

From the Logic of Choice to the Logic of Care: Exploring the implication of care of subjectivity

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Abstract

Questions about how people should be cared for and what good care should entail are increasingly discussed. Although caring is not a ‘new’ phenomenon, human sciences have not shown much interest in this topic so far. As the consultant of Research Center for Chinese Cultural Subjectivity in Taiwan, Prof. Lee Wei-Lun proposes the philosophy of care. A series of workshops are proceeding as planned till now. As a participant, I will try to explore the implication of care of subjectivity in order to contribute to the project.

Modern Western thinking highly praises the autonomy and alienated subjectivity which is viewed as the ideal theory of subjectivity. However, the emphasis on individual free choice is discrepant from our living experience, especially from care in practice. The idea that every individual has active ability to make his own decision may actually form a stress to some degree for patients or trauma sufferers. In the meanwhile, the sense of powerlessness will discourage caregivers because the logic of choice seems not to result in “active” patients as it ought to be. In the monograph *The Logic of Care: Active Patients and the Limits of Choice*, Annemarie Mol provides a new perspective on care and helps to rethink current developments in health care. Unlike the above-mentioned logic of choice, she proposes the logic of care. The logic of care concerns the patient’s living life in context and existential situations and tries to understand how the patient’s decision to be made and how the practical intentionality to act. This approach differs from the active and antecedently individuated self which the logic of choice has upheld consistently. Advocating the logic of care, how do we think the care of subjectivity? How to disclose the relationship or intersubjectivity between care-receivers and caregivers, I would put the discussion on care of subjectivity itself rather than health care or types of trauma experiences.

By the help of Husserl’s genetic phenomenology, I would explore the following questions: Is every decision determined by a logical reasoning and an axiological evaluation? What do we commonly mean with practical intentionality and how does it affect a decision-making process? The idea of intentionality has been usually linked up to the activity of giving meaning about what one wants to do. I can intend something to acquire information on it and then deed. However, I retain that the practical acts conveying their own kind of intentionality occasionally were covered up by theoretical acts even in these early stages of the intending.