

HOW TO RECONCILE MORALITY AND DIVERSITY IN GLOBALIZATION AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY INTEGRATION

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Abstract. *Although the world has been shrinking due to rapid advancement in communication and transportation technologies, and the age of globalization and multidisciplinary integration has been clamorously announced, there is no agreement on unified morality throughout the world. We intended to provide a unified model for human morality. First, we identified three moral problems we are facing that evoke divided views on morality and pose serious conflicts with diversity. Second, we classified the previous representative thoughts on morality into two categories: the society-based and individual-based; then we pointed out limitations of the two thoughts. Third, we built a unified model of human morality, which appears to consistently explain the human reality. Fourth, we shed insight on the uniqueness of human morality in comparison with other animals. Fifth, we investigated the relationship of human morality and human language to reveal that human uniqueness resides in virtual acquaintance enabled by the human language. Lastly, we proposed how to reconcile human morality and diversity based on the mechanistic understanding of human morality.*

Keywords: *morality, diversity, language*

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite many efforts to elucidate the basic principle of human morality for many centuries, we human still do not have adequate answers; instead, we have various standpoints that are opposing to and incompatible with each other. On the other hand, because the recent rapid advancement of communication and transportation technologies has been bringing us closer to each other in various aspects, so called globalization and multidisciplinary integration are collecting attention. Globalization and multidisciplinary integrations are, however, on a shaky ground, since both activities call for us to cross borders and put our moral values to test, and if we do not have the common moral principle, crossing borders is extremely dangerous and risky. Now is the time to seek for the common moral principle of humankind.

2-1. IDENTIFICATION OF UNSOLVED MORAL QUESTIONS

To make the argument as simple and focused as possible, we restricted ourselves to treating homicide as a

representative example of moral breach, since most people agree with little controversy that homicide is the vilest deed to do. Based on the observation of current chaotic moral status in the world, we identified three questions that have no clear solutions so far. The first question is: “Who decides that homicide is evil and why?” We could divide the answers roughly into two categories: 1) the authority in the society decides so to protect the social integrity; 2) each individual decides so to protect his/her own life. The second question is: “Why is homicide condoned by the society in war and capital punishment?” This question collides head-on with the first one. The third question is: “Is there no common principle of morality for the whole humankind?” If we cannot find adequate and reconciling answers to the first and second questions, the answer to the third will be negative.

2-2. STUDY OF THE PREVIOUS REPRESENTATIVE MORAL THOUGHTS

By extracting the essence of the message from the representative moral thoughts in the past, we categorized the answers for the above three questions into two contrasting basic attitudes toward morality. The first group thinks that there is ideal morality based on the social tradition including religions. We name this group the society-based thinking. The second group thinks that each individual defines his/her own morality, which cannot be directly compared with those of others. We name this group the individual-based thinking. The first thinking provides us with stable and rigid frame for morality; however, due to its resolute but exclusive nature, when two societies with different views on “ideal morality” collide, there is no restraining intolerance and violence, putting diversity in danger. In contrast, the second thinking tends to be more tolerant toward different views; however, due to its flexible but indecisive nature, it is not able to propose concrete moral rules, being unable to reconcile diversity with morality.

2-3. UNIFIED MODEL OF HUMAN MORALITY

Why there is such a big discrepancy between the society-based thinking and the individual-based thinking? We hypothesized that both ways of thinking do reflect the essence of human morality, but only partially, due to incomplete assessment. First, we reviewed the moral rules of the major religions, attempting to abstract common rules. We succeeded in extracting three common moral

rules: "Do not kill others; Do not steal from others; Do not deceive others." In short, these rules tell us: "Do not harm others." However, these rules have not been observed in war or capital punishment, creating inconsistency. To resolve this contradiction, we rethought the meaning of "others" to find out that we human usually mean by "others" not "biological human beings", but "other fellow human beings" almost automatically and unconsciously. If we supplement with "fellow" the above common rules, they become such rules that have been well observed and many efforts have been made to enforce throughout human history.

Keeping this in mind, we investigated the Ten Commandments as a representative moral code. We noticed that the first 4 rules are specific to certain societies; on the other hand, the remaining 6 rules are common to all societies by and large. These findings suggest that human moral rules intrinsically contain two distinct aspects, and that the two opposing views exaggerate only one aspect, ignoring or belittling the other.

Next, we investigated whether there is a basic principle that can unify the specific and common aspects of human morality to propose that it can be summarized into an imperative: "Be fellowish." This basic principle intrinsically contains two aspects: 1) "Do not harm other fellow human beings"; 2) "Think and behave in a manner similar to other fellow human beings." The content of the first rule is invariable and common to all societies; without this rule, no society can be formed or maintained. Thus, we call it the absolute rule. On the other hand, the content of the second rule is variable and specific to a certain society, depending on geometry and climate. Thus we call it the relative rule.

2-4. UNIQUENESS OF HUMAN MORALITY

To clarify the uniqueness of human morality, we compared human morality with that of other animals. Many researchers have tried to find unique content of human morality in vain. We hypothesized that it is not the content, but the coverage that differentiates human morality from that of other animals. The observation of gigantic society unique to human kind including state, religion, and ethnos revealed that these uniquely human societies contain those genetically remote individuals that we have never met and will never meet. This type of acquaintance is unique to humankind, not observed in other animals, providing support for our hypothesis.

2-5. RELATIONSHIP OF HUMAN MORALITY AND HUMAN LANGUAGE

Why are we able to form a society with those individuals that we have never met and will never meet? We hypothesized that we human have a surrogate for genetic closeness or direct acquaintance, a special sort of acquaintance that other animals cannot form or handle. We call it virtual acquaintance, which connects us with genetically remote individuals beyond time and space. This virtual acquaintance is enabled by human culture, which provide us with a specific world view and standards of thought and behaviour. Why can human culture go

beyond time and space? The human language can transmit information beyond time and space, which is not possible through the communication methods of other animals. These characteristics of the human language enable virtual acquaintance.

3. CONCLUSION AND PROPOSAL FOR THE FUTURE

In conclusion, we have identified the unified principle of human morality: "Be fellowish," which intrinsically contains two distinct aspects: the common, absolute moral rule and the specific, relative rule. When we look into key issues on morality in globalization, xenophobia and ethnocentrism is the most serious. The typical assertion of xenophobia is: "Our culture and language is unique and superior to others," regarding being different from their standards as being inferior and evil. This can be interpreted as coercion of the specific, relative moral rule. To conquer xenophobia and ethnocentrism, it is essential to recognize the two distinct elements of human morality (the common, absolute rule vs. the specific, relative rule); if we observe the first rule, we can form a society with diversity. At the same time, we should never coerce the second rule. Development of the method to implement these solutions is now underway.

4. REFERENCES

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