

# HUMANITIES AND FREEDOM FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF INFORMATION

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# HUMANITIES AND FREEDOM FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF INFORMATION

- ◎ Viktor E. Frankl

- Humanist who discussed “freedom” of human

- ◎ Fundamental Informatics (FI)

- Information theory based on systems theory proposed by Toru Nishigaki

# OUTLINE OF THIS PRESENTATION

- ① 1. Humanities, hermeneutics, humanism
- ② 2. Humanities and Freedom in Frankl's Thought
- ③ 3. Reinterpretation of Frankl's Thought from the Viewpoint of FI (Fundamental Informatics)
- ④ 4. Humanities and the Freedom of Speech and Expression

# I. HUMANITIES IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

- ◉ Global scale transport and communication
- ◉ Only one set of values easily becomes dogmatic, self-righteous
- ◉ To search the way of co-existence of a variety of senses of values
- ◉ Not singular form “humanity” but plural form “humanities”

# HUMANITIES AS AN ACADEMIC FIELD

- The word “humanities” also mean academic studies on human culture
  - Philosophy, history, and literature
- German word “Geisteswissenschaften”
  - science of mental activities
- Japanese word “人文科学(jinbun-kagaku)”
  - science of human culture
- Philosophical word “精神科学(seishin-kagaku)”
  - science of mental activities

# HUMANITIES AND NATURAL SCIENCE

- ◉ Science of mental activities must have a unique framework or a paradigm of “understanding”
- ◉ Natural science needs logical and methodological procedures
- ◉ Humanities as an academic field need another way to understand the essence of human culture

# PHILOSOPHICAL HERMENEUTICS (PHILOSOPHISCHE HERMENEUTIK)

- ◉ “understanding (Verstehen)” of products of mental activities by humans can be realized as comprehensive recognition which consists of not only logical thinking but also emotional factors.
- ◉ Philosophical hermeneutics quests for the essence of human beings by researching the phenomena of “understanding” such mental activities including the views of the world as their background.

# HISTORY OF HERMENEUTICS

- ◉ Schleiermacher
  - ◉ Dilthey
  - ◉ Heidegger
  - ◉ Hans-Georg Gadamer
- 
- ◉ These are philosophical studies quests for the essence of human beings by researching the phenomena of “understanding”



# CAPURRO'S HERMENEUTIC APPROACH TO INFORMATICS

- ◉ intercultural information ethics
  - Based on philosophical hermeneutics of Heidegger and Gadamer
- ◉ Angeletics (Angeletik)
  - Greek word “angelia” means message
  - new areas of interdisciplinary research of message studies



# UNDERSTANDING THE MEANINGS OF INFORMATION

- ◉ Meanings are “generated inside” a living thing. It cannot be treated as something to be transmitted from one to another.
- ◉ Hermeneutics / angeletics try to grasp the complex factors which build meanings, such as embodiment or dynamisms of social and cultural contexts.

# BEYOND HUMAN"ISM"S

- ⊙ Heidegger himself was quite negative to the concept of “humanism”
- ⊙ What Heidegger was negative to was not “humanity” or “humanities”, but human‘ism’, that is, human-centered view
- ⊙ “Letter on humanism (Über den »Humanismus«)”
  - “über” = on, about, above, over, beyond
  - “On humanism” → “Beyond humanism”

## II. HUMANITIES AND FREEDOM IN FRANKL'S THOUGHT

### ◎ Viktor Emil Frankl (1905 - 1997)

- Austrian psychiatrist who was deeply affected by Heideggerian philosophy.
- He discussed “freedom” in his thought and is one of the most famous humanists in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



- ◎ Anti-materialism and anti-reductionism
- ◎ Superiority of mind and the uniqueness of experience as each individual
- ◎ Against the reductionisms which resolve all human activities into simple pieces, such as physiological, psychological, social factors

# THE WILL TO MEANING

- ◉ Frankl regards humankind as living being who has the responsibility to his/her own life and to search for meaning.
- ◉ The deepest desire of humans is to find the meaning of their lives (the will to meaning)
- ◉ In every situation, the meaning of life is provided by their own life (or natural providence which produced human beings)
- ◉ Human beings have the “freedom” and “responsibility” to find and fulfill the meaning of their lives

# FREEDOM DESPITE OF RESTRICTED SITUATION

- ◉ Human spirit has freedom of thought although we are restricted physiologically, psychologically and socially.
- ◉ This mental freedom is remained in every situation, as long as we are conscious, by the very moment of death.
- ◉ Humanity or humanness are characterized by this ability, the freedom to search for the meaning of life, find it, and fulfill it in every situation.
  - Example of a question to a chess master

# THE LIMIT OF FRANKL'S THOUGHT AND NEED TO REINTERPRET IT

- ◉ Frankl's thought was built through his experiences and struggles in the concentration camp of Nazi
- ◉ A progeny of the humanism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which was also a century of war
- ◉ It is within the limits of modern view of humans in that time
- ◉ In his thought, the dimension of personal inner liberty is emphasized, but he does not discuss enough the freedom of the social dimension

## TO DEVELOP FRANKL'S ARGUMENT...

- ◉ Nevertheless, Frankl's thought has much to be considered for today's and future humanities.
- ◉ In order to enrich his argument and apply its essence to consider future humanities, the informatic approach to it, that is, to reinterpret Frankl's argument from the viewpoint of "information" based on vital information process (meaning-producing process), can be one of the hopeful tactics.



### III. REINTERPRETATION OF FRANKL'S THOUGHT FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF FI

- ◎ Toru Nishigaki established his information theory “fundamental informatics” (FI) based on systems theory.
- ◎ In FI, information is regarded as the process of meaning-producing and is distinguished according to three phases:
  - Life information
  - Social information
  - Mechanical information



# THREE KINDS OF INFORMATION

## ◎ Life information

- Not something based on material such as gene
- The widest concept of information
- All kinds of meanings including non-verbal ones
- Generated inside a living thing (in-formation)
- Also called “raw-information”

## ◎ Social information

- Made from life information into symbols or statements
- All kinds of symbolized information

## ◎ Mechanical information

- Made from social information into the form which can be processed mechanically
- It is not vital or life information anymore, because it is not generated “inside” a living thing. But allegorically it can be regarded as a kind of information as frozen or dried storage.

# DIFFERENT MEANINGS OF THE CONCEPT OF “MEANING”

- ⊙ Although there is a conceptual gap between the “meaning” of FI and that of Frankl, the latter is considered to be, in a sense, included in the former.
- ⊙ Informatic “meaning”, which is a bulk of sensation of a living thing, **can be shaped into** “meaningfulness” which Frankl calls “meaning of life”
- ⊙ Frankl’s concepts of “man’s search for meaning” or “responsible being” can be understood informatically as **“possibility to find and realize meaningfulness”**.

# HIERARCHICAL AUTONOMOUS COMMUNICATION SYSTEM (HACS)

- ◉ In addition, Frankl's argument on "freedom despite restrictions" can be explained by using the Hierarchical Autonomous Communication System (HACS) model of FI.
- ◉ Humanistic thought of Frankl can be reinterpreted and rebuilt from the viewpoint of FI.
- ◉ HACS is a model of situation that more than one autonomous system maintains a hierarchical relationship.

# LAW-SYSTEM AND MIND SYSTEMS

- ◉ Law-system is a kind of social system, and we usually live within this framework with no doubt
- ◉ If we are not specialists of law, we usually do not always clearly aware of how the law-system works in everyday life
- ◉ This situation shows a hierarchical relationship, that is, **law-system is a higher ranking system** and we, living systems being within the framework (to be exact, our **mind systems**) are **lower-ranking systems**
- ◉ Stable social situation generally remains this kind of hierarchical relationship between social systems and individuals (e.g. Money system and mind systems)

# OBSERVING STABILITY OF SYSTEMS CRITICALLY

- ◉ This stability is not equal to “righteousness”
- ◉ Rather, what HACS model shows is the situation that there are normally **invisible or less-visible mechanisms which restrict and lead people to do specific actions with little doubt** in such a stable society
- ◉ When we have a special or unusual relationship concerning the social system, it **appears into our consciousness**, and we **start to reflect** the relationship between the higher-ranking social system and ourselves
- ◉ This situation is exactly what Frankl says “freedom despite restrictions”
- ◉ HACS model is a conceptual tool which **enables us to be aware of and to examine** such situations

# IV. HUMANITIES AND THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND EXPRESSION

- ◉ The question: Is it “absolute goodness”?
- ◉ Recently there are world-wide problems both in the East (gag in China) and in the West (conflict between Islamic tradition and Western democracy and freedom of speech)
- ◉ These situations should be considered not only from the viewpoint of traditional ethical theory, but also from informatic view



# JYLLANDS-POSTEN MUHAMMAD CARTOONS CONTROVERSY



Jyllands-Posten (Denmark)



Die Welt (Germany)





BOB KATZNELSON



PETER BINDSØGAARD



KURT WESTERGAARD

# Muhammeds ansigt



ANNETTE CARLSEN



POVL ERIK POULSEN (PEP)



RENÉ AULVS HAVNEN

## YTRINGSFRIHED

### AF FLEMMING ROSE

Kulturudvalget

■ Eksikens Frank Strøm erklærede for sydig, at han ikke - som sagt - på Strøm-øen for Strøm, ti-åreren. - En tegner, der skal afbilde profeten Muhammed i en børsbetag, ønsker at optræde anonymt. Det sættes sig venteturenlige over- lættelse af en islamkritisk emnevalgning. Et ferske karikaturistens tjener et kunstnerik af frigt for muslimernes reaktion. I denne teatermarionette optimerer

af den findes, og at den lever til selvmeget. Det sker en retsindighed af den afsluttede navn. Karikaturen, budskabet, tegneren, over- sættelse og teateretik går derfor i en stor bue uden om vor tidts vigtige kulturmondi, der mellem blæk og de skulpturens, vestlige samfund med nød i kærbedømmen.

### Latterliggørelsen

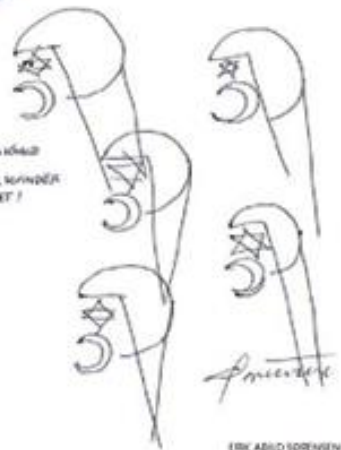
Det moderne, sekulære samfund afviser af nogle muslimere. De gør læst på en sættelse, når de møder sig på særlig berømtstegen til egne religiøse forelæser. Det er ulovligt at sæt et værdigt

stykke er det ikke berømt til vildt, men de afsluttede skulptur giver viden, at vi er på vej ind på en glædelig, hvor tegner kan frembringe, hvad selv- overensomme vil ende med.

### 12 bladetegnere

Dette er bladetegnernes 12 bladetegnere oplyst om de mest berømte af danske bladetegnere forment til at tegne Muhammed, som de vil være. 12 ud af ca. 40 har berømt berømtbladet, og vi bringer dem tegninger her på siden under eget navn. De er: Asger Sørensen, Povl Erik Poulsen (PEP), Rasmus Sand Høyer, Erik

'PROFET!  
NAD KINE OG KØB  
I LØBET  
SOM HÅNDKARVNER  
UNDER, GÅT!



ERIK AULVS HAVNEN



RENÉ AASUS HANSEN



RASMUS SAND HØJER



LARS REFN

### YTRINGSFRIHED AF FLEMMING ROSE Kulturstatistik

■ Kritikerne Frank Hvam erkender for sig, at han ikke - som sagt - på kritikkens for side, er skæmmet. « En tegner, der skal afbilde profeten Muhammed i en fremmed, ønsker at optræde anonymt. Det samme gør verdensberømte oversættelse af en islamisk erindringsbøger. Et fremmed kunstnerens navn er kun værd af tryk for muslimernes irritation. I denne situation er opløsningen opløst for fremstillingen med bud og satte omme med USA's præsident George W. Bush, men det er ikke en erindringsbøger om Osama bin Laden og hans efterfølgende, og under et møde med amerikanerne Anders Fogh Rasmussen (V) oplystes en anden oplysning til at gøre sin udfordring gældende over for danske medier, så de kan tegne et mere præcist billede af islam.

De andre eksempler giver grund til bekymring. Hvad enten den oplyste tryk lever på et fælt grundlag eller ej. Faktum er,

at den findes, og at den lever til selvbevarelse. Det sker en uanset om det offentlige navn, kunstner, forfatter, tegner, oversætter og teoretisk går derfor i en stor bølgesvind og ved sig vigtige kulturmæssige, det vil sige islam og de sekulære, vestlige samfund med et i kristendommen.

### Litteraturredaktionen

Det moderne, sekulære samfund afviser af nogle muslimere. De gør krav på en særlig ret, når de kommer på særlig betingelser til egne religiøse tekster. Det er ulovligt med et særligt demokratisk og ytringsfrihed, hvor man må være villig til at finde sig i ikke, også og litteraturredaktionen. Det er berømt ikke altid lige trykret og er svært at se på, og det betyder ikke, religionen er ikke en erindringsbøger skal gøres til gavn, men det er ulovligt i samfundet.

Det er således ikke tilfældigt, at folk i totalitære samfund også i Danmark er at betragte vidergælder eller afbilde diktorer kritik. Det sker som regel med henvisning til, at det kræver fuldstændig i Dan-

mark er det ikke kommet så vidt, som de andre eksempler viser, at vi er på vej ned på en glidebane, hvor ingen kan forhindre, hvad religionskritikere vil gøre med.

### 12 bladegnere

Dette er Magmaritens flyvende Pølse og de danske bladegneres fordeling til at tegne Muhammed, som de ser ham. 12 ud af ca. 40 har bevaret henholdsvis, og vi bringer dem tegninger her på siden under eget navn. De er: Arne Sørensen, Poul Erik Poulsen (PEP), Rasmus Sand Højer, Erik Skid Sørensen, Frank Richard, Peder Sandgaard, Bob Kastrup, Anette Carlsen, Lars Refn, Jens Julius Hansen, Claus Seidel og Klaus Sørensen.

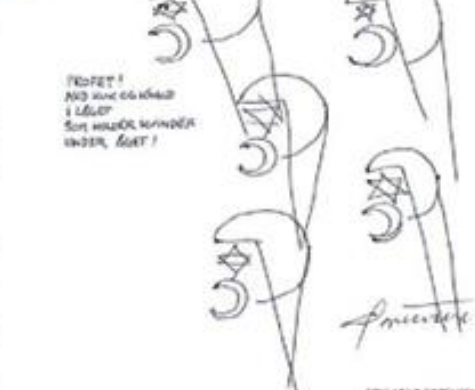
Kan 12 ud af 40 er skatte, og nogle af de aktive er selvfølgelig en konkurrence. Endelig har argumenter for dem selv til at tegne, andre har bremset af personlige afbrydere, men andre andre ikke har givet lyd fra sig.

Flere tegninger af:



- ROLIG, VENNER, NÅR ALT KOMMER TIL ALT ER DET JO BARE EN TEJNING LAVET AF EN VANDRO SPØNDRYDE...

FRANZ FEHSEL



ERIK ABILD SØRENSEN



CLAUS SEIDL



ARNE SØRENSEN





# DO THE WESTERN MEDIA NOT KNOW KANT'S ETHICS?

- ◉ According to Kant who is one of the most famous modern philosophers in the West, a person should not be treated as merely a means to some other end, rather than always an end in themselves.
- ◉ Did western press treat billions of Muslims who worshipped Muhammad as “persons”, as “ends” in themselves? The answer is no.
- ◉ Moreover, we can find that there is unspoken double standard, that is, Jyllands-Posten avoided printing such a cartoon of Christ in 2003.

# VISIBLE / INVISIBLE / LESS-VISIBLE

- Of course it is true that violence caused by some armed Islamic groups affects on the international situation and often becomes bad flashpoints. However, this is “visible” situation and easily understandable.
- Compared to this, problems such as double standard of freedom of speech and expression are “invisible” or “less-visible”. So if we are not careful enough about it, we will never be aware of its defectiveness.

# OTHER PROBLEMATIC SITUATIONS CONCERNING FREEDOM OF SPEECH

- ◉ Victims of crimes often suffer from the second damage by invasion of their privacy by mass media. In a country ruled by law, a person of interest (suspected person) should be considered to be innocent until he is proved guilty, but he is often reported sensationally before / after arrested.
- ◉ If we call this situation “freedom of speech”, “freedom of press”, or “freedom of expression”, they are never “absolute goodness”, but just one situation which was brought by mass media system which is a “super-social system”.

# SCOPE OF HACCS MODEL

- ◉ By observing individuals and society with HACCS model, we can see some aspects of the normally invisible or less-visible mechanisms. So it can be a kind of “media literacy” or social criticism method.
- ◉ But the scope or target of HACCS model is not only mass media information, but also every situation of life.
- ◉ Therefore, it can be a conceptual tool with which we consider the past, present, and future of humanities.

- ◉ 1) Humanities in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should be considered from multifaceted and multidisciplinary viewpoints
- ◉ 2) Humanities should be clearly distinguished from “humanism” which implies human-centered view
- ◉ 3) The thought of Frankl who emphasized freedom of humans can be reinterpreted from the viewpoint of FI (Fundamental Informatics)
- ◉ 4) HACS (Hierarchical Autonomous Communication Systems) model of FI is useful to see normally invisible or less-visible mechanisms or relationships between individuals and society
- ◉ 5) Although freedom of speech and expression tends to be considered absolute goodness, it is not true from the viewpoint of HACS theory
- ◉ 6) Even though the situation seems to be that freedom of speech and expression is realized, it is not always true
- ◉ 7) HACS model can be a conceptual tool with which we consider the past, present, and future of humanities