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Articles

On “Reading the Mind of the Other”:  
A phenomenological attempt of reading the mind of  
A Master Teacher who reads a little boy’s mind

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「他者の心を読むこと」について  
—— 或る少年の心を読む達人教師の心を読む現象学的な試み ——

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On “Reading the Mind of the Other”:  
A phenomenological attempt of reading the mind of  
A Master Teacher who reads a little boy’s mind

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“Reading the Mind (Kokoro) of the Other” was among the tasks that motivated me to enter the world of Phenomenological Psychopathology by Mieko KAMIYA (1914-1979). Previously, I had been disillusioned with my kind of Educational Psychology for its powerlessness, when, in 1971, confronted with the marvelous teaching practice of a Japanese master teacher, whose ways of reading the minds of children amused and amazed me. Now, about 40 years later, I believe I can read the minds of children nearly as well as those master teachers. My specialty in psychology, however, urges me to go further to become able to read the minds of the master teachers, and, more generally, the minds of the “others” in general. At one time, the task appeared as if simple and easy. However, how could you ever read the mind of Edmund Husserl, who is obviously among the “others”? The task in its entirety turns out to be impossible in principle. Still, practicing teachers need to learn reading the minds of others: children and teachers. The task should modestly be pursued further to promote the deeper and richer understanding of the human minds in educational practices, while clarifying its possibilities and limitations.

Keywords: the other, phenomenology, master teacher

**Introduction: the personal-historical background of the study**

“Reading the Mind of the Other” was one of the tasks that motivated me to initiate studying Phenomenology back in the year of 1975. At that time, as I reported elsewhere (YOSHIDA, Akihiro (2010a)), I was seriously disillusioned with the incompetent shallowness of the kinds of educational psychologies I had been familiar with, while being confronted with the task of understanding the marvelous teaching practices of Japanese master teachers in schools. I was particularly interested in their excellent ways of reading the minds of children. Now, about 40 years later, I tend to believe that I might be able to read the minds of children, just as well as those master teachers I met at that time. Naturally, my reading will be with the help of the phenomenological psychology and/or the folklore psychology of those master teachers, which I have

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learned from them. As a psychologist, I would like to go further to be able to read the minds of the master teachers, and possibly also the minds of many others. You might read the minds of children and a teacher all right at times. However, could you ever read the mind of Edmund Husserl and/or Fyodor Dostoevsky, for instance, who are evidently also among the “others”? What about the mind of the Almighty. Doubtlessly, the task in its entirety turns out to be impossible in principle and urges us to be keenly and realistically aware of its possibilities and limitations.

This time, I would begin my presentation with 1) an episodic record by a Master Teacher of observing a little boy in a classroom, 2) the Master Teacher’s way of “reading” of the mind of the boy, and 3) my own attempt to reach some insights into the mind of the Teacher while “reading” the little boy’s mind. This is, in a sense, a story and a history of my old day’s dream of obtaining the ability of “reading” the other’s mind.

### **A proposal of the Symbols for designating the participants in the classroom teaching-learning activities:**

For brevity’s sake, let us decide upon the Symbols for designating the kinds—e.g. types, roles, functions, etc.—of each of the participants of the teaching-learning activities in the classroom. They are:

- “T” for Teacher (s),
- “LL” for Learner (s),
- “O” for Observer (s),
- “R” for Researcher (s).

In the episode to be introduced shortly, for example, “T” is the teacher of the particular class, “LL” are children Learners of the class including the little boy in our episode, “O (s)” are Observers of the class, including Mr. Takeda, who is to be introduced shortly and was visiting the school and the classrooms for the day, and “R (s)” are Researcher (s), not directly participating the teaching activities of the day, including myself and the research-minded reader (s) of this article with the narrative of the episode. The reason for distinguishing between/among TROLL and adopting the Acronym “TROLL” is to indicate explicitly that the perspectives of the respective participants TROLL fundamentally differ among themselves, need be articulated and, thus, be represented accordingly. Incidentally, “TROLL” is also taken here to mean and imply “Song sung in successive parts”.

The teaching-learning processes and activities in the classroom are metaphorically understood here as those of “singing songs in successive parts” TROLL by the participants TROLL.

Evidently, we could possibly explicate a great number of implications from the following anecdote, while taking many various different kinds of perspectives. However, our purpose here is chosen to be limited to focus upon *how the master teacher reads the mind of the child*, in order that we —— the author of this article as a researcher and the expected readers of the article as well, —— could eventually be helped to

learn to read the minds of children in their own everyday life-world situations in the future. The task of this author as a Researcher is to articulate the "Meanings and the Structure" of the teacher's reading of the mind of the child. Thus, the task for the R (searcher) here is, in that sense, admittedly and deliberately limited.

### An anecdotal episode of a Master teacher's observation

For convenience's sake, let me divide the episode into four parts.

Part I: The tale, and the task, given to the LL, of "reading" the king's mind

Part II: A strange questioning by a little boy L, observed by the O

Part III: The "reading", by the O, of the little boy L's mind

Part VI: A view on the nature of teaching, expressed by the O

Immediately after each part, the R's comments will be given, which will be this author's attempted explications on the narrative written by the O, a master teacher, Mr. Tsuneo TAKEDA (1929-1986), who participated the class at that time as an officially visiting O (bserver) and as a teaching expert to help the classroom teacher.

#### Part I: The tale, and the task, given to the LL, of "reading" the king's mind

昔. ある国に, からだが五色の毛につつまれた大きなしかがいた。ある日しかは, 川におぼれかけている一人の男の命を助けてやった。男は感謝し, そのお礼をしたいと言う。しかは, お礼よりも自分のことを, 他人にけっしてもらさぬよう頼む。男は承知して約束を守ることをかたく誓う。(This tale in Japanese is translated by this author into English. The same will apply to what follows)

Long time ago, in a country, there lived a huge deer whose body was covered with the fur of five colors. One day the deer happened to save the life of a man (a hunter) who was almost going to be drowned in a river. The man expressed his thanks to the deer and said that he would like to give a gift to the deer. The deer asked the man to make the promise, rather than to give a gift, that he will never disclose to others that he met the deer. The man agreed to make the promise and swore firmly that he would keep the promise.

それから数年後, 王様のおきさきが五色のしかの夢を見た。王様は国中におふれを回して五色のしかの居所を知っている者にはたくさんのほうびをやるといった。男はそれを知り随分と迷うのだが, とうとう金銀への誘惑に負けてごてんにかけこみ, 自分が五色のしかの居所を知っていることを告げる。

——王様は, 自分も行ってみたくなりました。そこで, 男にあん内させて, しかがりをすることにしました。

かりうどをつれた王様の行列は、都からおく山へ向かって進んでいきました。——  
(光村国語 三年下)

A few years passed. The queen of the king saw a dream of the five-colored deer. The king gave an official notice all over the country to offer a lot of rewards to the reporter of the whereabouts of the deer. The man agonized over whether to report or not, but finally being overcome by the temptation of silver and gold, he run into the palace to report that he knew the location. “The king felt like to go himself too. So, the king ordered the man to guide for hunting the deer. The procession of the king with the hunter as the guide went from the city into the depth of the mountain.”

これは、私が見た「五色のしか」という国語の授業の教材の一節である。授業は、この時間の最後の課題である、狩人を連れて都から奥山へ向かって進んでいく王様の気持を考えさせるところにさしかかっていた。

This was the passage of the teaching material of a Japanese elementary school language class titled “The five-colored deer”. The class was coming to begin to think and discuss over the mind of the king who was proceeding with the hunter from the city to the depth of the mountain.

この課題は、この時間の中心課題である、しかとの約束と金銭への欲望とのいずれをとるか思い悩む男の心を追求する作業に比べれば、こどもにとっては比較的容易な課題であった。若い男の先生の指示に応じて、たくさんのこの手が挙がり、珍しい獲物をわがものにしようと、期待に胸をはずませているであろう王様の心が、こどもたちによって次々と語られた。

The task was the central issue of the hour. As compared with the task of investigating the mind of the man who was agonizing over which way he should take; his promise with the deer not to disclose or his desire to get the gold, this particular task on the mind of the king was relatively easy for children. Upon the urge of the young teacher, many children raised their hands to respond, and they narrated one by one on the mind of the king who must have been excited with great expectation.

### **R's comments, from his own perspective:**

This part is just giving the quotation of the teaching material, and describing how the teaching had been developing. It is noteworthy that the young teacher T had been guiding the children LL to read the mind of the man, the “hunter”, and then the mind of the king, heading toward the depth of the mountain in “The procession of the king”. The reading of the minds of characters in the given tale, first the hunter and next the king, was going on rather smoothly in the class.

## Part II: A strange questioning by a little boy L, observed by the O

そうした展開の方法について、ことさらに何かを言う気は私にはなかった。もっと違った方法で展開してみたらどうかと思われるところがないではなかったが、それはそれぞれの教師の個性の問題であり、自分とおなじでなければならぬなどとはつゆ思わなかった。しかし、その中に、ほんの些細なことだけれど、どうしても見過ごしにできないことがたった一つだけあった。

I (\*) had no particular objection against the way the young teacher developed the teaching. Even though there were some other ideas of my own possibly adopted for the developments of the teaching, but I did not at all think that his way should be the same with mine, since the choice would naturally be the problem of the individuality of each teacher. Nevertheless, there was just one incident that I could never overlook, however petty and trivial a matter it may appear. (\* Mr. Takeda as the Observer of the class)

王様がどんな気持で奥山へ向かっていったでしょう、という教師の発問に促されて、次々に発言する子どもの中に、

「ね、先生、王様は幾人？」

と聞く子がいた。いちばん前の席にいる小柄な男の子から発せられた質問であった。しかし、その声は、発言を求める他の多くの子の声にかき消されて教師の耳に届かなかったように見えた。

Among the children speaking to answer to the Teacher's invitation "With what kind of mind (mood) was the king heading to the depth of the mountain?", there was a child who asked "*Ne, Sensei, Ohsama wa ikunin* (Say, Teacher, how many were the king (s))?" The question was uttered by a little boy sitting on the very front row. However, that voice seemed to have been drowned out to reach the teacher's ear by the loud voices of many other children seeking to speak out.

私は一瞬、この子の言いたいことは何なのだろうと考えた。そして私ははっとした。その子は友達の発言の間を縫って再び叫んだ。

「ね、先生、王様は幾人いるの？」

For a moment, I wondered what that child wished to say? Then, I got startled. The child screamed/shouted again threading among the voices of other children.

"*Ne, Sensei, Ohsama wa ikunin iruno* (Say, Teacher, how many king (s) are (is) there?)"

先生は、一瞬とまどったようにその子を見た。しかし先生は、その子の発言の意味が理解で

きなかった。理解しようとする姿勢も示さなかった。時間も迫っている。ようやくまとまりかけた最後の課題の追求の最中に、そんな訳のわからない質問にかかずらっている暇はないと思ったのであろう。

The teacher looked at the child for a moment, as if confused/perplexed. However, the teacher did not understand the meaning of the child's utterance. He did not show even the positive attitude of attempting to understand. The time was just going to be up. Perhaps, he may have thought that, in the midst of pursuing the very final task just to be completed, he had no leisure time to get involved in such a meaningless question.

男の子の発言は、私にとっては思いがけない一つの事件であった。しかし、その先生にとっては泡のように些細な現象としか映らなかったのである。

The utterance of the boy was an incident totally unexpected for me. However, for the teacher, it appeared as only a trivial phenomenon like a little bubble instantly to disappear.

#### **R's comments, from his own perspective:**

Here, the description by the O continues. He (O) felt that the young teacher T's approach in reading the minds of the characters was somewhat different from what he would have taken, but he accepted the T's approach as an approvable one, the difference being one of individual differences not unusual among teachers. However, the O notices an incident of a little boy L exclaiming a question, at a first glance, seemingly totally irrelevant to the main flow of the teaching under the guidance of the T. The T did not respond to the L's first question, did not attempt to listen and understand it, seemed to be pretending not to have noticed it, perhaps, he felt it to be too trivial to be taken up seriously. However, the O was startled by the question, and particularly by the way the boy asked the question even twice in an earnest manner. The O strongly felt the big difference between the T and the O himself, regarding the way of perceiving the incident: the former as "only a trivial phenomenon like a little bubble instantly to disappear", while the latter as "an incident totally unexpected" and "one incident that I could never overlook".

#### **Part III: The "reading", by the O, of the little boy' L's mind**

授業は終わった。この時間、教師はよく教材を研究し、発問を工夫し、子どもの発言をよく取り上げ、よく生かしていた。派手ではないが押さえるべきところはきちんと押さえた手堅い授業であったと私は思う。それなのに、たった一人の子どもの発言に私がひっかかるのはなぜか。

The class was over. For this class, the teacher had made a good preparatory study of the teaching

material, figured out good questions, listened well to children's opinions and made good use of them. I believe that his teaching was not showy but steady with his careful attention well devoted to all the necessary points. Why, then, am I so much concerned about the utterance of just a little boy?

この子どもたちが一学期のころ同じ教科書で、「ありの行列」という説明的文章を習っているはずである。そこで「ありの行列」とはたくさんのありが列をつくって一本の線のように連なっている様子を言うのだと教わったはずだし、さし絵によって視覚的にもその様子をはっきりとイメージ化しているはずである。

These children must have studied an explanatory text titled "The procession of ants", in the preceding spring semester, using the same textbook. There, they must have been told that the "The procession of ants" means the state of affair in which many ants are moving forward forming a line in an orderly way. They must have clearly imagined visually the state of the line with the help of an illustration.

「ありの行列」が数えきれないほどの多くのありによって作り出された一つの秩序をもった状態であるならば、「王様の行列」もまた大勢の王様が一列に並んで奥山へ踏み込んでいく状態と考えてわるいわけはない。でも、王様がありのように無数にいるとも思えない。一体王様は幾人いるのか。

If "The procession of ants" were an orderly state of affair being produced by an uncountable number of ants, then, "The procession of king (s)" could also be a state of affair produced by many king (s) forming a line in an orderly way. However, it looks as though there are not so many king (s) as just like uncountable ants. Then, how many king (s) are there?

私は「王様は幾人いるの?」としきりに尋ねる子どもの発言の意味をそんな風に読みとった。そして、このことがはっきりしない以上、この子には、狩人を従えて奥山へ向かう「王様の心」を追求する学習へ参加するゆとりなどほとんどなかったのではないかと私は思ったのである。

So I read the meaning of the utterance of the child who was anxiously asking "*Obsama wa ikunin iruno (How many King are (is) there?)*?" And, I imagined that the child was so much occupied with this question that, unless this becomes clear, he could not participate the study task of investigating the "mind of the king" who was heading into the depth of the mountain taking the hunter along.



**R's comments, from his own perspective:  
The "reading", by the R, of the T's mind**

Here, our main theme of "reading of the mind of the other", particularly "of a little child" is described and elaborated. Let us focus upon the O's, the master teacher TAKEDA's way of reading the mind of the boy, attempting to explicate the implications of his own description.

Learning from the way in which TAKEDA "reads" the mind of a character in the literary works of art, say a novelette, while teaching himself as a T, and also from the way he "reads" the minds of the LL and the T, while observing a classroom teaching as an O, this author= I, as an R, would ask the similar question regarding the acts of the O, the T and the LL. In other word, here, I will ask an "Understanding Inducing Question" in the form, for instance, of "What did the boy *perfink* (a verb, already a well-known neologism coined by J.S.Bruner, to designate the amalgam of "*perceive, feel and/or think*")", when he asked the question "Say, how many kings were there?", rather than an Explanation Inducing Question such as "Why did the boy ask the question?". (For more details on the implications of the distinction between the two kinds of questions, please refer to YOSHIDA (2010b)).

First, I am strongly impressed with the Takeda's, the O's, usage of the word "read" (「読み取った」(Yomitotta)) in his report: "So I read the meaning of the utterance of the child who was anxiously asking "*Obsama wa ikunin iruno (How many king (s) are there?)*?" Of course, the word "read" may have been used here rather casually and only metaphorically. However, I believe, the use of the word has a deep meaning, because, I recall, in Takeda's works as a teacher, the "reading" of the mind of characters in literary works of art was always the major focus of his investigation, and the way he reads the characters' minds are also used in the reading of narrative records of teaching-learning practices. Furthermore, even in the actual participation in the class room teaching, he reads the minds of T and LL. In other words, Takeda does "read" the mind of the T and LL in the class he participated as an O, in the very much the same way as he reads those of characters in a novelette, a literary works of art. This very fact naturally finds its expression in the word "read" casually used in his own narrative report.

Now, from my perspective as an R, there is a TROLL structure among TROLL. What does that mean? The T reads the minds of the characters, the king for instance, in a tale. The LL also attempt to read the king's mind. The T reads the LL's minds. Perhaps, the LL read the T's too. O reads the minds of T and LL. And R reads the minds of T, LL, and O. Thus, there is a TROLL structure of "readings" among the TROLL. Naturally, their parts in their roles as TROLL respectively, are quite different from each other, but constitute a TROLL as a whole, nevertheless.

Max Scheler wrote: Der alte englische Scherz, dass, wenn Herr 《Mueller》 und Herr 《Meier》 miteinander sprechen, immer nur Muellers Mueller mit Meiers Meier, dazu Mueller immer nur zu Muellers Meier, Meier immer nur zu Meiers Mueller spricht, waehrend den 《wirklichen》 Mueller und Meier und den 《ganzen》 Sinn ihres Gespraches

nur der allwissende Gott vollueberschaut and hoert, ist leider etwas mehr als ein schlechter Scherz—es kommt ihm woertliche Wahrheit zu. (Scheler, Max, 1974/1912, S.78)

Let me attempt to translate the German text above into English:

The old English joke says that, when Mr. "Muller" and Mr. "Meier" speak together, Muller always speaks only to Muller's Meier, Meier always only to Meier's Muller, while only the omniscient God fully sees and hears from above the "real" Muller and Meier and the "total" sense of their dialogue. This is regrettably something more than a bad joke. Literal truth belongs to it.

This old English joke would hold also with our "reading" TROLL, basically in the same/similar way with "speaking" between Mr. Muller and Mr. Meier. For instance, T reads T's LL, and O reads O's T and LL. Naturally, R reads R's O, T and LL. You might recall "Knots" by R.D.Laing (1972)

I would believe that the researcher (R)'s goal to attain with much efforts would be to approach, as maximally close as possible, the above mentioned perspective of the "omniscient God", "transcendentally" in our Husserlian phenomenological term/jargon. Because of the openness of the horizon of experiences, the goal will never perfectly but only partially be achieved, through concretely investigating every perspective of the respective participants,——in our case, TROLL——by means of the self-reflective phenomenological methods: particularly the methods of "Phenomenological Description", "Phenomenological Reduction", "Free Imaginative Variation" and "Intuition of Invariance (so-called Essence)".

Now, let me develop my own reading of the O's mind, while the O was reading the mind of an L, the little boy. For "reading" the mind of the L whose questioning invited the O to read, O would first ask the "Understanding Inducing Question" and would attempt to take the perspective of the L at a distance. In order to take the perspective of the L, the O would attempt to situate oneself in the same/similar situation as the questioner's—the little boy's—situation, imaginatively as well as actually, if possible. Among the varieties of possible ways to situate the O him/herself in the same/similar situation as the questioner's situation are to be chosen by the O. The sameness/similarity could be spatial, temporal, spatiotemporal, personal, interpersonal, historical, personal-historical, social-historical, cultural-historical, lived-bodily, linguistic, fictive, and imaginative, as many and varied as you would like.

**Spatially**, for instance, the O would observe the L, while, at the same time, putting himself imaginatively in the lived space of the L, sitting in the very front row of the class, and taking the spatial perspective, as a little boy, and most probably looking up at the T from below. This is very much similar to the "*Looking of distant looking*" Zeami (「離見の見」世阿弥) in the Japanese Noh-play secrets. While playing on the stage, the master Noh player naturally sees the audiences watching him, on the one hand. However, on the other hand, he train himself to see vividly, *simultaneously and imaginatively*, from the multiple perspectives of all the audiences seated at the varieties of locations, —stands, boxes and/or gallery, for instance—within

the theater (Tadashi NISHIHARA, 2009, 137-155).

Temporally, the O would observe the L, while, at the same time, putting himself imaginatively within the lived history of the L. while, from within the temporal perspective of the L, recalling the memories of experiences possibly relevant to the learning task at hand, in our particular case, the task in the class of “reading” the mind of the king proceeding in the “Procession of the king”. The O — Mr. TAKEDA— attempted this to notice and recall, among many of the supposedly learned texts, “The procession of ants” that might be relevant, in the L’s mind, in his visible and audible act/behavior of asking the question: “*Ohsama wa ikumin iruno? (How many kings are there?)*”

Linguistically, in Japanese language, “*Ohsama no gyoretsu*” could mean either “The procession of the king” or “The procession of the kings”, as the O notices at the question of the little boy. This is because, Japanese language very weakly distinguishes between the singular and the plural, between “a king” and “kings”, when compared with European languages, English language in particular. In addition, Japanese also has very weak syntactic distinction between “a” and “the”. Incidentally, these two points are known, therefore, as the conspicuously common weak spots of Japanese students of English language. Let me hurry to add that, of course, Japanese do make these distinctions, however in different and additional ways, “Hitorino Ohsama” (a king) and “Ohsama-tachi” (kings), and “Aru Ohsama” (a certain king), “Sono Ohsama” (the king, or that king), “Sono Ohsama-tachi” (the kings, and/or these kings) or “Sorerano Ohsama-tachi” (“those kings”). You might recall the well-known “Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis” (“Linguistic relativism”) in this regard. I might also mention Toshihiko IZUTSU’s anecdote in his boyhood. He writes that Toshihiko was shocked by revelation of the sharp difference, pointed out by his English teacher, between Japanese and English regarding the issue of singularity/plurality, and that he was convinced of the difference of the lived-worlds of Japanese and English speaking people. That incident motivated him to become a philosopher of language in his later life (2009, 601-604). The questioner, the little boy in our story, from his own perspective, would never have been aware of these two weak spots in Japanese language, much less these two distinctions grammatically explicitly formulated in European languages, which would be totally unknown to him at the time of learning in the class. In order to take the perspective of the boy, the O must, with the reader of this article, phenomenologically “reduce” or “bracket” the linguistic knowledge, regardless of his/her nationality.

Linguistically again, the usage of “no” in Japanese and that “of” in English seems somehow to be common. “*Ohsama no gyoretsu* (王様の行列)” could mean either “The procession of the king” or “the procession of the kings”, the former meaning the procession “owned/possessed/ruled by” or “belonging to” the king, and the latter meaning the procession “consisting of/constituted by” the kings. However, this point would have needed a clarification for the little boy, since these points also will never be present in his perspective, all of which the O may have observed.

The T should have noticed these linguistic problems when encountering the expression “*Ohsama no gyoretsu*” which could have been recognized as relevant to the expression “*Ari no gyoretsu*” (“The procession of ants”), but apparently the T did not, while the O, Takeda, seems to have been stimulated, at

the little boy's earnest questioning "How many kings are there?", to become suddenly aware of the problem, and to consider it possibly worthwhile to take up as an issue to be discussed and clarified in the class.

Obviously, in order that the issues be taken up in the class, the T as well as the O should have been sufficiently sensitive to the differences of the delicate nuances of these various linguistic expressions.

Typically personal-historically. When the O encountered with the shocking "strange" question by the little boy, the O must immediately have attempted imaginatively to explore the possibility of the typically personal-history of the boy, which could have brought the boy to ask the question. Let me attempt to develop a possible series of "*perfink-ing*" of the O, imaginatively, explicitly and verbally expressed. 1) "What that child wished to say?", while being a little startled for the moment. 2) "The child must be seriously wishing to know something. What could that be, then?" while seeing that the child insisted on asking the same question even twice, despite the apparent negligence by the T. 3) "The child is asking 'How many king (s) ?', but, of course, the king is only one, needless to say. What did he *perfink* when he felt like to ask 'How many? ' ?" 4) "He is certainly not convinced of the singularity of the king, but why is it so? *Let me imagine together with the child* that there are more than just one king. How many? Two, three, four, ..., even a hundred?! If there were so many kings, then yah! that would be 'a procession of king (s)!' " 5) "Yes, the expression 'the procession of king (s)' made its appearance in the text, but... Just a moment, let me think about it from the perspective of the child. What did in the past 'the procession of something' mean to him? " 6) "Has he ever learned about 'the procession of something or anything' before? In other words, what was the possible experience for him, which is relevant to the "procession of something"? Yes, sometime ago, he must have encountered, in the textbook material in the class, with the expression the 'procession of ant (s)'. In that case, of course, there were many ants, more than one ant." 7) "He must be convinced that the ants were so many, never just one, recalling the impressive illustration in the text showing the 'procession of ants' " 8) "If and when the child should imagine the 'procession of king (s)' just like the 'procession of ant (s)', then it is quite natural that he should imagine that there were many king (s). In addition, he may have perceived that the T and the other LL seemed to be talking as if they believed there was only a king, which is, in his perception, simply wrong, and they seemed not to have noticed their own mistake of imagining only one king. The child may have thought, 'I must point out the mistake for the class. The Teacher may know the correct answer, then, before pointing out the mistake, perhaps, I had better make sure of how many kings are there by asking the question: '*Obsama wa ikunin iruno (How many king are there?) ?*' " 9) "Seeing that the T did neither notice nor listen to his question, he could not help but scream out the question again in order to catch the attention of the T to raise this important issue, 'very important' at least from his perspective." 10) "He must have felt disappointed to experience the perceived negligence by the T of his own 'very important' questioning, while not understanding the reason why the T did not respond to him". 11) "He might have felt that he was unfortunately the only one who noticed the obvious mistake of the whole class, including the T and the other LL, and that life is always this way, to his disappointment and resignation." 12) "He may not remember what the whole class was discussing about, except the great discovery he believes he himself alone had made on his

own during the class.” 12) “What a pity it is that the little boy had to experience that much disappointment, but this kinds of tragedies may have regrettably been left unnoticed many times also during the years of my own teaching experiences. Therefore, I am aware that I am not at all qualified to blame the T, much less to criticize him as an on-looking Observer teacher visiting from outside.”

I am recalling the Dr. Watson’s question to his friend Sherlock Holmes: “How on earth do you know that?”. After Holmes’s detailed explanation to his question: Dr. Watson exclaimed: “How absurdly simple!” And, Holmes’ response to the exclamation was: “Quite so!” “Every problem becomes very childish when once it is explained to you.” (Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan (2008/1905) *The Dancing Men*. In *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, 49) His lecture which just followed was that “it is not really difficult to construct a series of inferences, each dependent upon its predecessor and each simple in itself. If, after doing so, one simply knocks out all the central inferences and presents one’s audience with the starting-point and the conclusion, one may produce a startling, though possibly a meretricious, effect.” (ibid. 48)

Generally speaking, any “reading” by anybody of the other’s mind can never be perfectly definitive. Thus, we must keep some room for consideration of possible misunderstanding and of other possible understandings. This is persuasively shown with “reading” the mind of the other belonging to a culture “unfamiliar” to the reader. I cannot help but recall an episode of an English lady in the essay titled “The Japanese Smiles” by Lafcadio Hearn (1850-1904), who became a significant bridge between the west and the Meiji era (1867-1912) Japan. He wrote, “... a queer story told by a lady of Yokohama about one of her Japanese servants. ‘My Japanese nurse came to me the other day, smiling as if something very pleasant had happened, and said that her husband was dead, and that she wanted permission to attend his funeral. I told she could go. It seems they burned the man’s body. Well, in the evening she returned, and showed me a vase containing some ashes of bones (I saw a tooth among them); and she said “That is my husband.” And she actually *laughed* as she said it! Did you ever hear of such disgusting creatures?’ / It would have been quite impossible to convince the narrator of this incident that the demeanor of her servant, instead of being heartless, might have been heroic, and capable of a very touching interpretation” (Lafcadio Hearn, 1923. 360-361). After a detailed “reading” of the minds of both the lady and the servant, Hearn wrote, “My own opinion is that she (the servant) was obliged to gratify a wanton curiosity. Her smile or laugh would have signified, ‘Do not suffer your honorable feelings to be shocked upon my unworthy account; it is indeed very rude of me, even at your honorable request, to mention so contemptible a thing as my sorrow.’ ” (ibid. 373) This kind of “reading” would have been impossible, in my opinion, without Hearn’s deep familiarity and empathy with Japanese culture, at least in the Meiji era, which enabled him to “look below the surface of the life” (ibid. 373). Even in everyday life, the possibility of failures of “reading” is abundant, exemplified poignantly in the tragedies of “Othello” and/or “King Lear”.

The O, TAKEDA in our episode, was an outside visitor unfamiliar to the everyday culture of the class, if any, therefore, there remains at least a possibility that his “reading” was off the target, of which

possibility the O was well aware. Because of the possibility, perhaps, he chose the expression "So I read the meaning of the utterance of the child". Let me hurry to add, even though I would believe that the TAKEDA's reading hits the target, I would still believe that we must keep, as always, some room for other possible readings. I must add also that a teacher may be in a privileged position for "reading" the mind of the children in his class, as much as he knows the "intellectual history" of the children via the school curricula, for example the prior learning experiences of the text "The procession of ants".

From my own perspective as an R, the communality, in reading the other's mind, between TAKEDA (the O) and Holmes by Doyle, seems to be that both, with their perceptive eyes, observed the meaningful and relevant behaviors of the other and attempted to situate themselves in the place of that particular other, in various possible ways, including "spatially", "temporally", "linguistically", "personal historically", "culturally", "imaginatively", even "lived-bodily" and so on, as closely as possible. The communality would help us understand and actualize the effort of "Putting ourselves into the place of others" (Spiegelberg, 1986). In addition, I would just like to mention the excellent works by the American actress Uta Hagen (1973, 1991, 2010) for her detailed elaboration of many delicate aspects of this necessary efforts for "Acting" by the actors and actresses.

#### Part VI: The O's view on the nature of teaching

授業の中の子どもというものは、一つの教材や課題に対して、教師の想像力などはるかに及ばないさまざまに多様な反応をするものだという事を私はいつも考え続けてきた。多様な受け取り方——ということの中には、誤解もあろうし、錯覚も、あるいは全く見当はずれという場合もなくはない。しかし、子どもが本気になって学習の対象に立ち向かっている中から生み出されるさまざまな反応には、時にはそれが、どれほど突拍子もないものに見え、ばかばかしいとさえ思えるものであっても、そこには意外に重要な展開の契機たりうる内容をはらんでいる場合が少なくないのである。問題は教師がいかにかそれを発見し、どのように解釈し、そしてそれをどのように学習の流れの中に位置づけていくか、そうした教師の授業者としての力量にかかわってくるのである。

I always have reflected and am convinced now that children in the classroom usually respond to a teaching material or a given task in such multiple and varied ways that are far beyond the limit of the teacher's imagination. Among their multiple ways of understanding, not a few of them are the cases of misunderstandings, illusions, and off the point. However, among the children's varied responses that are born out of their serious attack at the object of learning, I believe, there also are not a few which may contain potential contents for unexpectedly important development of teaching. This is definitely so even when the responses, at the first glance, sometimes look so extraordinary and absurd. The problem depends upon the

capacity of the teacher as an educator, upon how s/he could find such responses, interpret them, and place them adequately in the flows of children's learning.

「王様は幾人？」と尋ねながら、ついに満足する解答をあたえられなかった男の子の小さな背中を見つめながら、私はかつて自分が正答では無いというたったそれだけの理由で、どれほど多くのすばらしい子どもの考えを切り捨て、学習への意欲を摘みとってきたらうかという新たな悔恨に胸をつかれ、この若い先生の授業を批判する資格など自分にはありはしないのだ、と思ったのであった。(武田常夫『授業の中の子ども』明治図書、1980年、10-14)

While gazing at the little back of the boy, who was after all given no satisfying answer, even for his asking the question twice: “*Obsama ha ikunin iruno (How many king are (is) there?)*?”, I felt that I am never qualified to criticize this young teacher. This was because I myself became so shocked to be aware, with many of renewed regrets, that in many of my past teaching experiences, I must have neglected so many of wonderful ideas of children and also nipped them in the bud, only for the very meager reason that their ideas do not correspond to the correct answers I had expected. (Takeda, Tsuneo 1980. *Children in the Classroom Teaching*, Meiji-tosho. 10-14, translation by Akihiro YOSHIDA)

**R's comments, from his own perspective:  
The “reading”, by the R, of the T's mind**

This Part IV is an expressed belief and faith of the O having been formed through the many years his experiences as a teacher. Thus, we may choose the issue not to thematize here, but his belief and faith expressed here would be the background of his “reading” that enabled him to observe, to notice and to “read” in the way he did. In that sense, his consciousness and awareness are worthwhile, as a horizon of his “reading”, to be explicated, even though our focus should stay within domain of the issue of “reading”.

Imaginatively, while in the classroom, any of the LL could and would be imagining on his/her own what would usually be outside and beyond what an O could imagine on the spot. However, it is important that the O is aware of this intrinsically fundamental limitation of his own imagination with respect to each of the LL's imagination. This is because, when and if the O is aware of this intrinsic limitations and the remaining open possibilities, then the O should also be aware of the fundamental Otherness of each of the LL. That is, that the O and the L are fundamentally different personalities with respective lived-histories, and also that the O should always be ready to notice and to attempt to imagine, as much as possible, what each of the LL might be imagining when and if any of the LL shows any visible act/behavior that appears to be indicative of the possibility of his/her imagining something else, regardless of whether within or beyond the O's own imagination.

The expression "While gazing at the little back of the boy" seems to imply and indicate implicitly that, while gazing at the boy, the O, TAKEDA situated himself in the situation of the L, the little boy, and the O lived his own body simultaneously overlapped and fused with the lived-body of the boy, so to speak. On the one hand, we might recall the old saying "Fellow sufferers pity one another" (「同病相憐れむ」), where sufferers of the same disease could mutually feel the pain of each other far better than otherwise. Identical twins would feel in the same way also. On the other hand, a boxing match fun sometimes could "*perfin*k" the situation of his favorite boxer better by imitating boxer's bodily actions. In the similar manner, the O was not just seeing, or just looking at, the boy's little back merely objectively, but he was "gazing at the little back of the boy" with much sympathy for the psychological situation of the boy. However, needless to say, there is also the limit, the O can never identify his own body with the body of the little boy. Let me limit myself within just mentioning that the O must have been deeply sympathizing with the boy, when he "gazed at the boy's little back".

Self-reflection prompted by the acts of the other. The O, TAKEDA, as an experienced master teacher, had keen sensitive eyes as an observer of classroom teachings. I found myself feeling that I would not like to miss mentioning a point: that is, when and if TAKEDA finds something to be criticized in a teacher's act of teaching, he does not stop just by giving critical comments upon the teacher and the act, and he never fail to reflect also upon his own teaching experiences in the past, and to make the occasion as an invitation to his self-reflection. I believe, this deeply rooted attitude of his has continued to enrich his lived world for his life, and made him a truly respectable master teacher. He was a sincere, modest and traditional Japanese master teacher.

An advice by Takeda, the O, to young teachers is noteworthy: "At least when I actually look at children, I have never chosen to 'think a little cynically' and I believe you had better not either. Rather, I would believe, you had better be always consistent in looking at children straightforwardly and naively, rather than cynically" (Takeda, 1980, 208). The O read the mind of the little boy naively, but not cynically.

Takeda's "Openness" and readiness should be mentioned. That is, the Openness and readiness to keenly attend to what are happening on the spot and to fully imagine the possible concealed and unrevealed meanings. I would claim that, even though this Openness may not be a rigorously formulated methodical operational procedure, it remind us of the spirit of Phenomenological Reduction, so it may be considered as the phenomenological reduction as embodied and lived by the experienced Master teacher.

I would like to leave untouched many of the implications that should be derivable from the Part IV, since the main purpose of this article was limited, as mentioned earlier, to the clarification of those implications specifically relevant to the issue of reading of the minds of others.

### **A Glimpse into possible Dialogues with some authors:**

Let me introduce here just a few of the ideas by the two authors, whose views are partly relevant to the ways of reading the others' minds explicated thus far as we have learned from the TAKEDA's little episode.



The author's note: Regarding the issue of the perspectives, or that of situating oneself in the same/similar situation as the other's, among human subjects, such as among TROLL, a few names of authors who wrote on this theme have come to my mind. They are, among Japanese, 空海 KUKAI (774-835), 夏目漱石 Soseki NATSUME (1867-1916), 時枝誠記 Motoki TOKIEDA (1900-1967), 三浦つとむ Tsutomu MIURA (1911-), Toshhiko IZUTSU 井筒俊彦 (1914-1993), 西郷竹彦 Takehiko SAIGO (1920-), 安永浩 Hiroshi YASUNAGA (1929-2011), 荻野恒一 Koichi OGINO (1921-1991), 竹田青嗣 Seiji TAKEDA (1947-) and possibly many more. Among Europeans as I know of, von Uexkuel (1864-1944), and, of course, William James (1842-1910), Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), Max Scheler (1874-1928), Alfred Schutz (1899-1959), Karl Jaspers (1883-1969), Robert Musil (1880-1942), Summerset Maugham (1874-1965), Roman Ingarden (1893-1970), Oswald Stewart Wauchope (1897-1956), Jean Piaget (1896-1980), Herbert Spiegelberg (1986) and again possibly and certainly many more. Let us satisfy ourselves just by recalling these names enumerated here. The number of the excellent authors having been concerned with the issue is so impressive to me, thus convincing me also of the great significance of the issue.

### **The three modes of Narrating for seeing things with the “inner eyes” of the other: Takehiko SAIGO's formulation**

Takehiko SAIGO (2005, 9-11) formulated his “Theory of Perspectives” for writing and reading the fictional works of art, in the following manner.

In the literary work of art, there is the ‘structure of fiction’, the structure different from the structure of reality. The Writer, who is the Author, writes the work, and the Reader reads the work. When the Writer writes the work, he creates the Narrator. The Author transforms himself into the Narrator. For example, if an adult male Author writes a narrative narrated by a girl-Narrator, the Author could be said to have transformed himself into the girl-Narrator “I”. Alternatively, we could also say that the Author creates the girl-Narrator “I”. The Narrator narrates to the Listener. The Reader transforms him/her self into the Listener, through whose ears and eyes the Reader hears the Narration by the Narrator. I (SAIGO) named such a structure “Ireko-kouzou” (入れ子構造), or the “Matryushka-structure” or the “Russian doll structure”, after the Russian folk dolls that nest within one another.

When the Narrator narrates to the Listener, the Narrator narrates the Character (s) and the circumstances of the Character (s). The Character could be human person and/or an animal, whoever could be given the humanly personality by the Author. Now, there are two ways for narrating the Character and its circumstances. One way is to narrate with the ‘outer eyes’ that is to narrate by looking at the Character from outside. The other way is to narrate from within, through the eyes of the Character. In the narrative fiction, these two ways are overlapped, that is to say, the Narrator looks at the Character not only from outside, but also from inside, seeing the other people and circumstances through the eyes of the Character. In order to do that, the Narrator must, metaphorically speaking, “possess” or “enter” the Character.

Now, Saigo continues, there are basically three cases of doing this. The first is “Gawakara” 「がわから (側から)」 (Standing-with/side-by-side with the Character) to narrate, the second is “Yorisou” 「よりそう (寄り添う)」 (Accompanying/going along together with the Character) to narrate, and the

third is "Kasanaru" 「かさねる (重ねる)」 (Overlapping/Fusing/Identifying oneself with the Character) to narrate. Saigo formulated the three ways alternatively as 〈側に立って, 寄り添って, 身になって〉, "Standing on the side of, Going along together with, and Overlapping/identifying oneself bodily with".

Even though his theory is on the writing and reading of the fictional works in literature, the three ways of seeing things through the eyes of the Character, with the "inner eyes" of the Character are relevant to our issue of "reading" the mind of the other, "by taking the perspective of the other", and/or "by situating oneself in the same/similar situation of the other". Let me point out that: the metaphorical expressions of 〈側に立って, 寄り添って, 身になって〉, "(1) Standing on the side of, (2) Going along together with, and (3) Overlapping/identifying oneself bodily with", correspond to the three ways of taking the perspectives of the other: (1) Spatiality, (2) Spatiality-Temporality in Movement, and (3) Lived-bodily, respectively. Thus, even though, these three are not exhaustive, they look convincingly distinct, representative and well-founded.

Regarding the contrast between 1) the case of the O's seeing the L by, or through, the "outer eyes" and 2) that by, or through, the "inner eyes" could be explicated as follows also. In the former case, *the O "perfind" the L*, in the latter case, *the O "perfind" what the L "perfind"*. The structural contrast explicated this way should become evident.

### **"I put myself in the place of the other subject" :A passage from Edmund (Ideas II)**

Husserl, E. wrote, "...the subject is not a mere unity of experience, although experience and universal type play an essential role, and it is important that this be brought out and clarified. I put myself in the place of the other subject, and by empathy I grasp what motivates him and how strongly it does so, with what power. And I learn to understand inwardly how he behaves, and how he would behave, under the influence of such and such motives, determining him with such and such force, i.e., I grasp what he is capable of and what is beyond him. I can understand many inner correlations, having fathomed him so. It is in this way that I grasp his Ego, for it is precisely the identical Ego of these motivations, ones that have this direction and this power. / I secure these motivations by placing myself in his situation, his level of education, his development as a youth, etc., and to do so I must need share in that situation; I not only empathize with his thinking, his feeling, and his action, but I must also follow him in them, his motives becoming my quasi-motives, ones which, however, *motivate with insight* in the mode of intuitively fulfilling empathy. I co-share in his temptations, I co-participate in his fallacies; in the "co-" there lies an inner co-living of motivating factors, ones which carry their necessity with them. Admittedly, there are still unsolved and unsolvable remainders, here: e.g., the original dispositions of character, which, however, I can indeed also, by analogy, make clear to myself and understandable." and, "...my Corporeality." (Husserl, Edmund 1989 287-288: *Italics* in the original, and **blocks** by Yoshida).

In this quotation above, to my delight, in a sense, Husserl seems to have been considering basically the same issue as our discussion so far regarding the "reading" of the mind of the other. Again, "by taking

the perspective of the other”, and/or “by situating oneself in the same/similar situation of the other”, in a variety of ways, “spatial, temporal, spatiotemporal, personal, interpersonal, historical, personal-historical, social-historical, cultural-historical, lived-bodily, (that is, corporeally), linguistic, fictive, and imaginative, as many and varied as you like.” We should leave the elaboration to another occasion, perhaps.

### **The possibilities, the limitations and bounds of reading of other’s minds: ontological, epistemological and ethical aspects**

The act of Reading of the mind of the other is varied and multi-layered. Among the TROLL involved in reading the mind of a little boy, each of the TROLL in actuality is also engaged in reading the minds of others, more or less. Even the little boy L must have been reading the mind of the Teacher, just before he exclaimed “*Ohsama wa ikunin iruno (How many kings are there?)*?” for the second time. Possibilities of reading among human beings as a whole may perhaps be inexhaustible. However, the reading capacity of each human person in concrete situations would have its limitations: a little boy or a girl may read the teacher’s mind also, but they would be able to read probably far less, in general, than the experienced Observer, for instance. The limitations would differ according to who reads and whose mind is read. Kazuo ISHIGURO, the author of “*When We Were Orphans*”, would “read” far better than when he was a little boy. Similarly, the little boy now in front of us will “read” our minds far better in his adulthood, when and if he does that in the future.

Besides, the epistemological psychological problem of the human capacity of reading the minds of others, the ethical problem of the reading must be investigated concretely in relation to the classroom teaching-learning situations among the TROLL. How much a T may be allowed to read the mind of the others, LL, even if it were possible, for instance? A relevant question would be: How the reading of the minds of the others is assured to be solely for the benefits of the others themselves? Should not we refrain from reading too much in details and depth of the other’s mind? What about privacy? I must satisfy myself here just by raising only a few of the issues.

### **Summary**

What and how would you have “read” the mind of me, the author?

I would like to listen to what and how you have “read”.

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**Note**

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## 「他者の心を読むこと」について

— 或る少年の心を読む達人教師の心を読む現象学的な試み —

吉田章宏

1971年暮、瀬戸内海因島の授業合宿研究会で、達人教師による、子どもの心を読む実践に出会う。教授学習の心理学研究をめざす私は、その読みの深さ豊かさに感嘆した。それまでの自らが学んだ心理学と自らの無力さに落胆した。生きた実践に学ぶ歳月を重ねた。神谷美恵子『生きがいについて』に出会い、その現象学的精神病理学の豊かな世界に憧れた。以来、現象学、現象学的心理学、文学、芸術に学び40数年を経た。達人教師に匹敵する読む力を身に着けたかな、と自負する時もある。しかし、心理学者としては、「達人教師の心を読む」こと、さらに、「人間の心を読む」こと、へと促された。だが、フッサールの心、ドストエフスキーの心、……、を読むことは可能か？ 完全に「他者の心を読む」ことは原理的に不可能である。とは言え、その可能性と限界を日々明らかにしつつ追究しなければならない。教育実践の豊かな発展深化に資するためにも……。

キーワード：他者、現象学、達人教師