The Divergent Outcomes of Empathy: Intercultural Sympathy and Essentialization

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Abstract

Across the disciplines of humanities, there has always been a tension between relativism and universalism. This parallel has been embodied as sympathy-empathy tension in the field of intercultural conflicts and sociology of communication. This paper posits a case where rationalization serves to elicit intercultural sympathy provided there is a commitment to understand "otherness". Two findings resulted from several interviews regarding this hypothesis. First, the polysemic nature of "sympathy". Second, utilization of rationalization which is activated by commitment could facilitate to perceive commensurability among social universes at variance. These two findings combined urge the redefinition of the notion of "empathy" (Bennett, 1979). For this paper, several interviews were conducted on close intercultural dyads where value differences seem to be obstacles, in an attempt to find a case where rationalization is observed and facilitates intercultural sympathy. An Australian-Chinese intercultural marriage presented such a case. In the face of a value conflict, the Australian wife's epoche attitude coupled with her commitment to the relationship eventuated in rationalizing her Chinese husband's world perspective attributing to the educational influence he received. Consequently, commensurability was widened in her perception. This research also briefly explored the stream in academia around the notion of relativism-universalism and charges against so-called western rationality. It provided one possible account for why Bennett's empathy did not mention the term "rationality" and thus failed to capture the polysemic nature of sympathy.

keywords: Empathy, sympathy, rationalization, phenomenology, intercultural relationship, intercultural communication, sociological imagination, ethnorelativism, ethnocentrism, imposed-etic, essentialization, personal commitment, conflict resolution.

In the world of thoughts and ideas across the disciplines of humanities, there has always been the tension of relativism-universalism. It parallels the tension of sympathy-empathy in the field of communication of sociology, more specifically intercultural conflicts. The term "empathy" used by Milton Bennett (1979) was aimed to make a distinction from the similar idea of "sympathy". While "sympathy" presumes the singular reality thus has a connotation of ethnocentric perspective, "empathy" underlines multiple realities, thus it holds ethnorelativistic world view. Hence both tensions reflect the contention of plural realities and singular reality at the root. Bennett's notion of "empathy" has been among the key terms in the context of intercultural communication.

It is unfortunate that at least in the context of empathy in intercultural relationships, the intervention of universality of rationalization seems to have been wholly dismissed. Rationalization and rationality were, by this association with western rationality, often charged as western ethnocentrism. As a consequence, contentions that posit rationality＝etic seemed to have been carefully avoided since then. What actually deserved criticism should have been limited to when western emic is dictated as if etic.[1]

The chief issue that this paper is going to focus on is this. Where is the realm for intercultural variance free from both essentialization and imposed-etic? This theoretical conundrum at the root level has not been well thought out in regard to intercultural contacts. In order to attempt to provide an answer to this, three sub agendas will be argued. All three and the above chief issue are interrelated with each other.

First, the vocalization of "rationality/rationalization" is usually carefully avoided especially in the context of intercultural

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communication. This paper proposes a possible reason for this is because "rationality" has been strongly associated with "western modernity," "ethnocentrism" and at times "imposed-etic."

Second, such a distinction of two different types of etic (the one with "imposed" and the other without it) corresponds with duality of universalism. As universalism parallels with "sympathy", thus the duality should have been reflected in the notion of "sympathy" in the line of arguments of sympathy-empathy. To date, this has not been the case.

The third sub agenda is rather fundamental. The notion of empathy made by Bennett (1979) did not seem to sufficiently cover how to address the risk of essentialization as it emphasizes cultural pluralism due to an aversion for imposed-etic. Unquestionably, the essentialization of culture specifics must be avoided. Although Bennett emphasized on epoche and his notion of "empathy" could be tautological with epoche, he did not refer to Husserl's work (Husserl, 1913) nor did he actually use the term epoche. Instead he used "suspension of self." (Bennett, 1979, p.420) However, it was practically the same idea. While epoche originally comes from Husserl's "phenomenological reduction", Bennett offered no regards to the abstractive universality which Husserl's phenomenology (Husserl, 1913, 1936) connotes, as its approach could potentially lead up to singular reality. Although a relativistic perspective helps avoid imposed-etic, a sole emphasis on relativism is a next door neighbor to essentializing "otherness." As a result, a possible danger of essentialization was left unaddressed in the notion of empathy. Essentialization of certain mindsets attached to a certain group is likely to come about when there is an insufficient amount of background knowledge of social construction. As Berger-Luckmann (1966) notes "It [the analysis of reification]* is important for the sociology of knowledge, because it prevents it from falling into an undialectical conception of the relationship between what men do and what they think" (p.109) [*added by this paper's author]. Bennett's empathy notion did not sufficiently address the risk of essentialization possibly due to his aversion to ethnocentrism, which lead to Americanization. Nevertheless, his aversion to ethnocentrism is somewhat reasonable considering the then situation in the United States.

Additionally, as mentioned above, empathy is an attitude one should have at one point. But what happens when one maintains such attitude for an extended time of period? This question has also remained unanswered.

This paper's hypothesis, an answer to the chief issue mentioned above, is that "rationalization" could play a key instrumental role in perceiving initially concealed universality, provided there is personal commitment for understanding "otherness" to the actor in the process of empathy in order to avoid essentialization. In this paper universality is predicated on an abstract level of which multiple realities are hyponyms. Instrumental use of rationalization incorporated with the perspective of phenomenological social construction can, as embracing plurality of realities, elicit intercultural sympathy in one's solipsistic subjectivity.

The importance of seeing rationality behind the seeming "otherness" of emic actions, which has not been paid the appropriate amount of attention it deserves, will be underlined in this paper. In the process, the said three sub agendas will be also argued.

In the main part of this paper, first, some literatures will be briefly explored in order to identify the stream in academia around the notion of relativism and charges against so-called western rationality and modernity. It will provide one possible account for why Bennett (1979)'s empathy did not mention the term "rationality" and thus failed to capture the polysemic nature of sympathy.

Next, the concept of "rationality/rationalization" in intercultural conflicts at personal level will be examined employing the framework of the "explanation of symbolic universe" and "integration of deviance" by Berger-Luckmann (1966)'s phenomenological analysis. Then, a case will be presented in which "rationalization" played a role subsequently to empathy in an intercultural dyad, in addition to another case where essentialization occurred as "rationalization" was not developed in such a way. Finally a possible function of "rationalization" will be discussed in terms of developing perceived commensurability which will consequently elicit intercultural sympathy.

This paper does not intend to claim a general tendency of understanding "otherness," but merely attempts to present example cases of the said hypothesis. Thus the number of the cases is minimal. It also does not aim to be of any ethical guideline but rather merely to suggest the possible utility of intentional usage of rationalization as it clarifies the notion of

empathy in regards to the relation to sympathy.

Duality of Sympathy

Milton Bennett (1979) dismissed "sympathy" and emphasized efficacy of "empathy" for approaching "otherness." This sympathy-empathy tension apparently parallels historical dialectic relation of universalism-relativism. The difference is Bennett's sympathy-empathy argument does not seem to have paid regards to the aspect that sympathy potentially means two different phenomena.

As mentioned before, this paper attempts to demonstrate the efficacy of instrumental use of rationality to develop subjective sympathy. Initially, it could be argued that the academic/social current of his era influenced Bennett (1979) in the way he did not mention "rationality" as a bridging device among culturally variant interlocutors. As is commonly known, the concept of "rationality" is often associated with universalism. And his version of relativism did not approve the intervention of "rationality" due to its commonly known affinity to universalism and modernity.

Firstly, an array of charges against "rationality" was submitted. Some of the obvious instances are Adorno and Horkheimer (1944) and Michel Foucault (1961.) Additionally, from a slightly different angle, ethno-methodologists such as Garfinkel (1967) also dismissed the conventional definition of "rationality."

Moreover, as mentioned earlier, "rationality" is also associated with modernity. Bennett (1979)'s argument on empathy was made in an era of postmodernism, when Lyotard, J. (1973, 1979)'s articulation of the end of modernism signified the trend in society. The significance here is the modernity that was criticized in this context was specifically "western" modernity. Naturally the association of this concept of "rationality" with modernity was more in line with "western" version of modernity as some theorists[2] considered rationality a unique trait to the western civilization.

To a certain extent, the above mentioned contentions and general social atmosphere made theorists carefully avoid mentioning "rationality" in the context of understanding "otherness." This elucidates the general atmosphere of time as to why Bennett (1979)'s notion of "empathy" gave no regards to rationality in relation to eliciting commensurability among culturally variant people.

In addition, Bennett (1979) contended that "idealist" thinking is based on the assumption of singular reality. He criticized that idealists view differences among people as ephemeral and superficial and presume transcendent reality. As a relativist, it was natural for Bennett to deny such an assumption. It is self-evident that the notion of "rationality" does include such transcendent reality in a sense.

But should rationality be entirely dismissed at all levels? The distinction that should have been articulated will now be discussed. Let us suppose that universalism (etic) could mean two different concepts. The first meaning should be when emic of the prevailing culture is dictated as etic. This is so-called "imposed-etic" and plays a more ideological role. The second meaning is when emic refers to common denominators behind presented differences. In this paper, the later type of etic refers to universality implicated in the intersubjectively constructed society model posited initially by Husserl (1936) and later elaborated by Schutz (1962) and Berger-Luckmann (1966) and so on. This model suggests that all monads are equipped with common psychological systems to function in the phenomenological system those theorists theorized.

Now, if we look at Bennett (1979)'s inclination to relativism, it is explained in his article as criticism against "Americanization," which he described as "molding" the differences into the prevailing American cultural pattern (Bennett, 1979). As this statement clearly demonstrates, what Bennett (1979) was actually criticizing was against imposed-etic, the first meaning of etic. Although this is just one example, it would not be too far-fetched to state that most of the historical charges mentioned earlier against rationality and modernity were directed against 'imposed' etic.

Apparently in the notion of "empathy" by Bennett (1979), the distinction of etic (universality) explained above was not considered. Consequently, the "sympathy" was postulated as monolithic in his paper. Now if we attempt to reflect the distinction of two versions of etic on sympathy, we can find two types of sympathy. One is sympathy that is based on imposed-etic, the other is one based on the second definition of etic. Bennett's dismissal of sympathy should have been limited to the

one with imposed-etic.

Rationalization elicited by Personal Commitment

Despite the series of charges against "rationality," it is possible to revive it as an instrumental device. Ethnomethodologists such as Garfinkel (1967), Pollner, M. (1975) and Polanyi, M. (1958) respectively offered implications that "rationalization" ensues posteriori in which the actor who is motivated by personal commitment is intending to see rationality within the interlocutor's reality. This notion offered a whole new paradigm that rationalization is an ad-hoc explanation of phenomena that can be seen if one is willing to do so. By this notion, certainly "rationality/rationalization" was set free from the said attachment to "western" modernity and now there is a way for us to utilize "rationalization" as an instrument to achieve monadic sympathy. A certain time period of empathy prepares two concurrent phenomena: the aforementioned rationalization and monadic sympathy.

Diminishing Essentialization

If we incorporate the instrumental use of rationalization into the context of contacts between the different social universes of Berger-Luckmann (1966), a certain mode of universality emerges. Most importantly, this model embraces plural realities yet diminishes the risk of essentialization. Their theoretical model was derived from Husserl (1913, 1936)' idea, which sought for transcended universality. Although his model ultimately did not break out of monadic solipsistic reality, it suffices the criterion of mental orientation to diminish essentialization inclination, because essentialization is produced equally from solipsistic perception.

At the root level, one of the causes of essentialization arises from the perception that "otherness" cannot be translated in an intelligible way. The empathy approach seems to tackle this through a participation in the "otherness" without translating it in one's own way.[3] In this paper, this empathy approach is considered as going only half way toward intercultural sympathy. In the following paragraphs, an elaboration will be made on this instrumental use of rationality in relation to Berger-Luckmann (1966)'s legitimation process model.

Berger-Luckmann (1966)'s phenomenological model to explain society predicates multiple realities. However, at the same time, it is also possible to understand that this model explains everyone has the same legitimation systems. This legitimation process model explains the process of incorporating "deviance." Through this process, if "deviance" is explained (if needed, justified) then it will be incorporated into normality. When deviance is explained, it is no longer unintelligible. It is often the case that standards and practices belonging to the outer domain of one's own social universe appear to be "deviant."

It means that certain action and behaviors based on unfamiliar values (foreign values) can be deemed "deviant" if they are viewed and judged by one's own frame of reference which is most certainly culturally biased. Thus it is a necessary step to go through epoche, which the empathy approach fully utilizes. If there is "personal commitment," it will legitimize, in another word, "rationalize" the initially perceived "otherness," accommodating such "foreignness" into one's own social sphere. In other words, it should emerge within the same symbolic world. This means the interlocutor of "deviance" or "otherness" now stands in the position where one may be able to "sympathize". What you have in this phase is no longer empathy, rather it is resultant of it. And that, in this paper, is called "intercultural sympathy."

So far, it has been shown how both the influence of essentialization and imposed-etic can be diminished. The remaining question is what are these explanation based on? In this paper, this explanatory schematic is equated with what's called "conceptual machineries" of Berger-Luckmann (1966, p.104). This means the explanation framework could vary depending on the individual's frame of reference.

As we have explored, empathy's multifaceted nature leads to diverse outcomes, varying from deep intercultural understanding to unintentional essentialization. These outcomes are not merely theoretical concepts but have practical implications in real-world intercultural interactions. Moving forward, it is crucial to delve deeper into how these implications manifest in everyday scenarios. The following section examines real-life case studies, offering concrete examples of how

empathy and sympathy function in intercultural contexts. Through these case studies, we will see the tangible effects of empathy and sympathy in intercultural relationships, highlighting the importance of our theoretical discussion in practical applications. This analysis aims to not only provide empirical evidence to our theoretical framework but also to offer insights into how empathy and sympathy can be effectively navigated in intercultural communication.

Interviews

Having explained most of the theoretical frameworks, some interview data will be presented below.

Two relevant interview cases will be presented below. Each person is respectively in close intercultural relationship. As mentioned before, this research does not intend to infer any generalizability, but merely to present example model cases for the said hypothesis. Thus the limited number of interview cases will be of no concern.

The first case is of an Australian female who's been married to a Chinese male. They met each other in Japan and were living in Japan up until the time the interviews were conducted. The Chinese husband declined to be interviewed for this paper. The interviews took place in Tokyo, Japan in 2008. This case exemplifies the said hypothesis in terms of rationalization founded on a commitment to long lasting relationship.

Next case is of an American female and her Japanese boyfriend. Interviews were conducted with both partners in this dyad. They met in Japan when they were both university students. About one year prior to the interview, they had moved in together and 4 months before the interview, the Japanese boyfriend started working full-time. In 2008, at the time of the interviews, the boyfriend was considering marriage with the American woman, but she was not interested in marrying him. This case exemplifies a type of rationalization without a commitment to long lasting relationship.

The case of the Australian female is an example in which empathy approaches had been maintained resulting in intercultural sympathy through rationalization with a culturally variant marital partner.

This Australian female (*in this paper, she will be referred to by the pseudonym "Hannah") and her Chinese husband (*his pseudonym is "Ming-hoa") initially met in Tokyo as international students working on Ph.Ds. In this dyad, despite her commitment to staying together for life, there were some aspects on which they struggled to come to terms with together. In the face of such incommensurability with her husband due to value struggle, she decided to have epoche which eventuated in rationalization.

*Inside square parenthesis were added by this paper's author for readers' better understanding of the context. Also certain parts were abbreviated (indicated "Abbreviated") in order to avoid semantic redundancies. All the interviews were conducted in Japanese and later translated for this paper by this paper's author. Any slightly unnatural English reflects the original Japanese, which is the second language of the interviewees.

(Hannah, personal communication, August 6, 2008).

A little bit more, I want my husband to understand me a bit more. I guess he feels the same way towards me. People naturally do not enjoy criticism of their home country, probably. And really really, I truly think the attitude of Japan towards China is not fair sometimes. The gyoza [Chinese dumplings] incident for instance. Even though the evidence was insufficient, it was broadcasted [on TV] for an extensive time. So I feel there is discrimination against China in Japan. Debates on having the Olympic Games in China are on TV quite often. I also think there are various issues in China however.... But things have been changing. It may take more time though. So problems related to human rights [in China] are criticized all the time. It takes time [to make improvements.] Perhaps 20 more years still. In a sense I understand my husband. Especially on environmental issues. Japan used to have similar environmental issues, such as Minamata disease, which claimed many lives. Nevertheless Japanese media on TV always make accusation on polluted air and so on [in China.] My point is that people should not readily take a critical position on such aspects, and instead they should try to understand them. Both Japanese and Western societies [should change their attitudes] toward China. My opinion wouldn't have changed like this if I wasn't married to Ming-hoa. Since the marriage, I started looking at

things from a little different perspective.

Hannah made a trip to China with Ming-hoa after their marriage. Her remarks on her experience during this travel are intriguing.

  There were various things that were ancient. Like tools from the Copper Age? Plates and jades and stuff. Very old ones. Like earrings and many other things from the ancient times were there. In many chambers, there were various kinds of ancient maps of China. I understood all the areas [concerning the border issues] used to belong to China long long ago. Really all of them were parts of China. Tibet was a part of China. So was Uzbekistan. After seeing all that now I kind of understand why the Chinese government is making territorial claims on those areas. All were China. Vietnam, Thailand and everything was a part of China. Long time ago. Seeing those [ancient things] was very intriguing. There was a lot of stuff brought from Uzbekistan in that museum. Uzbekistan is closer to Europe than Tibet, right? So it was a very interesting experience getting to know about all that things.

Below is Hannah's opinion about her husband's personality in relation to their conflicts around politics.

  But sometimes, he is too opinionated. Especially ... what was the word... patri... patriotic [*looking for a word in Japanese]? He is too patriotic. The Western image about China is different from the image Ming-hoa holds about China. So he tells me those stories are lies. People on TV speak negatively about China. But I was also born in the West [while he's from the East,] so I was raised in such an environment holding Western perspective towards China. I and Ming-hoa have very different opinions about Tibet.

The Australian wife showed "rationalization" based on the key notion of "education." She did not readily discontinue her thinking process by not having attributed her husband's opinion about the Tibet issue merely to his nationality or culture or any sort of collective identity fixed with a certain mindset and mentality. Her macro-socio imagination explored further seeking what was behind this seeming group attitude and in the end she noticed the influence of education he was exposed to in China. Through education, anyone's mindset can be shaped into any form depending on the contents of it. More importantly, she also considered herself as being under the influence of the particular education she had received in Australia, and became more actively aware that education holds arbitrary perspectives and it shapes individuals' attitudes toward things. Prior to this rationalization, there was another factor: personal commitment.

A personal commitment to a long lasting relationship determined the way in which the value difference was rationalized within her perception. Since it is generally easier to essentialize unintelligible foreign actions as mindsets attached to certain social groups, many may be inclined to resort to this type of essentialization. Endorsing this paper's hypothesis, Hannah's commitment for the relationship with her husband allowed her to avoid such essentialization by rationalization. In Hannah's case, there seemed to be two main factors to the commitment. One is because of marriage. Marriage is a commitment by definition. In the interview, Hannah made a comment that she might not have ever changed her way of thinking about China if she hadn't married Ming-hoa. She reasonably felt strong commitment for this marriage. To provide a brief context for Hannah's commitment to this relationship, she had had interminable struggles with her previous partner (who was Japanese) for an extended time period. Another factor to Hannah's commitment is that she and her husband shared a marginal position in society as foreign Ph.D. students in Japan. Another factor is that they converse together mainly in the third culture language, Japanese. Moreover, she had experienced a substantial amount of difficulty acclimatizing to general everyday life for an extended time period in Japan. In general, commitment probably does not necessarily have to come from marriage but certainly in part it derives from affectionate feelings, emotional attachment or strong friendship and so on. Therefore it is one of the possible requisites to be emotionally committed with a target culture.

In this particular case, relativizing her own educational influence in comparison to that of her husband is the pivot of rationalizing and it led to skepticism about her own possibly arbitrary perspective. As a consequence, she gained a macro perspective that enfolds culturally different social universes (that is to say multiple realities) under a single umbrella. This is where both she and her husband are similarly functioning agents in the inclusive phenomenological social structure. Naturally, the seeming value differences emerged within a same ground upon which she now can "sympathize."

It is no longer empathy as empathy is an ethical attitude that enables epoche. In the above case, the Australian wife held an empathetic approach which consequently allowed an opportunity to reach an abstractive common ground where her husband appeared in the same extended universe. In this stage, it is sympathy rather than empathy by definition. Then the particular mode of "sympathy" becomes feasible interculturally, with which communicators can avoid both imposed etic and essentialization of differences.

Next, we will discuss the interviews of the second case. Firstly, the interview with the American female, referred to by the pseudonym of "Eimilly" will be presented.

(Eimilly, personal communication, July 22, 2008).
To the interviewer's question about the value differences she perceives, she mentioned her boyfriend's overtime hours at work, which occur every day.

> Overtime work practice in Japanese companies. In the beginning, I could not get why work overtime. ... [Abbreviated] ....
> Well, 'Why working contract is until 6, but comes home at 9?' Then he goes it cannot be helped at Japanese companies.
> They I go it cannot be 'it cannot be helped.' It was like that in the beginning but now I got used to it... [Abbreviated] .... as
> I can spend an extra 2 hours on my own. .... [Abbreviated] .... Since I do creative job and I cannot understand why have
> interests in doing an ordinary job [an ordinary job refers to stereotypical office working job.] But I don't think it's a bad
> thing. I just feel we are different persons. Ummm, there is this stereotypical image of workaholic Japanese 'salary men' [a
> similar concept in English term might be "corporate drone."], right? I don't want him to turn into one of those.

All her original comments cannot be included in this paper, but she added more remarks extensively about this value difference regarding occupation/career,[6] referring to the different reference groups they have. She felt his view on occupation/career is somewhat pessimistic.

She did not necessarily make a significant leap from the discourse of the workaholic Japanese "salary man" image in relation to her Japanese boyfriend's approach to his occupational life. In other words essentialization was not completely avoided.

Lastly, the interviews with Eimilly's Japanese boyfriend, referred to as a pseudonym "Jungichi" is below.

(Jungichi, personal communication, July 29, 2008).
> The way she thinks of occupation is fundamentally different. ... [Abbreviated].... Usually I get off work around half past 8.
> The contract specifies from 9 to 6. But ever since I started working fulltime, it has not been possible to leave office on
> time so far. She cannot accept this. She thinks I should call it a day on time at 6. This kind of differences about work is
> there. ... [Abbreviated]... I don't know how she thinks[feels] about this but maybe she is considering it cannot be helped.

At the time of this interview, Jungichi was not aware that Eimilly was already planning to leave Japan for the United States to continue her academic career the following year. Naturally her commitment to this relationship was temporary as she envisioned the relationship lasting no more than another year or so. The type of rationalization she showed was what she needed to stay with him for a limited period.

This presents us an insight into how rationalization works in various ways. It could help the rationalizer (the person who

rationalizes her/his interlocutor's action/behavior) to rationalize in order to suit her/his own necessity.

The Eimily-Jungichi relationship was terminated half a year after this initial interview. She terminated it while Jungichi wished to continue. Follow up interviews were conducted with Eimilly in 2009 in an effort to search for the factors why she left him. Follow up interviews to Jungichi were turned down.

In the follow-up interviews with Eimilly, she commented that it was not necessarily because their occupational values were different, but it was more because she simply lost interest in staying with him. This also endorses that the direction of rationalization depends on whether commitment is there for the relationship and the strength of commitment.

A comparison of the above two cases produced the following findings:

First of all, the degree of commitment and whether there is commitment to understand "otherness" determines the orientation which "rationalization" is directed toward. In Hannah's case, her commitment for the relationship was rather strong whereas in Eimilly's case, her level of commitment was not quite as strong as Hannah. This difference caused the subsequent process in which Hannah rationalized her husband's given circumstances, while rationalization via universality was absent for Eimilly. Instead Eimilly rationalized in the way that allowed her to stay with her boyfriend for a limited time. In turn, Hannah avoided essentializing her interlocutor's apparent emic whereas Eimilly did not necessarily depart from such essentialization. Both Hannah and Eimilly moved into an empathy process yet their consequences were different in terms of essentialization avoidance. That is to say, personal commitment has a direct effect on the way rationalization is made. When the commitment to one's culturally variant target interlocutor and the relationship is firm, the rationalization can be made in the way the difference can be legitimized.

Secondly, another important factor is conceptual machinery. Hannah's case indicated that the intervention of conceptual machinery has a direct effect on the mode of rationalization along with a personal commitment. The conceptual machinery for Hannah, in this particular case, was "education." That is to say, in her perception, she and her husband were commensurated by "education," which worked as conceptual machinery in her social universe; in this case, it is of no importance whether her inference reflects her husband's thinking. By having gone through this process, essentialization was avoided.

This finding may invite criticism that it is an idealist's or an empiricist's idea, or merely an imaginative sympathy. However, this criticism can be dismissed if the following is considered. The efficacy of such rationalization is oriented by the committed attitude to understand "otherness." Ultimately essentialization is a resultant of monadic solipsistic perception. As ultimately solipsistic the perception of sympathy is in a similar manner. It suffices the purpose of avoiding essentialization.

Mills (1959)'s term "sociological imagination" connotes an implication relevant to this type of intercultural sympathy. Sociological imagination links micro phenomena, such as an individual's behavior to macro milieu. It should be remembered that Mills's notion of sociological imagination was presented as a necessary attitude for researchers of sociology. This indicates that such a way of perceiving reality may require certain training.

The Australian female exercised a similar way of thinking in an attempt to understand her culturally distant husband. The conceptual mechanism for her at least in the above particular case was "education", which could be explained by the fact she is a Ph.D. bearer in Education. Practitioners of both Education and sociology are required to have a certain type of intellectual training in order to perceive social structure and agents within it, as well as to be skeptical about ideology. Ideology within one's own social universe normally appears "self-evident" especially to those who are within a single social universe. Nevertheless self-awareness of being under such influences does not automatically make the individual immune to the effect of ideology, the person will comparatively become less susceptible to it.

The below schema can be drawn upon the above two findings. (*The prima facie relation of apathy to essentialization was not debated in this paper.)

A resultant of empathy is not always same. Both personal commitment and conceptual machinery defines the mode of rationalization. Bennett (1979)'s notion of empathy dictates us to withhold the act of thinking. Although it is unarguably appropriate in the initial stage of interaction, when thinking is reactivated, an intermediate variable of mode of rationalization will lead either to intercultural sympathy or to essentialization. Intercultural sympathy, which is elicited via realization of
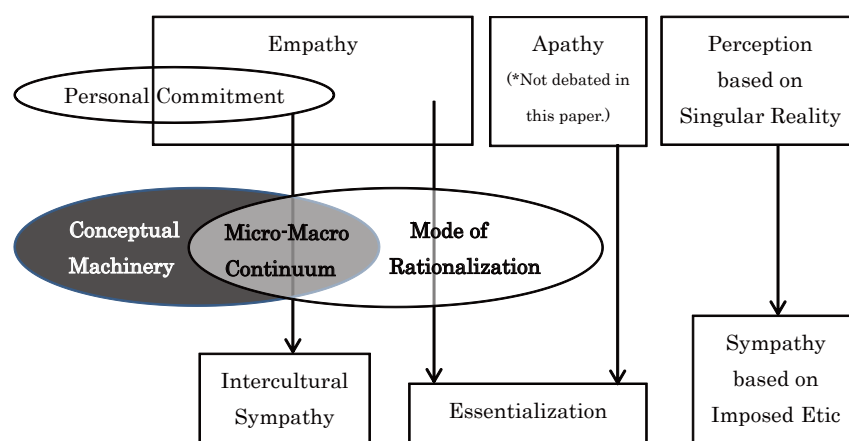
Diagram 1

micro-macro continuum (overlapping domain), will provide a realm developing an extended commensurability where both ends of interlocutors inclusively emerge as similar agents in the same composite social universe. Thus this realm is free from both essentialization and imposed-etic.

Redefined Sympathy and Empathy

To conclude this paper, the two types of sympathy with qualitative differences were discovered. The first type of sympathy is based on imposed-etic. The second type, referred to as "intercultural sympathy" is not based on imposed-etic but rather a resultant of micro-macro continuum which emerged in perception.

Next, the role of empathy that Bennett (1979) contrasted against sympathy is now recaptured in relation with the newly defined sympathies, personal commitment, rationalization and conceptual machinery.

The tenability of the hypothesis of this paper was maintained. Rationalization was an intermediary variable, along with personal commitment between empathy and intercultural sympathy. Additionally, the role of conceptual machinery as another intermediary variable was discovered. As the hypothesis was thus supported, a possible answer was given to the chief issue of this paper. That is, in order to avoid both essentialization and imposed-etic, empathy is required initially then a mode of rationalization via personal commitment and intervention by certain types of conceptual machinery will come into play. This in turn can elicit a perception free from the said both risks, namely intercultural sympathy.

As a limitation, in this paper, the following aspects were not addressed; that the qualitative differences between the terms "rationality" and "rationalization" used in this paper, as well as their relation to so-called "western rationality." Also the notion was not taken into consideration that rationality does not always constitute human action. Further research is needed on these issues regarding the above limitation, in addition to an increased number of cases in order to refer to generalizability to an extent of the said hypothesis.

Notes

（1）Clifford Geertz (1984)'s statement of the following is the opposite side of the same coin. That is cultural relativism is inclusive of culture universalism. When universalists criticize relativism for inviting separatism and segregation, it is actually directed toward ethnocentricism.

（2）In the beginning of 20th century, "rationality" was treated as unique trait to the western world. One of the giants in sociology, Max Weber (1920), described rationality as having emerged solely in western civilization. This notion was later denied by Levi-Strauss (1966) who concluded that rationality was also observed outside Western civilization. Levi-Strauss is known as an ethnorelativist, however, his relativism included a more or less culturally universalistic aspect paying regards to commonality throughout all human beings.

（3）Years earlier, in a similar way, Chicago school theorists such as Park and Burgess (1921) also argued that "sympathy" can be achieved through sharing the same goals. This also did not sufficiently diminish essentialization.

（4）Referring to the food poisoning incident happened on January 30th, 2008 causing 10 people to vomit and experience dizziness after ingesting "gyoza" dumplings made in China.

（5）First discovered in 1956. It was caused by the release of methylmercury in the industrial wastewater from industrial factories, which continued until late 1960's. This highly toxic chemical bioaccumulated in shellfish and fish caused many casualties.

（6）The lack of distinction in Japanese between the concept of "occupation" and "career" has an interesting implication regarding the disagreements Eimilly and Jungichi had.

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