

APPLICATION OF *DÉ-COINCIDENCE* AND ITS EXPANSION TO NORTHEAST ASIAN POLITICAL SOCIETY♦

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Abstract: This study aims to restrain possible attempts to force ideological coincidence into Northeast Asia, by comprehending François Jullien’s concept of ‘de-coincidence’ and the meaning of interface that it implies. The interface for a common society can operate only in a dynamic relationship maintaining a mutual *diverge* (*écart*). The current ideologies of Northeast Asia are overdetermined by various cultural changes and assimilation processes through the modernization. However, the creation of an interspace for communication in Northeast Asia cannot be based on the homogenization of the multilayered ideologies. The dominant orientation towards coincidence in Northeast Asia hinders the dynamics of dialogue by relying on force. This study argues that the concept of de-coincidence opens up other possibilities in politics and is an important element avoiding the devastating indictments of conformed ideas of coincidence. As a result, this paper elucidates the

♦ This work was supported by the Seoul Theological University Research Fund of 2023.

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theoretical foundation for interface of coexistence ethics, clearly beneficial to Northeast Asian political societies. Expanding further the de-coincidence methodology, this approach will contribute to dismantling the illusion of so-called 'universal coincidence'.

Keywords: Co-existence Ethics, Northeast Asia, Political Society, Interface, De-coincidence, Coincidence, Divide, François Jullien, De-ideology, Processual Thinking, Modernity.

1. Introduction

With the purpose of spreading the concept of *dé-coïncidence* to the social movement, François Jullien launched Association Dé-coïncidences in December 2020. He asserts de-coincidence as a new form of strategic thinking that dismantles the complacency and stereotypes of established ideas.¹

The present work examines whether de-coincidence is valid as a methodology to escape from ideologies, the implications this has for Northeast Asian political society, and what kind of coexistence ethics it could discuss. In this paper, we try to present a new ethical horizon for the circumstances of ideological debate in Northeast Asia by discussing the social and political meaning of de-coincidence at the level where what has not been thought in the meantime begins to be thought.

The term 'de-coincidence' means 'divergence from coincidence.' Specifically, the meaning of 'out of (*dé*)' is added to the French word '*coïncidence*'. This emphasizes the importance of strategic deviation from the socially established systems of thought. In other words, de-coincidence is a sort of adventure and exploration in which one could experience a kind of thinking cracks in its own thought while being confronted with a particular thought from the "outside (*dehors*)."² The substance of de-coincidence is to keep the two terms divided, facing each other, and to maintain their distance. Rather than relying on a

¹ The concept of de-coincidence has been expansively interpreted as the meaning of participation and practice in the political level. François Jullien, *Politique de la décoïncidence*, Paris: L'Herne, 2020; For a detailed discussion on the concept of De-coincidence see the works of François Jullien mentioned in the Reference section.

² François J, *There is no Such Thing as Cultural Identity*, Paris, 2016, 92-93.

relationship of conformity, when social communities try to discover a “common,” which prompts changes and intensity to each other, those societies become more dynamic and stimulate themselves to reconsider their political situation more deeply.³

The adventure of de-coincidence—in which we encounter others and step outside our zone of adequation—makes us doubt the established truth in our societies, not only that concerning the systems of meaning at a personal level but also that concerning the socio-political notions of ideologized coincidence. A political society that does not turn its eyes on the outside and does not have de-coincidence is a dead world wherein no changes take place. Creating a crack in our own system and discovering an interspace with the outside allow for dynamic coexistence, by which the closedness of a society can be dismantled.

This study examines the closed notions of coincidence and asks how we can escape from the meaning systems of normative coincidence. Specifically, it argues for the expansive interpretation of de-coincidence by discussing whether de-coincidence can be applied to the socio-political circumstances of Northeast Asia. The interface for coexistence of Northeast Asian political societies is not a coincidence that seeks mutual conformity. Rather, by maintaining their mutual distances, the meaning systems in social and political contexts can be activated into dynamic relationships that result in the creation of their own internal changes. In this way, the interface of ‘common’ becomes a condition for shunning the notion of coincidence that confines socio-political diversities within a specific ideology. Therefore, applying the concept of de-coincidence to Northeast Asian societies could contribute to building a new ethical basis for co-existence through the concept of mutually de-ideological communities.

2. De-coincidence Resisting the Social Coincidence Ideology

De-coincidence refers to “the unsealing that undoes from within any established—and therefore fixed—order, and thus brings to light unimagined resources fortuitously.”⁴ In this context, order refers to what is typically agreed upon; namely, what is determined with adequation and adaptability in the areas of life, physics, language,

³ Jullien, *There is no Such Thing as Cultural Identity*, 75-76.

⁴ Jullien, *De-Coincidence: Where Art and Existence Come From*, 10.

institutions, art, history, philosophy, religion, politics, culture, etc.

De-coincidence occurs through detaching (de-solidarizing) from what is defined as adequate. The efficacy of de-coincidence lies in facing—at a distance—the adequation of social orders in which each individual has settled, and thereby, in escaping from the perspective of self-identity. In other words, the concept of de-coincidence implies the sense of resistance that a human being as the subject should dismantle the uniformization systems that have no changes and cause some kind of dissidence to themselves by deviating from established norms and standardized notions. Breaking out of familiar frameworks is an adventure wherein, by being outside of oneself and keeping one's distance from daily lives, habits, and accustomed thinking systems, one willingly embraces certain distraction and separation from the existing world of adequation.

Here we can find some important implications. First, the praxis of de-coincidence assumes that there is an outside of the existing system fixed in the adequation and adaptability. The outside that activates de-coincidence is the opposite one to “the expected, the foreseeable, the settled,” and it refers to the meaning systems “not in impact relation” to the existing preconceptions or coincidences.⁵ Alternatively, it indicates any other part of thought (heterotopia) that can cause cracks in the social frameworks (social systems, norms, customs, etc.) of a particular civilization.⁶

Second, if we do not have such awareness on the outside, it is certain that we would be stuck into our own world, where there is not any questioning. A society locked up in solid self-identity and blocked off from the outside defines disengagement with, resistance against, and changes in the existing system as being unnecessary. This is because coincidence does not allow for any cracks of disturbance. When a certain idea coincides like a geometric congruence, that becomes an ideology. There is no tension amid which something new can be sought out. In that sense, coincidence is a death. It is a kind of state where “there is nothing exceeded, nothing deficient, nothing to be desired, and therefore, nothing happens.”⁷

Third, de-coincidence is based on the fact that coincidence cannot

⁵ Jullien, *There is no Such Thing as Cultural Identity*, 33.

⁶ For a detailed discussion on the *heterotopia* see Section 4 of this paper.

⁷ Jullien, *De-coincidence: Where Art and Existence Come From*, 29.

be continuous. When we encounter others, cracks begin to appear in the world of coincidence. When the face-to-face relationship is activated by the deviation from our own coincidence, de-coincidence actively develops.

Based on how actively tensions and changes are shared in their own ways in face-to-face relationships with the outside world, or how much the both sides are mutually understood and de-coincided within or between the two, the existing systems begin to explore new possibilities, respectively.

De-coincidence provides the following important suggestion: If “the possibility of questioning and improving” its own frame through the external world is “opened up in the middle of one world,” new changes and innovation occur contradictorily through “existential rejection of what is confined in the world,” which lets de-coincidence develop into ethical realization.⁸

3. Coincidence, *Écart* and Interspace

The meaning of de-coincidence becomes more obvious with critical thinking about the notions of severance and coincidence. The possibility that something new can appear arises from starting to voluntarily stay away from the world of adaptability and adequation, and to realize a certain discrepancy not from completely severing oneself from and excluding the existing world. At the end of such severance, there is only either a return to a state of being trapped in social adequation, or complacency about saturated satisfaction where any possibility of change cannot be explored.

The realization of de-coincidence consists in consciously embarking on the adventure of discrepancy away from the world to which one is adapted. The meaning of coincidence is a state where there is no deviation at all, as if the lines and faces of one triangle perfectly correspond with those of another triangle, a state where evidence fortunately measures up to certain events or phenomena, and a state where mind and matter are completely united as one.

The representative case of de-coincidence can be seen in the opening of a divide between the Western thinking and the Chinese thinking.⁹ The fissures caused by the encounter between these two

⁸ Jullien, *Living by Existing: A New Ethics*, 204, 275.

⁹ Jullien, “From Greece to China: Back and Forth,” 1276-1277.

traditions of thought have considerable significance in that they expose the prejudices of both sides and create unfamiliarity.

While the logos is 'definition,' *horismos*, all of the Greeks tell us, it carves out the limits between genus and characteristics that allow us to recognize the Being in it, transition is par excellence that which holds us back from being able to say how far any one characteristic or quality extends, where the other begins.¹⁰

In this way, a face-to-face between disparate ways of thinking arouses feelings of unfamiliarity and disturbance among each other. It exhibits the conflicts that occur in the existing ways of thinking or stereotypes that have been considered adequate in a particular social or cultural environment, in a familiar way of life, in the empirical beliefs that one is convinced to know absolutely, or in a sense of self-sufficient coincidence or satisfaction. This face-to-face is what Julien calls *ÉCART*.

Écart refers to the divide, division, distance, difference, state of being out of a joint, fissure, etc. in English. P. Rodriguez, who translated *Dé-coïncidence* into English, emphasized the deconstruction of general thoughts pervaded in a society by translating *écart* as "the opening of a divide."¹¹

As the different standards of orders face each other, *écart* "discloses in the open spaces between both sides."¹² They turn into a tense relationship of exploring and being explored by each other. This not only allows each side to discover and explore itself in the other, but each side can also survey and reflect on its limitations by the other. The systems bound to the existing adaptability and adequation must constantly be evaluated by others in relation to what is mutually absent. In this way, the interspace that one is involved in the other in *écart* is maintained.

Thus, the interspace between two terms that face the outside of themselves creates new possibilities of dismantling the deep-rooted prejudices or the existing orders. By being awakened from the implicit

¹⁰ Jullien, *The Silent Transformations*, 42; François Jullien, *The Silent Transformations*, trans. Michael Richardson and Krzysztof Fijalkowski, London, New York, Calcutta: Seagull Books, 2011, 31.

¹¹ François Jullien, *De-coïncidence: Where Art and Existence Come From*, 45.

¹² Jullien, *There is no Such Thing as Cultural Identity*, 39.

subordination to a specific world and de-coinciding it, it is possible to have doubts about the system that are bound to the existing adaptability and the certain adequation for good deeds. The adventure of de-coincidence takes place by maintaining a distance with our own position and a society without *écart* being activated is a ruptured one where there is not any interface with the outside world.

4. Correlation between Language-Thought and Politics

When *écart* refers to a state in which cracks are formed in confrontational relationships, i.e., a state of deviation from what is coincided, the concept of the outside is an inevitable element that fosters face-to-face relationships between different meaning systems. For instance, although Western thought and Chinese thought both have their own different paradigms and traditions of thinking, they form—in a face-to-face relationship— ‘a certain between’ or distance through which they could re-examine their own values. The divide of this in-between takes on the exteriority through what is mutually absent; namely, through language-thought paradigm such as philosophy, politics, etc.¹³

The condition wherein China is outside of the influence of the syntax and etymology of Indo-European languages, which are so essential to Western thought, makes the Western feel unfamiliar with their own tradition of Indo-European languages. The face-to-face encounters between Indo-European and Chinese cause the two social and cultural orders to deviate from themselves, to reflect on their habitual line of reasoning and prejudice¹⁴, and to de-coincide and stand the outside (*ex-istere*) of themselves.

The face-to-face encounters between the two cultural resources help explore the divergences of language-thought that activate between them.

From a divergence (*écart*) of language unfolds a completely different way of being able to conceive of life and of articulating its destiny. All

¹³ François Jullien, “A Philosophical Use of China,” 1245-1246.

¹⁴ François Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1997. This book is one of Jullien's major works, and it addresses the concepts of efficacy related to military strategy, diplomacy, and politics. Janet Lloyd, the English translator of this book, has interpreted “*le pli*” as a meaning of “habitual line of reasoning.” François Jullien, *A Treatise on Efficacy*, trans. Janet Lloyd, 1.

philosophy, no matter how radical its questioning, comes only afterwards, and it is enfolded in the idiom which it can only reflect.¹⁵

If those divergences are discovered and promoted between other language-thoughts, the context in language will be related to that of politics which encompasses the ethics of life. If we cannot deny that politics has public nature, it is inseparable from the Greek *logos*, which means language, discourse, and neutrality of truth. To ensure that politics do not become an exclusive property of particular private subject(s), a political community must be a dialogue (truth) community that regards *logos* as a thing transcending individual perspectives and interests and as an autonomous instance. What needs to be contemplated in the search for truth or in the operation of a political community is not a person as a private element, but a *logos* as a concept of regulation.

Moreover, the inherent interrelationship between languages and politics continues to make possible the double reflection. On the one hand, we need to be alert to the fact that Western logocentrism has been ideologized in the name of cultural universalism since the age of imperialism by regarding *logos* as an ontological universal that has already been realized. After all, what is drawn from the face-to-face encounters with Chinese language-thought is that Western language-thought is not the universal that has already been realized. Universal, derived from a compound word of Latin 'Uni' and 'versus,' is—as phenomenologists say—a horizon, which indicates the process of being towards one. In that horizons are infinitely open, they are not a universal realization.¹⁶ When we overlook the processual contexts and assume that we have already reached the one, the universal is deteriorated and distorted into uniformity.

On the other hand, in Chinese language-thought, it is sought out as wise and harmonious to avoid the definition of meanings in the manner of *logos* culture and conflicts in dialogue. This sense of the uselessness of dialogue reveals the weak point in that it eliminates “all possibilities of resistance” not just in people’s daily lives but in the

¹⁵ Jullien, “A Philosophical Use of China”, 1245-1246.

¹⁶ For more information on the phenomenological concept of the horizon see Jean Ladrière, *Vie Sociale et destinée*, Gembloux: Duculot, 1973, 38-65.

political environments specifically.¹⁷ Due to the tendency of pursuing naturalness, Chinese language-thought is fundamentally apolitical. Of course, it is true that Chinese language-thought has continuously been concerned with power, but it is also true that it has failed to foster a certain political environment that institutionalizes the policies of conflict resolutions. This then leads to the present situations in China where democracy is still far-off.

When a state of tension continues to exist between these two language-thoughts, each language-thought confronts the threat of uniformization, such as the mainstreaming of particular ideologies, China- or Western-centric globalization, or the centralization of hegemony, which raises the questions on its own closedness and seeks new possibilities and tense vitality with the concept of de-coincidence. This concept helps prevent political ideologies from being fixed and provides new interfaces that bring about changes in the existing social orders by activating the interface between relationships.

Meanwhile, the double questions as to language-thought and politics in Northeast Asia cannot be simply reduced to the relationships between the West and China. Instead, it requires further considerations of the complicated situation in Northeast Asia.

5. Ideological Hybridity in Contemporary Northeast Asian Societies

Compared to 200 years ago, Northeast Asian societies are now more pluralistic. With the increasing occurrence of active encounters between the East and the West and subsequent situations of complexity and disturbance such as ritual controversy and ideological conflicts, most of Northeast Asia (China, Japan, the Korean Peninsula, etc.)¹⁸ has accepted Western modernity and become considerably Westernized. More precisely, Northeast Asian societies today exhibit clear characteristics of a pluralistic form in which the traditional Eastern culture prior to accepting Western modernity and the Western culture are intertwined together. Confucianism, which has a long tradition in Northeast Asia, Christianity, which played a mediating

¹⁷ François Jullien, *Un sage est sans idée*, 224.

¹⁸ The geopolitical environments of Northeast Asia include Russia, which borders the Korean Peninsula, and the United States, which is related to a wide range of the Pacific Ocean.

role in the East-West encounters, and liberalism and capitalism, which were the mainstream ideologies of the time of imperialism, along with nationalism and communism, which were the reactionary thoughts against the right formers, are all intertwined together there.

If we fail to grasp the historicity and internal cracks of various ideas and thoughts that create the hybridity in Northeast Asian societies, we would be at risk of comprehending each idea as simply what is ideological. For example, since Chinese thought, including Confucianism and Taoism, puts great emphasis on the maintenance of harmony and its restoration, political dimensions institutionalizing the policies of conflict resolutions – that is, institutional devices that prevent individuals from falling to the bottom of society – have been absent. Whereas in the modern history of Western politics, it has been possible to devise and propose various systems different from the existing values or political orders, in China, what was considered to be most important was stabilizing the existing social systems.

China pursued the political conception that the monarch's morality spreads to the whole society at large and gives them good leverage, but it did not set up relationships between individuals and a society based on the very perspective of politics itself. In other words, while there was a concept of governance through morality, there was no political dimension that had its own essential attributes. Paradoxically, through this process, modern Chinese communism seems to continue and inherit its traditional thinking based on processual thinking and harmony, even if the concept of communism itself comes from Western ideology.

Meanwhile, liberalism, which is the mainstream concept of the imperial age, appears to be a product of modern times, but is actually a long-standing ideology of Western thought. Liberal concepts such as the self-regulated market or the 'invisible hand' of capitalism seem, at first glance, to be a natural fit for the human nature for exchange, but they are always based on some kind of models, and therefore fundamentally artificial. Maurizio Lazzarato explains the liberal model as follows: "The origin of values is based on the individual's willingness to exchange and produce, and those values are determined, without anyone wanting or designing it, by the actions of the invisible hands which control them."¹⁹ Keeping in mind Leibniz's

¹⁹ Maurizio Lazzarato, *Puissances de l'invention*, 10.

theory of preestablished harmony, Lazzarato also somewhat emphasizes that “the theory of the market economy is like a theodicy without God.”²⁰ This liberalism is based on models such as a series of theorization works refined through classical political economy and the balance of power theory, *haute finance* from the early 19th century, the gold standard, etc.

Moreover, the period when liberalism was established was historically linked to imperialism. Liberalism, which is one of the strategies used by the Western powers in the imperial age, actually supported the period of “The Hundred Years' Peace” until the gold standard’s falling to the extreme following the outbreak of World War I, but it eventually led to colonial wars and imperialism outward.²¹ Before and after the establishment of liberalism, the West, with the victory of the Opium War (1840-2), concluded the treaty of Nanking, which resulted in the opening of China’s ports. That was the beginning of Western modernity’s thorough entrance into Northeast Asia.

Looking at nationalism also reveals some cracks in its historical origin. As Western imperialism encroached on Northeast Asian culture in the form of cultural universalism, Northeast Asian intellectuals countered Westernization and defined their own culture anew as if, in their indigenous culture, there were mysteries, essences, and things that were impossible for strangers to access. Korea's national spirit, Korean soul, China’s Sinocentrism, cultural aboriginality or nativism, the Japanese great soul, and even a return to “National studies” that try to separate themselves from Oriental studies, which are judged to be too western and to lack “cultural innateness,” are all perspectives that implicitly acknowledge the reality of the universalism of the West.²² Thus, Nationalism is not an ideology with substance, but rather an ideology that involves reactions against the West and political-economic circumstances.

Therefore, Northeast Asian societies would rather open up new possibilities through the concept of de-coincidence by acknowledging

²⁰ Lazzarato, *Puissances de l'invention*, 11.

²¹ For a detailed discussion on the relationships between the gold standard, liberalism, and imperialism see Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 3-21.

²² Jullien, *On the Universal*, 256.

their historicity and cracks than fixating and adhering to a specific idea as an ideology.

6. Plurality of Social Culture and Multiplicity of the Concept De-coincidence

Various ideologies that determine how a society should be run are currently tangled up in Northeast Asia. These circumstances make us reconsider the meaning of confrontation between ideologies and de-coincidence. It is difficult for differences in so-called identity such as socialism, liberalism, nationalism, and globalism to become real resources for change. A difference is an exclusive and closed concept that just confines each ideology to its essence. A difference “isolates and essentializes [each] by pairing” with what is called an identity, like conservatism, progressivism, relativism, or universalism.²³ Instead, de-coincidence is a concept that tears down the self-essentialization of difference.

The language-thought systems in cultures typically describe a social whole or a social environment. It is not easy for individuals accustomed to particular systems of language-thought like nationalism, liberalism, and communism to avoid the functional and normative influences of those systems that provide a concrete framework for their existential life. Northeast Asian societies have also been actualized in the complex historical process of traditional culture, modernization, and Westernization, and these intricate changes continue today through the institutional establishments.

Such historicity makes us contemplate the plurality of cultures that makes up a social environment. Social cultures are developed through focalization in a specific region and tend to homogenize their own domains. This way of development is typically realized by excluding or suppressing other areas in cultures; and thereby, the homogeneity of a social culture always implies the possibility of the appearance of heterogeneity.

From the perspective of the application of de-coincidence, various ideologies in Northeast Asia have also been developed through double movements of homogenization and heterogenization. For instance, the acceptance of Western culture in Northeast Asia is not only achieved by social-political influences like imperialism, but it can

²³ Jullien, *There is no Such Thing as Cultural Identity*, 72.

also be understood that modelization (ontological thinking) suppressed by processual thinking was diffused through encounters with the West.

Likewise, when the expansive logic of de-coincidence is applied to the politics of Asia, productive changes in the understanding of this area's political situation through *écart* (the divide) are achieved by encountering language-thought terms of various systems recognized as the outside. That is, the ideological hybridity of Northeast Asia, which is entangled in the relevant historical process, includes the possibility of the random divides in face-to-face relationships.

Given that Northeast Asian societies have complex historical determinacy, the application of de-coincidence should be pluralistic. In the principle of de-coincidence, any outside that causes minimum divergence in the existing thought could be considered a pluralistic element that spans the opposite double movement of heterogenization and homogenization. As a result of this process, the face-to-face relationship between two systems through *écart* opens up the possibility of face-to-face encounters between other systems as a resource, as a subject for development and discovery.

This suggests that each social system needs to actively explore various possibilities of face-to-face encounters with so-called outer terms of itself, which can lead to divergence from the existing framework. In such an attempt, the praxis of de-coincidence could move forwards to productivity, thus making one breaking the wall of its own system. De-coincidence induces an extension of the interpretations of concepts in terms of politics, which can cause certain fissures in the ontological thinking in the Western tradition, in the processual thinking in the Chinese tradition, and even in various ideologies of modern Northeast Asia.

7. Politics Opening the New Possibilities

To this point, the present paper has examined the necessity of de-ideology in various lights, based on the concept of de-coincidence. This thesis makes the following suggestions: Considering the historicity of Northeast Asia, in which complicated ideologies are intertwined, it is no surprise that the concept of de-coincidence is extended and applied to Northeast Asian societies in multiple ways. Of course, though such a claim could be implied in Jullien's concept of de-coincidence, it is not yet specifically addressed in his writings. This

paper presents the possibility of expansion and the applicability of the concept of de-coincidence to Northeast Asian societies as follows:

It is well known that Northeast Asia has experienced sweeping East-West geopolitical encounters since the 17th century, followed by the imperialism age, the penetration of Western power into Eastern countries, and the cold war intensified with the Korean War. Currently, various political ideological systems such as capitalism, communism, and nationalism coexist in Northeast Asia under the spread of (neo)liberal globalization. In the depths of these modern ideologies, although perhaps not on the surface, their relationships with traditional thoughts such as Confucianism and Buddhism have always existed, and there have also been certain situational ideologies as various reactions, conflicts, and concerns on hegemony, thus reflecting various political realities in history.

For example, the aspects of communist ideology in China and Korea during the age of imperialism are incomparably different from those of communism today. In China, the facets of Mao Zedong's Communist camp and those of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist camp underwent significant changes in a short period of time, to the extent that the ideologies of the two ended up being in a hybrid. In particular, in South Korea and North Korea, after the Korean War, general discussions on ideology easily turned into ideological controversies to extremes. Nonetheless, while the political reality in South Korea obviously adopts the mainstream ideologies of liberalism and capitalism, it also accepts the ideas of progressive movements that have secured their influences in the depths of the society.

In this way, face-to-face encounters between ideologies are promoting in-between relations creating hybrid ideologies.²⁴ Accordingly, Northeast Asian countries are now experiencing a great deal of conflicts and dynamicity in political reality. In other words, along with the specific historical circumstances of each country in

²⁴ This hybridity now seems difficult to define as an 'ideology' any more. For example, in Korea, many leaders that previously followed progressive ideologies are now losing their respects from supporters, by showing rather conservative dispositions, and the progressives are faced with taking on the task of pursuing new visions beyond ideology.

Northeast Asia, various ideologies and realities are intricately developing under mutual influences.

Such a multi-layered circumstances in Northeast Asia cannot be unified into a single ideology like globalization. In the current situation in which the United States and China have already formed an evident polarity over decades, integrating Northeast Asian societies into globalization—by regarding the political reality of China's communism and the situation in North Korea as just a negativity to a unified world—hinders the dynamicity of the interface and the effectiveness of dialogue. It also poses the risk of transforming ideological differences into the hierarchy of power.

The dominant orientation towards coincidence of Northeast Asian societies, which relies on power, interrupts the dynamics of their interconnection. In fact, at present, many countries in Northeast Asia, instead of trying to take the historical interactions between various ideologies into deep consideration, show a tendency to simply judge ideologies by some conceptualization that is easy to define and pursuing their own interests, respectively. Obviously, this tendency is causing a reduction in their mutual understandings, but increased geopolitical tensions.

Based on the dynamics of dialogue, the concept of de-coincidence can reveal productive fissures in Northeast Asia. The Northeast Asian political environments should uncover new and different possibilities through the dynamics of interface and de-ideology of common. The ethical aspects of extended interpretation of de-coincidence are intended to shatter the coincidence of various ideologies, and to open up further possibilities for Northeast Asian politics so that they can escape from the devastating indictment of the notions of consensus that have been conformed and adapted.

After all, to open new possibilities in Northeast Asian political societies, dialogue between ideologies (i.e., de-ideologization) needs to be reactivated. Ethical coexistence in Northeast Asia is neither stabilized through ideological juxtaposition nor integrated through selective synthesis, but rather constructed in dynamic networks through de-coincidence.

8. Conclusion: De-coincidence Networks' Expansion

The complex historical determinacy of Northeast Asian society foreshadows the pluralistic expansion of de-coincidence. The situational historicity of ideology penetrates into the state, the individual, and anonymous others. It forms the framework of language-thought and can be fixed as generalizations of adaptability and adequation through the agreed upon and predicted normativity of institutions. At this point, the political expansion of de-coincidence is ethically required. The activation of de-coincidence that promotes divergence is the very ethical strategy that resists socio-historical determinacy.

De-coincidence helps thoughts and lives be alert and active against the uniformization of conventions or ideologies. The praxis of de-coincidence de-identifies common lives with others, that is, the political lives, so that they would not sink into their fixedness. This activates questioning and dialogue amid internal tensions that help rethink the existing community.

While maintaining the divide (*écart*) between various ideologies, reprocessing the existing systems and concepts and reconsidering one's own self represent the operation of de-ideologization and the beginning of dialogue. In particular, dialogue contributes to the ethics of coexistence in Northeast Asia as it does not try to fix mutual differences through the establishment of identity.²⁵ Since it is not a conversational approach that finds similarities and fuses them together, dialogue instead secures common interface for communication. That is, to have a productive "dialogue, we have to keep our situations unclosed, put them in tension and set them into face-to-face relationships."²⁶

²⁵ For a study highlighting the differences between civilizations see Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, 2011; For a study emphasizing the resemblance and harmony between civilizations see Karl-Otto Apel, "The Question of an Ultimate Foundation of Reason," 1981 and Kuang-ming Wu, *On the Logic of Togetherness*, 1998.

²⁶ Jullien, *On the Universal*, 247.

The way of dialogue that activates de-ideologization is gradual but effective. The dialogue that maintains mutual distances does not stop the divide according to power relations like the politics of coincidence or that of ideology, but rather increases the divide between the established and adapted systems and explores new possibilities. In this process, the subjects, outside the social systems that have been founded on identity, can recover their freedom of exploration and discretion and thus reconsider the meanings of their lives.

Therefore, Northeast Asian societies can develop dialogical communities by discovering *écart* between different ideologies. The creation of interspace for communication in Northeast Asia cannot be based on the homogeneity of each ideology that is multilayered and intertwined. In Northeast Asia, it is impossible to comprehend the historicity of the East-West encounters separately from each other; that is, it is impossible to understand by splitting the relationships between the East and the West, as well as the relationships between Northeast Asian countries. Even an ideology that is determined as the same contains diverse points of discrepancy that can never coincide and be unified.

De-coincidence, as it leaves open the possibility of uncertainty and explores common interfaces, is developed in the plural. By discovering fissures and interfaces between different viewpoints or tendencies in various meaning systems of East Asian ideologies, and by freely traversing the paths between those widened interfaces created by each different language-thought, de-coincidence always opens up new possibilities. Therefore, the dynamic of de-coincidence can be expanded politically in that it requests common intelligence and common life through dialogue.

Consequently, active common intelligence that develops a wide diversity of the divide, or dialogue that improves community resources by our own choices with others, is a political movement. In this respect, what Northeast Asian societies require is the dynamic ethics of co-existence through the expansion of de-coincidence networks.

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