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“Outside Thinking” and “Horizontal Logic”

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Abstract Metaphysics is a repeated act by way of “representation”; the instantaneous judgment is solidified, the inevitable conclusion is made, and at the same time other possibilities are excluded. “Outside thinking” is a blow to the spiritual tradition of metaphysics, which holds that “representation” will lead to a differential activity concerning the relationship between stranger things. Such relationship follows a kind of “horizontal logic,” the latter discards the presupposition on the “origin” of things, that is, it no longer presumes that this point or that point has greater privilege than “other points.” Things do not develop from a central point. Rather, things are the result of innumerable “points” in cooperative relationships between strangers. These cooperative relationships are arbitrary. In “horizontal logic,” many “starting points” or “spiritual T-points” are used as substitutes for a unique “origin.”

Keywords spiritual T-point, outside thinking, horizontal logic, neutral language

1 The history of philosophy is constantly being rewritten, i.e., being repeatedly restated. How do we differentiate between “copying” and creation during the course of restating? From the strict perspective of thinking, this is not a question of academic morality but a reality in the history of philosophy: People originally planned to “copy” but changed their mind when they were engaged in the “copying.” This is because they felt that the original thoughts were so wonderful that they could not help but add something new. As to whether or not the additions are equally wonderful depends on the creative force of the “distorter.”

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The above introduction is presented to provide justification for my restating of some of Deleuze’s work. I have made a comparison of his “thinking image” and “outside thinking” (la pensé du dehors), which he derived from Foucault, with my “horizontal logic.” The creative thoughts of Derrida in his early years came from discussions of famous classical authors. The reason why great philosophers like Plato, Descartes, Kant, Husserl, etc. are so spiritually creative is that they can grasp, more often than not, the faults in commonsense issues, and they have the extraordinary ability to make minute differentiations. They use common sense to perceive that some things in preceding philosophies are not completely as they were; and conceived of something else. This is how a turning point occurred. The turning point here is in effect a new starting point, or a critical point. Thinking around the turning point must be critical, but can we equate “I am suspecting” to “I am thinking” in the train of thought of Descartes when he deduces “I think, therefore I am”? I am creating a spiritual turning point when I hold that “suspicion” is not equivalent to “thinking” (this is an ability to tell minute differences) and all my following remarks stray far away from Descartes’ direction of thinking. Thus the following conclusion might be reached: the philosophical spirit that can be truly called “suspicious” is that on which previous philosophical states have been formed. We have to forget all the hypotheses given by previous philosophies—this is what Descartes, Kant, and Husserl say in unison in the opening remarks of their works. Their own thinking, nevertheless, creates new premises, do they not? Previously, if the premise of philosophical thought was not subjective, it was objective. Whether from a subjective or objective premise, it was taken from a ready-made concept. When both Aristotle

1 It is my contention that “horizontal logic” is a spiritual turning point (spiritual T-poing) in logical thinking outside of “vertical logic,” which includes traditional formal logic and Hegel and Marx’s “dialectic logic” on the premise of the oppositional uniformity between concepts. In other words, “vertical logic” is a kind of objectivity that examines the relationship between subject and object and similar parlance. “Horizontal logic” is based on spiritual flow, and it holds that the real process of spirit is connected via innumerable instants. “Vertical logic” is produced when the mind singles out some instant judgment from the spirit and establishes it as the premise for all following judgments, that is, instant judgment is eternalized. Apparently, “horizontal logic” makes use of another set of terms different from those of “vertical logic”, which have close bearing on time, speed, and essential difference. Q.v. my other two articles, namely “Mojing Xinjie” 墨经新解 (“Reinterpreting ‘Mo Ching’”) in Qinghua Daxue Xuebao 清华大学学报 (Journal of Tsinghua University), 2008, No. 5, and “Cong Zhongxi Yuyan de Chayi Zhuisu Zhongxi Zhexue de Chayi” 从中西语言的差异追溯中西哲学的差异 (“Tracing the difference between Chinese and Western philosophies in Chinese and Western language”), Hangzhou Shifan Daxue Xuebao 杭州师范大学学报 (Journal of Hangzhou Normal University), 2008, No. 5.

2 Here, “spiritual turning point” is used by the author to express the point wherein different ideas, particularly the author’s.