authority. Here, Geertz tried not only to overcome the cultural relativism with his actual action, but led the way for our field work.

3. Case analysis

The basic conclusions we have got are as follows: all knowledge belongs to local knowledge, and also narrative knowledge. Validity of knowledge depends on the particular cultural tradition which produces knowledge, and, thereby, it is only valid within its own particular cultural tradition. The effective path to overcoming cultural relativism lies in participation in that cultural tradition through practice, so as to give certain “thick description” to that cultural tradition. In the following, we are going to briefly analyze three typical cases: “god-man communication”, “miracle” and “alternative medicine”.

3.1 “God-man communication”

At first, limbs of the conjurator begin to wobble, with an accelerating frequency. In a flash, he sways from head to foot, and his head whirls continually more and more fast for approximately a couple of minutes. Then, his long hair begins to flutter in the air, and his neck swings with an inconceivable angle... When the sound of the drum attains its summit, he begins to waver... his mouth slobbering, his head shaking. He leaps staggeringly with his tiptoe from one side to another in the house, and he makes a weird sound. By this time, he begins to cut his tongue with a sharp sword... He pierces a spike into his cheeks, beats himself with an acanthosphere, or climbs a knife ladder.

This is a record of telepathizing occasion in a temple of Singapore. The weird body language of the conjurator is a cultural sign for communication with the Deity, while his later super performance is a proof that he has succeeded in communication with the deity. For instance, climbing of a knife ladder symbolizes elevation of the soul. However, here the supernormal capacity of the conjurator or the necromancer tends to surprise a large majority of anthropologists: How they manage to do this? In addition to magic or deceit, there is another cultural explanation on this phenomenon. In the analysis of the Azande witchcraft, we have mentioned this point, and believe that here conceals mystery of many mysterious phenomena. Willis W. Hamann has mentioned, people with different cultural background usually experience different realities, which is just like the case in which a deeply mesmerized subject has a totally different realistic world with the ordinary people. This is a sort of “cultural hypnosis”. A person who lives in a cultural atmosphere of worship of gods and who deeply believes that he can communicate with gods, can’t experience the pain of an ordinary person if he is in a state of extremely craziness, which is quite possible. Another instance is the “fire-walking training” popular in American: people living under a certain cultural background know that, sometimes walking on a burning charcoal fire barefooted might not burn one’s skin. Thousands of well educated people, with only training of several hours, can manage to do this, which merely needs to train them to accept the psychological hint that fire wouldn’t burn their skin.

3.2 “Miracle”

A man with a first name of Jin, is an old follower who believes in God for 25 years, and he now holds the position of Presbyterian in a nearby village. According to him, he suffered from nephritis when he was young, and the disease tortured him almost to death. But in 1982, there was someone in the village who passed to him “Gospel” which was said to be able to cure his disease. Then he believed in God just with an attitude of trying. However, what was mysterious, later after he believed in God, his symptom began to mitigate, and afterwards, he gradually recovered. He said, “within these 25 years, I have never suffered again, and this is owing to the blessing endowed by God. Thank God.” At present, he often witnesses with his personal experiences and passes “Gospel” to others.

The above case is chosen from a field work material of a Chinese scholar about the relief situation of Christian in Chinese rural areas. The Presbyterian in the material is a typical example among Chinese adoptionists. I still prefer to regarding this as another typical case of “cultural hypnosis”. Mitigation or recovery of his disease might be merely a coincidence, but as for the presbyter who has already been convinced of Christian, it is natural that he owes this “miracle” to bestow of God. Likewise, There appeared a wave of persecuting witches in Europe in the 16th century. Robin. Briggs recorded that, an elderly woman named Bobby in a small town in England was unfortunately charged as a witch. After excruciation, she began to make a confession, admitting she had conjured many of her enemies. With development of the case, Bobby began to deeply believe that she was a witch who had a magic, and she had murdered numerous men, women and children with drug powder. She also recalled her confederates whom she saw in the ghost-worship ceremony (an occasion for get-together of witches) at midnight, then she also pointed out three other elderly women, who got arrested and trialed soon. Here, whether persecutors or casualties, they were all mesmerized by the strong witchcraft culture at that time, and their imagination and the reality were confused as a whole. Maybe we think that it’s self-contradictive that the primitives believed they were both humans and crows, which is unbelievable. However, just as Anthony Giddes pointed out: What is the logic of thought to believe that bread fragment in the Eucharist is the body of Jesus, and the liquor is his blood, or to

believe that time swells with acceleration of speed in the Theory of Relativity? What people believe or not actually depends on what they “would like” to believe or not. As a matter of fact, difference between knowledge system and belief system is not so much as we imagine.

3.3 “Alternative medicine”

The following is an excerpt of recollection by the American doctor Lewis Mehl-Madrona on his own experience, which has changed his view about the overall traditional medicine. Wesley in this article is a Native American. Doctors in the Medical Center of Duluth University diagnosed that he had suffered from lymphoma, and disclosed that he could live for at most six months. Wesley turned to an Ojibway witchwoman named Carolyn to hold a ceremony for him.

Carolyn “mesmerized” Wesley with a psychological cure, which was the antecedent procedure in a ceremony. In the following four nights, she took us into a shanty: a bungalow made with willows, which was covered with carpets, coverlids and paulins outside. Each night, we stayed here and prayed for approximately five hours for Wesley. In the daytime of the four days, Carolyn stayed alone with Wesley --- they two praying, telling stories, and burning herbs. She also met his family. By the fifth day, she walked out with Wesley, and told him that he should stoop for worship several times each day until when a glade appeared, which symbolized that he would recover.

In that afternoon, Wesley discovered a glade, and was in a trance. Carolyn conjured on the spot, and she scattered tobacco and corn flour onto the ground to purify it. She burned sage to repel the evil, she intoned the hymn, she asked for instructions from the Holy Spirit, and she also smoked a Holy pipe. Finally, Carolyn told Wesley that, the White Buffalo goddess ordered to her that he had already recovered.

When Wesley returned to the City, his doctor unexpectedly couldn’t find any trace of his lymphoma --- but unable to give any explanation for disappearance of his lymphoma. They just recorded this case in his medical record as a rare and unexplainable spontaneous alleviation of a symptom. ... The observation time limit of the doctor having passed, his doctors finally agreed with words of the Goddess. They declared that, Wesley had already totally recovered.

The author of this article Lewis Mehl-Madrona is a student trained in American Medical College, who has a doctor license recognized by the country. His own experience again pushed the demarcation issue of science and non-science to us in a sharp way which has been eliminated by Feyerabend. As one form of alternative medicine, does the traditional medicine have any effect? Is it scientific? At what meaning do we define science? Within the limit of western cultural tradition? As local knowledge, is it that it only has effect within its own internal cultural tradition? ... In the frame of reference in western cultural tradition, there is another case of “alternative medicine”, which is obviously traditional Chinese medical science. However, its efficiency in curing has been obvious to all.

This kind of issue is not of little importance, but desiderates a definite answer, because it is concerned with the subsidization of the government and the society to research of “alternative medicine”. Taking America as an example: in addition to formal National Institutes of Health (NIH), it also has established “Organization of Alternative Medicine” (OAM) and “National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine” (NCCAM). In 2001, The US Congress appropriated a fund of \$ 5 million to OAM; in 2003, it again appropriated a fund of \$ 113.4 million to NCCAM. After the foundation of PRC, support of the Chinese government enabled this ancient medical technique to survive in this modern society and play an important role. Validity of local knowledge sometimes needs to resort to support of the national authority, which is another exemplification of the relation between modern social knowledge and authority pointed out by Joseph Rouse.

4. Epilogue: “moderate relativism”

Culture is an intangible and lasting spiritual power. It exists in mind of each cultural holder, and is reflected in the social organization and living method of a nation. There exists a “cultural map” in the mind of each cultural holder, while the task of anthropologists is to study this map. How to deal with “cultural others” reflects the social civilization development of mankind fundamentally. The self-important cultural absolutism is a hotbed for chauvinism and cultural hegemonism to attempt to measure cultures of all nations with an unchangeable standard and to regard all other cultural forms as a reflection of primitiveness, barbarousness and backwardness. This cultural absolutism might bring disastrous damage to civilization of human beings. However, due to the fact that the extreme cultural relativism emphasizes cultural particularity of each nation in the wrong perspective, it also objectively negates possibility of mutual communication between cultures. If we have to adopt a theoretical standpoint on this issue, then I believe that, the standpoint of a “moderate relativism” is feasible. This “moderate relativism” on the one hand opposes cultural absolutism, extremely respects diversity and particularity of ethnic culture of each nation and fully respects particular values and living ways of each nation; on the other hand, it differs from the extreme relativism, but emphasizes possibility and necessity of mutual communication between all national cultures. In mutual communication, they achieve mutual understanding and recognition. This sort of cultural recognition neither changes itself totally into a member of another cultural community, nor regards culture of the other nation as a “sample” or “fossil” for appreciation with a predominant attitude. Since “action is easier than words” in this kind of job, and theory goes in advance of practice, then we should start from the most

ordinary and tough field work with a modest and equal attitude, listen to their heart, touch their emotional pulse, experience and blend into their culture. During this process, we participate in and share their living, and feel that they are just the same as us, who are all members of this global cultural family. This is a tough but valuable task:

Culture of a nation is collection of a text and itself, while anthropologists try to translate them passing the shoulder of those people who they were supposed to belong to. A difficulty in such a situation is tremendous, ...However, on whatever level, and however complicated, the guidance principle is the same: society, exactly like life, contains its own explanation. One can only learn how to get approached to them.

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