

The Logic and Ethics of an *Intellectual*

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1 The collapse of Taishō period “personalism” (*jinkakushugi*)

Whenever a human being attempted to place him or herself as a valuable individual with a sense of self in the context of the world and humanity, the domain of “personality” supported by an “ideology” emerged.

Me, I am an independent personality. Moreover, I possess my own ideology. To possess an individual ideology means that the conditions of combination, the means of unification expose the appearance of individuality, however, it does not mean that these elements are altogether original. (Abe Jirō: *Santarō no nikki*, ch. 3)

Individual ideology takes shape in the “means of combination” and “unification” of many various ideological elements. Its subject is a “personality”. For this kind of formation of personality one is required to extensively read the literary

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masterpieces of world literatures of all times and has to begin with the acquisition of “elements”. One obtains a thorough and bookish “education, “wanders” around it, “combines” it with “contemplation” and “unifies” diaries and sentiments by *writing* them down. This was the strategy of personality formation within the Taishō era self-cultivation or culturalism (*kyōyōshugi*).

Rather than living an actual social life (real life), a higher value was granted to the academic enjoyment of writing activities (ideology). We can say that within this inversion after the Russo-Japanese War, young men, deprived of a *way of dying* and having lost sight of *their way of living*, were given the possibility of *life* simulated by literary representations.

In theory, this kind of personality formation is possible through isolated work in a study room. For the independent city dwellers, who came from the countryside, a narrow boarding room became their sanctuary for “spiritual life”. Relations among a few friends and nearby girls became an abstraction, as if they were an essential “experience” of “human life”, and personal experience swelled to an event of historical importance for “humanity”. Mushakōji Saneatsu's work from the early Taishō period describes one type of such intellectual youth.

Abe Jirō's protagonist, Aota Santarō, says: “First and foremost, for everyday living we have to choose an *occupation which will conform to spiritual life.*” (Italics by Komori, along with the following text.) The strange feeling of naming an intellectual occupation which puts the “education” as the basis a job (which still persists nowadays) symbolizes the overturn of “ideology and actual life”. In Shiga Naoya's novel *A Dark Night's Passing* (*An'ya kōrō*, 1921–1937) Tokitō Kensaku's almost eccentric attachment to his “job” is also a common denominator of the main female protagonist in *Nobuko* (1924–1926) by Miyamoto Yuriko.

Moreover, the emergence of an intellectual occupation as a “job” was possible because in that time mass communication as a market capable of commodifying it was established. When a personality is captured unawares in a kind of capitalist system, where “spiritual life” as such is commodified, the image of Taishō “cultural life” starts to function as a simulation of the everyday life of the masses.

But “personalists” were indifferent to the fact that in order to lead a kind of cultural life, which forms a personality, a minimal economic security is indispensable. In these circumstances Kawakami Hajime made it clear there were many “who cannot even make an income to reach the lowest standards of living” (*Binbō monogatari*, 1917). In 1918 and 1919 the voices of these people led to and

rapidly brought about rice riots, frequent labour strikes, and tenant farmers' revolts.

The personalists who posited questions in the dichotomy between individual and humanity, individuality and universality, suddenly made the problems of society, economics and politics, which were missing from the frame of general recognition, a central matter of journalism. Already it gradually started to become clear that the formation of a personality in a space with no connection to the nature of social relations is nothing but a delusion.

At the same time there was a remarkable trend among students, centered around members of the Shinjinkai, who joined labour movements, farmer movements, and relief work for the poor, carrying the slogan "Let's go among the people!" A period when Kagawa Toyohiko's book *To cross the line of death* (*Shisen o koeru*, 1920) became a great best seller was arriving. The book depicts a young man Niimi Eichi, who conducts not a formation of personality in an academic way through the medium of printed words, but a formation of the self by throwing himself into the slums and doing relief work.

A generation which also critically confronted relations with this kind of humanitarian society immediately followed. The influence of the Russian revolution and Marxism showed a rapid spread among students. The remnants of something like Kawakami Hajime's insistence on a personalism, which was in "individual self-control" expecting the solution to social injustice, were also being wiped out.

While the idea of a revolution which can solve capitalist system itself as a social system only through reforming it served as a basis of existence of Taishō personalism, class opposition between workers and capitalists destroyed the concept of an abstract "individual". The idea became imbedded that every human being is defined by class. It can be said that Takeuchi Hitoshi's *Questioning the personalism of Mr. Abe Jirō* (*Abe Jirō shi no jinkakushugi o nanzu*, Shinchō, February 1922) is a typical example of this sort of period awareness maturity.

Just then, the trend to ostracize the intellectuals within the labour movement was gaining strength. Ōsugi Sakae declares that "the labour movement is a workers' movement for self-possession" and "a movement for personality" (*Rōdō undō*, October 6, 1919), and criticizes that "so-called idealists and leaders of the intelligentsia" brought to the movement a lot of "impurities, disadvantageous for the labourers" (*Chishiki kaikyū ni atau*, January 1, 1912). At the same time he also felt irritated when intellectuals gave speeches about the labour movement.

Yamakawa Hitoshi in his work *The Downfall of the Middle Class* (*Chūkyū kaikyū metsubō ron*, Kaizō, November 1920–January 1921) points out that *intellectual* as a class attribute lacks a certain originality and has no choice but to be included either in a capitalist class or in a working class. He then insists that according to the law of “decline of the capitalist class” the *intellectual* has to become “a learned proletarian”.

Arishima Takeo’s *A Declaration* (Sengen hitotsu) (Kaizō, January 1922) was issued within this kind of dynamism.

2 The multilayered nature of *A Declaration*

Arishima’s *Declaration* was of course just *one declaration*. However, the parties targeted by the declaration varied. Arishima’s declaration was turned towards different trends of intellectuals of that time: bystanding scholars, who took the labour problem for a research subject, thinkers, leaders of fraternities like labour movements, intellectual youths, who resembled Russian Narodniks, members of literary world, the advocates of proletarian literature, Marxists, anarchists and others. Depending on which of these layers is targeted, the function of the declaration’s meaning subtly changes. On the contrary, due to these subtleties, the declaration was molded according to singular evaluations, such as a “declaration of defeat” or a “declaration of hopelessness”.

What was developed mostly in literary magazines such as *Chūōkōron* and *Kaizō* were discussions by “scholars and thinkers” who turned “workers” into an “object of the labour problem”, a lot of them were “treatises on leaders from the intelligentsia” and “treatises on mediators from the intelligentsia”. Arishima at the moment criticized the tone of the argument which said that “worker” (the fourth class) is not a discussed “object” but “is becoming aware” that “he himself is a solution to a problem” (subject) and will take the movement away from “vitality” and “practice” lacking “scholars and thinkers” and will give it back into the “hands of workers themselves”.

For example, *A Study of the Middle Class* (*Chūryūkaikyū no kenkyū*, *Chūōkōron*, February 4, 1921) and other writings by Arishima’s friend from student years, Morimoto Kokichi, is one type of an intellectual treatise of that period.

Morimoto says that exactly because the “middle class includes a great part of intelligentsia” it can fulfill the leading role in the “social development”. According to his view on “reforming the social system”, the middle class will “raise” the “lower classes” which are “mostly physical workers” to the “Japanese standard” of living (cultural life of the middle class). He added that with mutual “cooperation we will *realize the error of an unfair acquisition of wealth* by the upper and propertied classes, and with *causing the inevitable class conflict we will bring down the upper classes to the common people's standard.*”

The term “class” was in use, but only as a concept completely unrelated with the Marxist view of class upon which Arishima was basing his ideas. No consideration was granted to the problems of exploitation or being exploited, ownership or lack of means of production, only the quantity of possessed wealth was questioned. And maybe exactly because of that the “intelligentsia”, literally the middle class, was able to connect the classes of capitalists and workers and was also able to advocate something as simple as the doctrine of mediators.

Arishima thinks that this kind of debate is not related to the subjective goodwill of disputants and that it blurs the directions of class conflict to overthrow the capitalist system, discouraging people in the process. In September 1921, a special issue of *Chūōkōron* featured *Unmasked thoughts of intelligentsia on the despotic proletarian tendencies (Puroretaria no senseiteki keikō ni tai suru interijentsia no itsuwarazaru kansō)*. As it is clear from the title, on one hand this special issue talks about the problem of proletarian dictatorship in the Russian revolution, on the other it is some sort of intellectual’s apologetic self-defense referring to the tendency to ostracize the intelligentsia inside the Japanese labour movement.

Sugimoto Kōjirō, professor at Waseda University, explains the “cooperation” of the worker and the intellectual from the standpoint of the “division of work” (division of labour) between physical work and mental work, which occurs in the “economic value” and “cultural value” output. Hayashi Kimio quoted Karl Kautsky, who stressed that “in order for the proletariat to expect a certain victory over capitalism, *intellectual power becomes the most important weapon*”, and developed a theory that the intellectual is “the casting-vote in class conflict”.

Furthermore Horie Kiichi, a *legal scholar*, says that “by no means can despotism be praised no matter in what shape or by what class it is conducted”. He then stresses the importance of “human nature” and “democracy” based on “humanitarianism”. From the standpoint of “compassion and love” Ogawa Mimei

“becomes aware” of the “horrors of revolutionary violence” and expounds that “we have to save human lives from misery” with the power of “intelligentsia”.

Even Miyake Setsurei, a *literary scholar*, says that “the masses should keep seeking for proper leaders until they find a lot of persons endowed with wisdom and leadership character”. From the viewpoint that workers equal masses, he insists on an argument that *intellectuals* equal the idea of leaders. And also, Chiba Kameo says that in a “culture”, “violence” is not “necessary”; he preaches to the “proletarian class” “the inherent disposition of individuality and awakening to the rationality” and he insists that “the one who wants to claim justice, without asking for help from some people or collective, will be left stark naked as an individual”.

Exactly because of the difference of emphasis, the basis of the idea of these different representatives of “intelligentsia” can with the help of a “personality” supported by reason and intellect overcome the opposition between labour class and capitalist class. The entity which will “educate” and lead both classes facing this opposition lies in the “personalistic” individualism in the role of an *intellectual*. This is nothing but a doctrine of anticlass consciousness capable of achieving mutual cooperation when an abstract individual emerges after having abandoned the class consciousness. This special issue was heavily criticized by Yamakawa Hitoshi as an “unconsciousness of intelligentsia” (Kaizō, November 1921).

If we think now, there is a viewpoint noted at the beginning of Morimoto Kokichi's previous paper, that the very “reforming of the individuality” is a keynote for the “reforming of the social system from the root”. It means that “each should respect the personality and begin to be aware of the heaven-sent rights of daily life”. In the matter of “cooperation with the intellect”, claims made also by fraternity leaders and Shinjinkai activists, already criticized by Ōsugi Sakae (*Rōdō undō to interijentsia; Rōdō undō*, January 1, 1920), were almost the same as claims of “scholars and thinkers”.

Maybe because of that, Arishima at that time dared to attack Kawakami Hajime for being a representative of those who withdrew from “individual self-control” as a solution and were developing the thoughts of “social reforming” through the class conflict. Arishima himself issued a warning or rather a refutation directed towards the middle class. He said that the statements of “people who live in totally different sphere than the fourth class”, whatever their own intentions, will end up delaying and obstructing the thorough accomplishments of class conflict and the refinement of the movement based on the labour class itself. In this sense

A Declaration is also a declaration of the conflict, where as “a member of the bourgeoisie which has to disappear naturally”, he “appeals to the bourgeoisie” and “seeks to widen the range of the movement to the middle class and to administer all his force” in order to hasten this “destruction”. (*Zasshi issoku, Warera*, March 1922)

3 From individual “personality” to class “personality”

Arishima's logic clearly surpasses the appearance of individualistic, Taishō cultured “personality”. In his criticism towards its representative, Kurata Hyakuzō, Arishima reiterates vaguely expressed parts of *A Declaration* as follows:

Thus, in the present time, when the labour problem became the central issue of the period, the movement is distinctly situated between the two classes. It is natural that a leader of a movement has to work in concert with the class, not just through his/her own measures. That is, it is natural that one class takes on one personality and has to work with the force of that personality. (*'Seishi' o yonde Kurata shi ni; Izumi*, November, December 1922)

The intention of the entire class is to crystallize to “one personality” and with the support of this power the “leader” “works”. In the period of class conflict the movement does not happen according to the arbitrariness of “one” individual leader. Arishima thinks that the “immanent tendency” to overturn the class society will occur in the very movement developed by the working class itself.

Besides, this “immanent tendency” is also the “ethical foundation” of the working class movement. For the protection of its own profits the capitalist class “abuses a great majority of humankind” and “is forced to obstruct the arrival” of “a majority to its class”. On the contrary, the working class will “destroy the capitalist system” and will “be able to unify the entire humankind” through a thorough articulation of the demands of its own class.

Here lies a definite difference between capitalist class and working class in how they perceive the notion of “love”. “No matter with how noble a love the capitalists are burning,” “in the end, they use it as a deceiving coat”, in contrast, on the side of the working class the “request to remove the class bounds” between workers and capitalists that are difficult to comprehend is getting “stronger” “the deeper the humanistic love is.” “Love” as a working class “human

instinct” appears not in the plan to attack individual capitalists but to “destroy” the capitalist system itself.

As Moriyama Shigeo rightly pointed out, it can be said that this kind of Arishima's logic sees through the fact that the *ethical* nature of the working class lies in the point of unification of “complete liberation from alienation” (*Jikkō to geijutsu*, 1969) and self-liberation. Moreover, this kind of ethical nature insistently manifests only as the “immanent tendency” of the labour class itself.

Consequently, the leaders of the revolutionary movement can by no means be something thrown from the outside as the collective consciousness of the class they themselves adhere to emerges in crystallization into one personality. In order to satisfy their own individual “heroism”, the intellectuals who want to join the labour movement can do nothing but perform the role of distorting class-bound, collective self-actualization of the worker him/herself.

Further, the labour movement is a “practical movement”, and certainly not an “academic movement”. Arishima consequently affirms that “materialistic socialism, guild socialism, Christian socialism, syndicalism, anarchic communism, and many other advocacies” are nothing but an “interpretation of a movement”. When he asserts: “With the claim that only the environment regulates everything that happens in human lives, materialists consequently become critics of extreme heroism. If among materialists there was someone who carried the ambitions of being a leader, this would be a faultless forgery”, “those posing as leaders, enlightened, agitators, supporters” who occur in *A Declaration* in the end also include intellectual youths with a tendency towards various ideological trends including also Marxists and anarchists.

In order to prove the validity of one's own ideology, “participation” in the labour movement and such is nothing but a misplaced priority. Like the answer to the Sakai Toshihiko's criticism, “participation in the labour movement” cannot be “just a sympathetic attitude of life”, etc. It inherently means that “standing at the standpoint” of the “labour class” is not possible without “*becoming a worker yourself*”. (*Henshin, Warera*, March 1922)

As Takayama Ryōji says, Arishima included in his declaration also the following decision: “I will correct my erred life (dispose of the farm and the fortunes) and become a worker of the pen.” (*Sengen hitotsu o chūshin toshite; Arishima Takeo zenshū*, Geppō 9, 1981).

4 *Knowledge as capital/system*

But, even if he becomes a “worker of the pen”, Arishima is determined: “As a proletarian artist I still do not intend to deliver works that would appeal to the proletariat”. Although he says: “I believe that from within the proletariat a new culture will suddenly rise to prosperity”. And although he wishes: “If I can, I would like to do it.” (*Hirotsu shi ni kotau, Tōkyō asahi shinbun*, January 1922). Why?

Probably in this point lies Arishima's deepest ethical sense for arts and literature. In *A Declaration* the part where he is explaining the reasons why he cannot speak to the proletariat is very concise. “I was born, raised and educated outside the fourth class. That is why I am a living being, unrelated to the fourth class.” Whatever “class one is born in”, whatever environment one is “raised” in, whatever “education one receives”, human consciousness and sensibility is regulated by the class. Arishima's fixation lies precisely in this point.

The next part is elaborated in the *Zasshin issoku* in the following manner.

Even if at the moment I throw away as many things as possible and put myself into the circumstances of a penniless proletarian, knowledge and thought are still inserted in me over a long period of time in a very advantageous environment. The outer appearance is perhaps indeed that of a penniless proletarian, but *inside* me there are hidden *extremely convenient weapons in the form of the means for everyday life*. Even if I want to lose them, I am by no means able to lose them. (Italics by the quoter.)

High education which one receives, that is, the content of the “thought and knowledge” acquired by the class privilege, is not the only representative of capitalist class interests in a form ideology. For example, if you, on the “outside appearance”, dispose of the production means and the capital (Arishima really intended to do that), you do not become a “penniless proletarian”. “Thought and knowledge” continue to function as a kind of “interior means of living” (production means).

The consequence of literary activity which acts as a medium for the dissemination of knowledge and thought was that in the progressively *commodified* capitalist journalism, knowledge and thought themselves become *capital*. It means that once you have knowledge stored in your brains (embodied), on the *inside* the existence like yours cannot become proletarian. It can be said

that Arishima acknowledges exactly the period of capitalism when even the “education” becomes an investment. Provided that the arts are “refined expressions” of people’s “inner lives”, it is impossible to “reach this status by means of bourgeois cultural education, reared over a long time by members of intelligentsia.” (*Sōhen, Shinchō*, May, 1922) Not just that. Probably “everybody has this impulse”, that is why the “impulse” itself transcends class distinctions, while great works of art “have the power to appeal to the people of any class”. “This fact is too obvious.” (*Hirotsu shi ni kotau*) What Arishima exposed as a problem is that “the arts can sprout *only in the case* when the refinement of these impulses *gets realized*.” (*Sōhen*)

But, “letters, plot, means of expression” used in order to “realize impulses” are all “invented by the people outside the fourth class,” so are criticisms and evaluations done with the help of “logic, thought, examination methods invented by people outside the fourth class.” Arishima presents “culture” as a *system* or perhaps the class nature of knowledge as a problem not from the starting point of mere ideological content, but from the level of the means of expression, techniques of expression and ways of reception.

New proletarian art will have to break with the institutionalized nature of the bourgeois culture present until then in all aspects, such as “plot” and “expression”, “logic” and “examination”. Because of that, Arishima notices avant-garde art movements, such as “expressionism”, “futurism” and “cubism”. They are movements which “in good extent are trying to detach themselves from conventional arts”, “*oppose all previous conventions and simply liberate themselves from all aspects.*”

Because of that Arishima discovers in “expressionist art” an “*individual revolt against all conventional models*”, and ranks it as “something which in an emerging class (with this word I designate the so-called fourth class) suggests an art which should sprout.” (This quotation is taken from *Geijutsu ni tsuite omou koto; Daikan*, January 1922). In comparison with expressionism, a so-called “proletarian literature” (*A Declaration*) is in Arishima’s eyes reflected only as an extremely incomplete thing.

However, Arishima’s criterion is very strict. “Expressionism” is nevertheless after all no more than an “*artificially made tree in the field with no fourth class.*” (*Geijutsu ni tsuite omou koto*) Thought as well as knowledge, leaders, in a similar manner also culture and arts, will be established as a part of a new “fourth class” only by those who “live as a worker, think as a worker, toil as a worker.” If social revolution conducted by the working class will lead to an overall liberation of all

humanity, probably the same will happen, the same must happen, with the literary and artistic revolution. Even more, as something most “refined”. It means that even “culture” and “knowledge” reared in the midst of bourgeois education and environment and which function as institutional frame of consciousness and sensibility are perceived as something which regulates self-alienation. In this lies the core of Arishima's ethic and logic.

5 Reverse logic

Fukumoto Kazuo probably accurately perceived Arishima's awareness of the issues. He puts Arishima's way of thinking in contrast to the logic of Kawakami Hajime and Yoshino Sakuzo. As a basis for the solution of the social problem they take “moral achievements of the general populace” and the “fundamental purpose of life” (Kawakami). They advocate the leadership of an *intellectual*, because the “standpoint is always correct” whereas “there is no reason to declare all establishing spaces good” (Yoshino). While quoting Arishima's opinion that “bourgeois society starts from *social service* when *in fact* it settles down in a space *for itself*, the proletariat starts from the space *for itself* when *in fact* it becomes a result of *social service*” (italics by Fukumoto; *Makiyama Masahiko e no tegami*, May, 1922), Fukumoto “hits the nail on the head” after having “confirmed” the working class's “historical mission” of realization of an overall liberation from “self-alienation” which is nothing but the content of the following statement that “proletarian class's *strong insistence on its own class interests becomes at the same time a sublation of class interests.*” (italics by Fukumoto) (*Ōshū ni okeru musansha kaikyū seitō sōshiki mondai no rekishiteki kōsatsu; Marukusushugi*, April 1925)

Under the capitalist system the capitalist class and the working class are both marked by “self-alienation”. Through gaining awareness of the circumstances of this alienation and through a thorough pursuit of its own class interests, the working class bears the “historical mission”, which is a “sublation of profits of all classes” i.e., the eradication of class society. “Owing to social/historical characteristics”, this class's “self-recognition” can be an “objective recognition of all society”, “this *class* should be a *subject* and at the same time an *object* of recognition, and no less than that.” (ibid.) On the basis of this new concept of “alienation”, Arishima's ethics becomes a clear logical system.

As Kurihara Yukio pointed out, in Fukumoto's logic “intelligentsia” “opened a path of restoration”. “After *A Declaration*, feelings of guilt and awareness of unwelcomed person regarding the *fourth class* which grasped the intelligentsia

and did not let it go crucially changed with arrival of Fukumotoism.” (*Puroretaira bungaku to sono jidai*, 1971) This is because Fukumoto insists that “outside force” (*Tōmen no ninmu; Marukusushugi*, July 1926) is necessary for the working class’s combat to triumph over “trade unionism” and to “develop” into a “political action of all the proletarian class.”

Arishima's logic centered around an intellectual is clearly overturned when Fukumoto insists that the “absolute conditions for a labour class to be able to develop toward a true proletarian class consciousness must be established by the acquisition of *new* elements – power – (power of a space where dialectic materialistic criticism, Marxist resistance are possible) – from the *outside* of this material production process – from the *outside* of economic struggles.” For the occasion of the compilation of a special book *Struggle of logic (Riron tōsō)* the quoted part was clearly rewritten (“*Revolutionary intelligentsia* – in fact awareness of all proletarian class intelligentsia, namely militant materialism, in fact all proletarian class political awareness.”) (Italics by the quoter.)

It can be said that logic which lives in the identity of an early Shōwa “intelligentsia” crystallized in Fukumotoism: the acquisition of a revolutionary nature of more than the proletarian class with a revolution of consciousness; the leadership of the class struggle in the form of an injection from the outside of militant materialism; bearing all that, a party – an organization as an overall subject. As for the fields of literature and arts, they got “connected in a straight line” with a nature of “political superiority” such as “Aono Suekichi's sense of purpose, Kurahara Korehito's Bolshevik theory of proletarian art movement”, Kobayashi Takiji's “schema” of “the most revolutionary *author* – party member”, Miyamoto Kenji's “proletarian literature” “linked to political responsibility of a party.” With this forms they acquired a “feeling of superior thought” which surmounts Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's “only a faint anxiety regarding my own future.” (Kurihara, as above).

But we will not overlook here the existence of yet one more reversal of the theory of “personality”. “The feeling of superior thought” is possible to obtain at the beginning by the identification of self with the organization (avant-garde party) bearing the historical mission of the working class. Organization as a group is personified as a thought, and by being a member of this organization, a turnover occurs, as if an individual personality is guaranteed by the whole group. But, when a party is halfway personally realized, the idea of an organization, which primarily is expected to be a process of an original movement of thorough and dialectically critical relations, dogmatizes as a single thought. Class “personality”

as a process of movement then rests and substantiates as an image of a member of an avant-garde party.

The vision presented by Arishima that “one class will become one personal existence” is not perceived as a practical movement mechanism, but as supported by a personal materialization of an organization, a party, and its idea of leadership. Of course, we will not forget that there was also Nakano Shigeharu's recognition of an “essence of a party as an expression of people's will.” (*Soshiki ni arawareta Rōgei no honshitsu*; *Kaizō*, August 1927) As Kamei Hideo correctly pointed out, Nakano understood “avant-garde (or a party)” as a “huge intensive speaker”. (*Geijutsu ni kansuru hashirigaki teki oboegaki* *kaisetsu*, 1971).

In order to do that, intensive *intellectual* has to deconstruct inner “models” and all existing “arrangements” between the voice of the people and perpetual dialectical relations. He has to go back to the level of “plot” and “means of expression” and face the “liberation” from all cultural paradigms of the past. At that time the dichotomy between intellectual and people (public) will probably lose its meaning.

But the sense of the era symbolized by Akutagawa's “faint anxiety” probably suggests the fate of the ideological discourse in the modern capitalist society, where final “liberation” is after all an illusion and where fallen out intentions are again brought back to the original *world*. It suggests a modern imperial system which represents politics and, simultaneously, also a culture appearing and disappearing in the background.