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The Significance of Trust for Ethics Critical and Applied: A Critical Account of Watsuji's Metaethics

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The Significance of Trust for Ethics Critical and Applied:
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ABSTRACT

Watsuji Tetsuro's philosophy in the early 20th Century presented a view of ethics that was markedly different from the more common theories of the Western philosophical tradition. He viewed ethics as a natural outgrowth of our essential nature as human beings. By investigating what it means to be human, Watsuji argued, one could develop a stronger understanding of our reasons and methods for being ethical. One of his ideas involved trust's importance and inevitability in our ethical palette. Developed by Watsuji, this connection between trust and our nature as human beings was interesting.

It is my claim that how we treat others is based upon whether or not we are aware of our commonalities. By expanding our awareness of the qualities we all share, we are expanding our sphere of ethical concern. We can do this by coming to recognize the deep interconnections present in all human beings. This deep interconnection I call Authentic Trust – a fundamental knowledge of our collaboration and interdependence in society. This level of Trust we have occurs at all times and is not a conscious choice we make in our daily lives. Becoming aware of the existence of Authentic Trust, I claim, brings about compassion and empathy within us. Out of such compassion we learn to take risks in order to consciously trust others (what I define as “chosen trust”) and form strong relationships. This leads to better moral choices and expanded ethical considerations. So our awareness of how we are interconnected is the source of our ethical reasoning. It is my hope to clearly establish this relationship between our ontological state as humans and the predominance of Trust in our lives.

I also examine my claims about Trust against similar thinkers in contemporary ethical philosophy as well as draw comparisons between Watsuji's concept of the human

being and Heidegger's concept of *Dasein*. Finally, I will apply my theory of Trust to larger communities such as small businesses, corporations, and nations. In this I offer a possible solution to some common ethical dilemmas and illustrate the normative claims that can arise from this meta-ethical viewpoint.

“The life I touch for good or ill will touch another life, and that in turn another, until who knows where the trembling stops or in what far place my touch will be felt.” - Frederick Buechner

“The reality today is that we are all interdependent and have to co-exist on this small planet. Therefore, the only sensible and intelligent way of resolving differences and clashes of interests, whether between individuals or nations, is through dialogue.” - The Dalai Lama

Introduction

Arguing about whose ethical theory reigns supreme is common in philosophical discourse. Over time, I began to wonder if there were commonalities among theories that would help solve some of the problems that plague ethics. I believed that perhaps an awareness of the commonalities could provide a better understanding of what it means to be ethical and lead to better ethical choices. Soon, I came across the writings of Watsuji Tetsuro (1889-1960) who offered a different approach than I had seen. He sees ethics as an outgrowth of our natural state as human beings. To Watsuji, understanding what it means to be a human being informs our understanding of ethical and moral thought. Via his analysis of our true nature, he came upon a metaethics that offers a new perspective on how we all can be more ethical. Watsuji makes the claim that trust, as we normally define it, is more than just something given or taken away; it is a fundamental quality of our true nature. We cannot have actions, or ethics, without this innate trust that exists as an essential factor in our understanding of human being-ness. Trust allows communities to function, permitting us the reality in which we can be ethical, care about others, and develop theories to account for proper ethical action in our lives. Trust also provides the momentum or motivation to be ethical.

My thesis, which will be explicitly critical, will discuss Watsuji's innovative theory and the importance of trust in our lives. I will present various views as well as show inefficiencies in approaches to trust. We will begin by looking at Watsuji's background, his writings, and the ideas that brought about a metaethical awareness. We will then focus our arguments on the idea of trust as a fundamental quality in our lives, noting its connections with our humanity through Watsuji's analysis of *ningen sonzai* (trans. "human be-ing") and also look at some of the outcomes of trust, what it affirms and engenders. Furthermore, we will examine some contrary theories on trust, looking at western perspectives as well as a discussion on *ningen sonzai* ("human be-ing") and Heidegger's *Dasein*. Finally, we will discuss two applications of trust in our lives, the importance of trust in business and corporate ethics, and how trust informs Just War Theory and international conflict.

It is my claim that Trust (which I capitalize in this paper to differentiate it from the more common "trust"...as shall be defined and elaborated upon later) is a fundamental aspect of our humanity. Being aware of Trust leads us to understand how we all are connected in an inescapable manner. From this understanding, we learn to be compassionate and empathic toward our fellow human beings. Recognition of our interconnections and the subsequent development of concern for the needs of others provide the foundation from which we easily become better ethical and moral agents. In essence, the awareness of Trust leads us to better ethical thinking and allows us to become more moral. Through my arguments, I will show how important and inescapable Trust is when we discuss ethics, thereby providing Trust its rightful place in the moral

hierarchy as inescapable and fundamental to the development of ethical thinking and moral theory.

“A human being is a part of the whole, called by us, "Universe," a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest -- a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty. Nobody is able to achieve this completely, but the striving for such achievement is in itself a part of the liberation and a foundation for inner security.” - Albert Einstein

Watsuji Tetsuro

To begin, it is important that we examine who Watsuji Tetsuro was and what his main ideas are. He does not put forth what Western philosophical thinking would normally ascribe to be an ethical theory. Instead, he develops a more anthropological analysis of ethical thinking in Japan, developing his philosophy out of what he sees as a unique quality in Japanese society. Via his anthropological survey, he argues for a broader view of what it means to be a human being. While an understanding of what it means to be a human being may not be primary to the main ideas of this thesis, my arguments spring from the foundation of Watsuji’s approach and then lead us to a better understanding of the primacy of Trust as a source of our ethical behavior. We will look at how Watsuji develops his concept of the human being and how our true nature affects our actions. This awareness will lead us to the fundamental question of why Trust is so essential to ethics.

Watsuji Tetsuro was a philosopher in the early 20th century who was loosely affiliated with the Kyoto School. This school was both the manifestation of Nishida Kitaro’s (1870-1945) work and the focus of a few individuals on re-describing Japanese thought and *tetsugaku* (哲学 “philosophy”) using methods developed in Western thinking, which had previously been unavailable to or ignored by Japanese thinkers.

Watsuji received his degree in philosophy from Tokyo University and spent 14 months in Europe (1927-1928) continuing his studies. It was during this time that Heidegger's *Being and Time* was published and this greatly influenced Watsuji. On returning to Japan, he introduced Heidegger and Kierkegaard to the masses, having been smitten by the ideas of Phenomenology. His first major work, *Climate and Culture*, was in some ways an appreciation of and response to Heidegger. Watsuji argues that the concept of individuals as isolated or separate from one another is wrong. To Watsuji, Japan's uniqueness in the prioritization of the group over the individual leads to the idea that we are each socially interconnected to such an extent that our selves are inextricably a result of our environment.

...Watsuji understood climate to be a geographical/cultural/social clustering of attitudes and expectations that relate to a specific region of the earth, populated by a particular people who share a great deal in common....Climate is correspondent with spaciality [sic], whereas history is correspondent with temporality. (Carter 1996, 336)

He sees that what is a unique cultural condition of the Japanese people (the idea of group harmony and group thinking being paramount to individual concerns) is a clue to a universal truth about all humans. This insight is lacking in Western philosophy, according to Watsuji, and he thought that such an important quality in all humans is what makes us ethical. There exists no Hobbesian concept of nature where we are separate prior to social connectedness. Watsuji argues that we are born into a social environment (our first moments being a pre-established relationship with our parents) and our experiences and factors in our lives make up whom we really are.

Watsuji was asked by Nishida to teach at Kyoto University (1925) and the influence of the Kyoto School combined with his previous interest in Schopenhauer,

Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Kierkegaard helped formulate his theories. He was also influenced by the author Natsume Soseki¹ (1867-1916) and began a friendship with him just prior to Soseki's death. Unlike the members of the Kyoto School, Watsuji focused less on epistemology and metaphysics and more on ethics. His treatise on his analysis of Japanese ethics and his formulation of his ethical theory is called the *Rinrigaku* and to date remains not completely translated into English.

Watsuji's Ethics

Watsuji begins his book, *Rinrigaku* (倫理学 "Ethics"), with a summation of his entire theory: "The essential significance of the attempt to describe ethics as the study of *ningen* consists in getting away from the misconception, prevalent in the modern world, that conceives of ethics as a problem of individual consciousness *only*." (Watsuji 9) He discards what he takes to be the traditional approach to ethical reasoning in favor of a new idea. To him, ethics is a discipline that remains fundamentally isolated and separate from the extent of what a human being truly is. He also thinks it ignores the common sense awareness that we are not isolated beings but inextricably interwoven with the rest of our community. This is not how Watsuji argues an ethical system should operate. The flaw he sees in Western thinking is how ethical problems and ethical reasoning are viewed fundamentally as issues of individual consciousness.

Utilitarianism, as an example, asks each of us to measure the greatest good based on our own weighing and deliberation of our choices. Each of us is left alone to make decisions based on the expected amount of good that would result. Deontology, also, stresses that each of us should act from a sense of duty and each of us should not act to

¹ Soseki's work often focused on loyalty and group mentality versus individual freedom.

exploit others as a means to an end. Both of these approaches rely on the individual consciousness making the proper decisions on its own, after weighing the appropriate response. One may or may not look to others for advice on a decision, but in the end, the ethical decision is of one's own making within one's own consciousness. Watsuji thinks that this approach ignores the fact that our individual consciousness is, in many ways, an abstraction. He thinks, instead, that being arises from a movement between abstracted individuality and community. Personhood and ethics lie in this place between what we perceive as individuality and the community itself. And, to Watsuji, trust and trustworthiness become essential ingredients to all relationships and are therefore crucially at the heart of ethical reasoning.

Watsuji and Individuality

People are not isolated beings. Watsuji asserts that human beings are fundamentally interconnected. So much so, that the isolated ego (or what we could call the "individual") is an abstraction. Human existence and personhood is based upon a culmination of the lessons we've learned and the experiences we've had. These experiences are not unique to each of us; they are, in many ways, shared experiences. Language, cultural trends, customs, etc. are all influences that most people in a community would share. Robert Carter, a Professor of Philosophy at Kansai Gaidai University in Osaka, Japan, and the co-translator of Watsuji's *Rinrigaku*, points out,

Watsuji's objection to the ethics of the individual, which he associates with virtually all Western thinkers to some degree, is that it loses touch completely with the vast network of interconnections that serves to make us what we are, as individuals inescapably immersed in the space/time of a world, together with others. Furthermore, **without taking into consideration this network of social interconnections, ethics is impossible.** (*emphasis mine*) Individual persons, if conceived of in

isolation from their various social contexts, do not and cannot exist except as abstractions. (Carter 1996, 329)

We may think of ourselves as separate from others, and physically it seems true in the way we usually define “separate”, but all of who we are is really a product of the shared experiences and common ways of being that make up our continued growth and existence. It would be impossible to completely separate oneself from the community; for even if one were isolated physically, that person would still possess commonalities with the rest of the group within which he or she was reared. To remove all lessons learned, languages spoken, and habits formed, would leave nothing to call the ‘individual.’ Even physically solitary individuals are connected as Robert Carter points out in his essay *Strands of Influence*,

Spatially, we move in a common field, and that field is cultural in that it is criss-crossed by roads and paths and even by forms of communication such as messenger services, postal routes, newspapers, flyers, and broadcasts over great distances in addition to ordinary polite conversation. Even Robinson Crusoe continued to be culturally connected, continuing to speak an inherited language, and improvising housing, food, and clothing based on past social experience and, no doubt, continuing to hope, however dimly, for rescue at the hands of unknown others! (Carter 1996, 330)

We are, according to Watsuji, the sum of an incalculable number of interactions and events. These interconnections Watsuji defines as spatiality; the myriad ways we are connected (culturally, philosophically, ethically, etc.). Spatiality is Watsuji’s attempt to recognize the quality overlooked in Heidegger’s *Being in Time* where he argues for the temporality of our Being; how we exist in past/present/future states. Watsuji agrees that humans are temporal, as we shall examine in a later discussion on obligation, but that our nature also must consider a second dimension, one of space and interconnections

(spatiality)². Due to the number of connections that we, as human beings, share, an ethical theory must take these into consideration as part of our moral calculus, equally with our consideration of our future Being. Carter explains,

We may choose not to bring to the surface of consciousness all of those influences that have come to us out of the historical and prehistorical past of our own coming to existence, but they will be present nonetheless. Our way of being in the world is an expression of countless people and countless actions in a particular 'climate', which together have shaped us as we are. (Carter 1996, 330)

So while we have historically seen the self as a unique individual separated from the other, Watsuji finds that our individuality is a myth. He builds his ethical theory so that the self becomes far less a separate and distinct consciousness than we have grown to embrace in Western thinking. He argues that the real self, as well as its ethical decisions, must arise from a unity between what we perceive as the individual and the community³. We are not just human, claims Watsuji, but an evolving human existing both temporally and spatially. Our state is ever changing; from moment to moment we become anew. Our actions, too, have far reaching consequences; far beyond the limits of our physical bodies. Spatiality is the additional factor that, in Watsuji's estimation, Western philosophy seems to avoid. Carter explains further⁴,

It is Watsuji's belief that social interconnectedness...must be understood as a perceptual-structure which arises within the space/time existence of everyday life in Japan. Watsuji's major objection to the ethics of the individual, which he associates with virtually all Western thinkers to some

² We shall speak more of the relation between Watsuji and Heidegger in a later chapter.

³ The terminology used to differentiate between the "individual" and "community" are necessary to explain Watsuji's innovative idea, but neither, for Watsuji, exist as separate states. As we shall see, both are abstractions and not actually separate and distinct, much like humans themselves.

⁴ This quote contains language similar to an earlier quote above but from a different Carter source.

degree, is that it loses touch completely with the vast network of interconnections that serves to make us what we are. (Carter 2001, 146)

An awareness of our spatiality (the “perceptual-structure which arises within the space/time existence of everyday life”) is what creates ethical agents capable of considering multiple viewpoints and acting together as a community for the greater good. We make our decisions and our choices not isolated or alone, but in a sea of habits, cultural approaches to problems, language, and interactions. Choices and behavior are not manifested in a vacuum but, rather, are interwoven and inseparable from the world and our personal history. If one is honest and considers all qualities of one’s person, it becomes evident that there is not a single part not shaped or manifested but as a result of a sum of previous experiences. Ethical agents’ actions and choices arise from this understanding of our fundamental interconnectedness. To ignore this interconnectedness is to ignore the near totality of what we truly are. Watsuji claims that this, “leads us to consider those human relationships that exist between the act of asking and the one asked, that is, it leads us to the practical interconnection of acts. Therefore it leads us to Ethics.” (Watsuji 31) Watsuji is saying here that our ethics must arise not from our historical concept of the separateness between others and us, but in the interstice between the two, in what he calls the “betweenness” (間柄 *aidagara*), in order to accurately assess the right action. We exist in betweenness and not, as we usually assume, in our unique and separate consciousnesses. Our ethics therefore must arise from this place of the true existence of a human being. The illusion of separateness disappears in this theory and we can allow our actions to spring from the true location of what Watsuji calls the *ningen sonzai*.

Ningen

What does Watsuji mean by *ningen sonzai*? He approaches his thinking hermeneutically by beginning with the Japanese word for human, or “ningen” (人間). The term refers to more than just the “unity of the drives of life and spirit” (Watsuji 12) but a more social animal, “capable of being an individual and at the same time also a member of a society” (Watsuji 14). It is evident when we look at the two characters that make up the word *ningen*. The first is defined as “person” (人) and the second means “between” (間). To the Japanese, it is important to consider the community in one’s decisions and so their word for human is an expression of the space between persons. The thinking is not just that our choices affect more than our immediate families or ourselves but that the choices themselves are not just “ours.” Ethical decisions arise from a shared space, a betweenness, and are not the sole domain of the solitary mind. Interconnection breeds awareness of itself so that our actions are understood to affect everyone. Watsuji adopts the term *Fudo* (風土 “Climate” or “Milieu”) to account for the varying factors that influence our human-ness. One’s milieu is a major influential factor in the growth and maturation of one’s self. Watsuji thinks that the Japanese mindset that favors group harmony⁵ (or *Wa* 和) is preferable to the more isolated Western viewpoint

⁵ The idea of “Wa” is a strong cultural element in Japan. The combination of factors such as the limited livable land area along with the requirements of agriculture forced the Japanese, over generations, to develop the idea of working together to maintain harmony in all social interactions. Disruption of the *Wa* becomes a type of social faux pas frowned upon in daily life. This focus on group harmony led to particular differences in Japanese language, culture, and behaviors that exist even through today. Group harmony takes precedence in decisions over individual wishes and directly influences their ethics. This has some interesting effects on privacy and tolerance as well, but this will be left for others to elaborate upon.

of ethical decisions made essentially within one's own mind and whose results are based on one's own needs, desires, or rational deliberation. To him, humans exist in cultural space between the individual and the community. Our actions and our effects should also affect what we perceive as the individual and the community.

The danger here is of a lapse into what I think is a common misunderstanding of such communal ideas. Nothing in Watsuji would indicate a loss of self so distinct that a person would lose any rights given to them by the State, or that the needs of a community outweigh the needs of the individual. Neither he nor I would make such a claim. Instead, what Watsuji claims is that we are never fully communal and never fully individual, but instead move ceaselessly between both extremes. There is no value placed upon one over the other (for example, Watsuji does not claim community outweighs the individual). Instead, he only claims an equal representation in our understanding of who we are and in our ethical deliberation. It is common to think of one's own needs or desires when making a decision. Instead we should realize that we are more than just our own desires. Our desires, in fact, may not even be solely our own. This is what Watsuji thinks is "preferable". Autonomy is not missing at all in this. It remains that each of us makes our own choices and decisions. But who is "each of us" exactly? Who really makes the decision? I, and Watsuji, argue that we may think that we are making autonomous choices but in reality we are making our choices based on myriad factors and influences that arise from the society and culture in which we are raised. I will not focus on the implications of this thinking on autonomy or free will in this thesis, but I do note that what we perceive as ourselves is limited in comparison with Watsuji's scope.

Sonzai

Watsuji clarifies the “being” part of “human being” in the term *Sonzai* which is translated to mean ‘the temporality and spatiality of continued human existence.’ *Sonzai* (existence or being), in ordinary Japanese, is a notion Watsuji uses to “describe the subjective, practical, and dynamic structure of a human being” (ibid 21). According to Watsuji,

If it is tenable to hold that son(存) is the self-sustenance of the self and zai(在) means to remain within human relations, then *son-zai* is precisely the self-sustenance of the self as betweenness. That is, it means that *ningen* possesses herself. We could also simply say that *sonzai* is ‘the interconnection of the acts of *ningen*.’ (Watsuji 21)

Therefore, the concept *ningen sonzai* (人間存在) is the basis for Watsuji’s ethics.

We are not just isolated forms but part of, and essential to, the community; yet we are never completely a community and never completely individuals. As bodily human beings, we exist both temporally and spatially. Our ethics must not only consider this temporality and spatiality; they actually arise from it. As we shall see, we normally consider only one of those two qualities of human being-ness. Watsuji’s innovation is to give as much weight to spatiality, our interconnections, as he sees being placed upon temporality. Carter’s analysis of Watsuji’s *Rinrigaku* finds the obvious connection between his ethical theory and his concept of *Fudo*. He says,

Watsuji concerns himself with this problem because of his contention that, in an attempt to grasp a human being, one should pay more attention to space than time. To speak the matter more concretely, what is here meant in terms of space is *fudo* (climate), that is, nature. (Carter 1996, 319)

Watsuji faults Western thinking (like Heidegger’s *Dasein*) as being too focused on temporality. The person defined by *ningen sonzai* is both temporal and spatial. Watsuji

does not agree with the limitedness of Heidegger's approach to temporality and, as we will see in a later chapter, finds that his entire theory could be seen as both a refutation and a clarification of Heidegger's thinking. We should see us as essentially social beings, as much in space as in time. We cannot cut off half of what we are as human beings and expect our behavior to be ethical and moral. Jeffery Wu agrees,

Ethics, then, is the manner of being for *ningen* as its activities unfold in the practical interconnections of everyday being. For Watsuji, ethics is inextricably a manner of social being, and he goes to great lengths to critique the illusion of individual consciousness so prevalent in Western philosophy. (Wu 98-99)

Negation

When we speak of *ningen sonzai* being a fluctuation between the individual and the social, one is likely to ask exactly what we mean by "fluctuation". How can we begin to make sense of Watsuji's idea that we exist in a state of betweenness and slide from pole to pole on this spectrum of community and individuality? According to Watsuji, the movement between individuality and community is generated by negation. If we look at individuality and community as two extreme ends of a spectrum of being, we find that it is impossible to be solely on either end of the spectrum. Instead, we exist in "betweenness". There is no true individual to Watsuji. He says, "[I]ndividuality itself does not have an independent existence. Its essence is negation, that is, emptiness." (Watsuji 80) But it equally seems impossible to lose one's own unique perceptions by becoming fully integrated into a community. What appears to be a contradiction is, for Watsuji, the reality of what it means to be a human. We exist within this movement neither isolated nor diffused. In actuality, we negate our individuality by willfully agreeing to capitulate to the needs of the community. At the same time, we negate the

community by asserting our will and acting of our own accord. We aren't really acting entirely on our own however, as every action is steeped in behavioral lessons, habits, and cultural mores. We find ourselves in this constant process of negation; an ongoing and dynamic process. Day to day, minute by minute, we adjust our relative position by asserting or sublimating our will, as needs dictate. The movement of this double negation is the state of *ningen sonzai*. It is inescapable and the normal, metaphysical state of existence for all of us. In fact, we cannot exist at all except within this movement. To wit, Watsuji sums up the idea that, "...both individuals and the whole subsist not in themselves, but only in the relationship of each with the other." (Watsuji 101) We are not isolated. We are not diffused into some imaginary molecular cloud of all humans like smoke released into the atmosphere. The truth is that we exist only in relationship to one another and this is what Watsuji calls betweenness; will and quality as a human being arise in the space between each other.

Absolute Wholeness and the Source of Ethics

If we exist in this constant vacillation, what arises out of it? For Watsuji, the answer is ethics. We exist in this state of betweenness, and while the concept may seem contradictory due to the traditional thinking of the isolated individual vs. the group, it remains that we are looking at a larger picture, a 5,000 ft view, of what it means to be a human being. There is no destruction of the individual and no destruction of the community. Instead, both are subsets of what Watsuji calls "absolute wholeness". Carter explains,

The double negation...whereby the individual is negated by the group aspect of the self, and the group aspect is in turn negated by the individual aspect, is not to be taken as a complete negation that obliterates that which

is negated. Rather what is imperative is that the “identity,” in the identity of self-contradiction, does not obliterate that which it unifies, nor does the disunity of distinction obliterate the unity. That which is negated is preserved, else there would be no true self-contradiction. (Carter 2001, 132-33)

It seems that this way of thinking is of a traditionally Asian perspective. One can see elements of the Taoist concept of Yin and Yang in the above quote, where both opposites exist in harmonious accord and become one⁶. Confucianism too, considers our relationships to be primary factors in our lives. Both of these influences I will speak to later, but Watsuji is correct, I agree, to step outside or above the apparent duality of the individual and the community in his larger picture of *ningen sonzai*. It seems as if his response to Western Ethical Philosophy is merely a plea to be less narrow-minded. He argues that the true human, the ethical human, is the totality of both the isolated ego and the dispersed consciousness. The process of negation brings about our existence in betweenness and this space encompasses the entire spectrum of relationships and our perceived individuality. Watsuji sees our movement of double negation as the complete state of human being and considers it our “wholeness”. He writes,

The dual existence of human beings as individual and social is precisely the place where absolute wholeness manifests itself. Because of this, the movement of the negation of absolute negativity turns out to be precisely the law of human beings, that is, basic ethics. If this is what basic ethics is, then all of the issues surrounding ethics must ultimately originate here. (Watsuji 124)

⁶ One could illustrate this point with a reference to the third Matrix movie, Matrix Revolutions. Neo’s solution to the war with the opposing sides was détente and unity, not the defeat of one extreme over the other (good vs. bad, black vs. white, etc.). Neo transcended that duality by seeing not the merging of opposites, but the harmonious coexistence of both.

But what does Watsuji mean by “the law of human beings”? This law is the aforementioned movement of negation. Without this movement of negation, we would cease to exist at all. There is no possibility for an isolated individual and to become fully communal would also remove anything identifiable as a human being. Betweenness, then, is the fundamental law of human beings. The movement of negation becomes the basic principle of ethics.

This is his foundation for ethics. It is not prescriptive, it is not deontological, and it is not contractarian. It is in actuality a metaethical perspective. He proposes an approach that takes into account all ethical theories. Ethical behavior is contingent upon the situation; our proper action is entirely contextual. Watsuji affirms that the dual existence of a human between individuality and community is that from which our ethics arise. It originates from our wholeness and therefore takes into account the whole spectrum of human existence and relationships. One determines the proper course of action in a given context through awareness and acknowledgement of this constant movement of negation. Through this, we see an understanding of, as well as empathy and compassion for, our fellow beings. Consideration of the other’s needs becomes important and therefore leads to right action.

Before we go further, it is important to comment on the apparently metaphysical claim made in Watsuji’s ethics. The wholeness he describes is not part of a separate universe, nor it is a transcendental state. It is complete in and of itself and an integral part of our reality and universe.

Watsuji, it should be noted, takes pains to point out that he is not describing some kind of experiential process in which particularity and multiplicity are simply cancelled out in favour of merger and undifferentiated unity. This would involve the error of assuming that

some higher reality lies in the one behind multiform existence. (LaFleur 249)

In fact, there is no higher reality and Watsuji makes no claim to any reality other than our own phenomenological one. Watsuji thinks being and ethics remains in the practical. Betweenness is “multiform existence”, a wider view of our true nature, and our state of being is a practical one.

Influences

Watsuji brings an essentially Eastern method of thinking to his ethics via the strong communal aspects of Japanese culture. Unlike Western thought, Watsuji’s philosophy lifts up the group as important and essential to being moral. And like other parts of his culture, he is strongly influenced by religious thought that migrated from China. In the *Rinrigaku*, Watsuji speaks briefly about the influence of Confucianism on his theory. The term *rin* of *rinrigaku* is, in fact, the Chinese pronunciation of the character *nakama* meaning “fellows”. The importance of family is essential to Confucian Ethics. This is made apparent in the idea of *ren* (仁) or “complete goodness”. Philip Ivanhoe explains,

While one is to have sympathetic concern for all people, the magnitude of one’s feelings diminished as they move outward from the family. Just as the concentric waves that emanate from the spot where a tossed pebble strikes the surface of a calm pool decrease in magnitude as they move farther from their point of origin, the intensity of one’s love decreases as it moves beyond the family and out through society. The strongest feelings are originally and forever those within the family. The virtues of “filial piety” (*xiao* 孝) and “respect for an elder brother” (*ti* 悌) are the source from which one draws in extending and developing such feelings for others and are the most profound examples of the type of concern that characterizes those who are *ren*. (Ivanhoe 3)

A sense of brotherhood or reverence for one's immediate family is of importance in Confucian ethics. For Watsuji, brotherhood characterizes us as human in that we are strongly interconnected with our families and ethical behavior is evidenced by how we treat those close to us. He writes, "[c]hethics, is the order or the pattern through which the communal existence of human beings is rendered possible. In other words, ethics consists of the laws of social existence." (Watsuji 11) Confucianism is an important part of Watsuji's development of *ningen sonzai* as well as a great influence on Japanese culture as a whole.

Taoism is also strongly evidenced in Watsuji's ideas, though not well elucidated upon thus far in any literature. One merely needs to recall the concept of double negation with the concept of *yin* and *yang* (the *Taijitu* 太極圖 in Chinese) in Taoist metaphysics to recognize their kinship. The fluctuation between the individual and the community in Watsuji's negation movement reflects that of the pitch and yaw of the *yin yang* philosophy. As *ningen sonzai* finds itself neither fully autonomous nor fully dissolved into a community, so we find the Taoist vision of the universe to be a tug of war between light and dark, positive and negative. The *yin yang* symbol, a popularized icon, finds dark within light and light within dark, balanced and ever shifting. Taoism's wholeness is reflected in this idea, as is the idea that Trust encompasses both itself and the concept of distrust or betrayal (as will be discussed later). Throughout the book *Tao Te Ching*, we find examples of the Taoist approach to duality exemplified in the *yin yang* icon. In chapter 36 it says,

Should you want to contain something,
you must deliberately let it expand.
Should you want to weaken something,
you must deliberately let it grow strong.

Should you want to eliminate something,
you must deliberately allow it to flourish.
Should you want to take something away,
you must deliberately grant it. (Cleary, 31)

And in chapter 2 we read

So being and nonbeing produce each other:
difficulty and ease complement each other,
long and short shape each other,
high and low contrast with each other,
voice and echoes conform to each other,
before and after go along with each other. (Cleary 9)

Taoism therefore exalts the unity of opposites by illustrating the fundamental connection between the two. Separation between the two is, to Taoists, an illusion. We can see the formulation of *ningen sonzai* in what Watsuji defines as double negation as also apparently, at least symbolically, in the idea of the Taoist universe, the continued fluctuation between two poles, neither succeeding in overcoming the other.

Ordinarily, we look at ethics as a prescriptive instruction on the proper way to behave. We struggle to learn the proper course of action that will bring about a desired state and naturally look to a simple rule or quality that will enable us to live a proper and meaningful life. Whether utilitarian, deontological, Rawlsian, divine command or even virtue theory, all are dictums on the most ideal and cohesive processes to discover proper action and right behavior. But for Watsuji, all of these are developed from a misunderstanding of what it means to be human. What arises out of Watsuji's concept of the human being is different from what we are more accustomed to thinking in the West. The state of betweenness and the movement of double negation generate a different idea of ethics. One of the main results of Watsuji's thinking is the acknowledgement and

awareness of the fundamental existence of trust. He states, “Human action cannot...take place apart from the presence of trust to one degree or another”. (Watsuji 268) In accepting the existence and moral “personality” of the other, we must accept that other people have a moral will to behave in ways understandable and with some degree of autonomy (though, as I have stated, Watsuji argues that this autonomy is an abstraction). To know that others have volitional will and the ability to act in response to one’s own moral rule set requires that we trust the other to be honest and able to act in this way. As we shall see in the next chapter, even those who intentionally act in such a way as to hurt us must do so by breaking the trust that exists, to whatever degree, between them and us. It is this fundamental existence of trust in all relationships that is the main focus of this thesis and the topic of the next chapter.

“When the rain falls, it don’t fall on one man’s house.” – “So Much Things to Say” – Bob Marley

“Today the network of relationships linking the human race to itself and to the rest of the biosphere is so complex that all aspects affect all others to an extraordinary degree. Someone should be studying the whole system, however crudely that has to be done, because no gluing together of partial studies of a complex nonlinear system can give a good idea of the behavior of the whole.” - Murray Gell-Mann

The Primacy of Trust in Ethics (信頼)

It seems the problem inherent in ethics is that so many people do clearly unethical things for various personal reasons despite being aware that their actions are wrong. We see murder, violence, and falsehood daily in the world and also encounter various forms of argument designed to defend such actions. The efforts of philosophers to design an ethical theory seem to be driven, partly, in an honest and altruistic desire to improve the world through the discussion and dissemination of theories and rules that everyone can agree upon and that are useful and practical. The idea is that if we all apply the same rules, or focus on the same values, a lot of the problems between humans would cease to exist. Watsuji is no exception in this effort; his discussion of the unique approach of the Japanese mind, the analysis of *ningen sonzai*, and his attempt to illuminate us on the reality of our state of betweenness defines an approach to ethical decision-making. The difference between Watsuji and other Western philosophers is in his focus on our inseparability from others, our spatial as opposed to merely our temporal nature. In order to develop a proper ethical theory, or even be capable of making the best ethical choices, it is therefore crucial for us to change our perspective and consider both elements of our true nature.

The one thing in common among all ethical theories is the assumption that each human being should strive to be ethical. We expect that, given sufficient motivation, the individual would act in such a way as to bring about the most favorable experience for her- or himself and those he or she cares about. Were we not to assume this, an ethical theory wouldn't hold much value. If we all were to act of our own accord and without concern for another's actions, there is little of society that would remain useful to us. The success of any community is dependent upon the agreement of those within the community to act according to shared goals. We all must play, like children in a game, according to the same rules, in order to survive. Doctors are trusted to heal, policemen are trusted to enforce the law, etc. Cooperation also applies to ethical theories. Regardless to which theory we ascribe, society and those within it should agree to the same moral calculus in order to behave according to the same rules ("Do not kill" or "Lying is wrong" for example.). Not doing so necessitates the creation of laws based around morality directing our behavior like a bandleader directs a marching band. It is not law that drives us to behave ethically, but our own internal desire to be good, ethical agents. If we should have different ethics within a community, the groups would soon breakdown and find themselves at odds. During the Civil War, one of the many reasons the North and the South found themselves fighting was their disagreement on the morality of slavery. This rift in society remained problematic until the force of war and prevalent thinking brought all Americans to accept the same moral outlook. The process was slow and painful for our country, but was necessary for us to become one community. Our sense of community would be impossible without an ethics that are shared. We may differ in the applicability of our morals, and argue over details, but we

all desire the ability to determine good from bad and right from wrong. Robert Carter sees this where,

All groups have a morality; that is, possess some way of distinguishing between the good and the bad, the social and the antisocial. And even though these sensitivities may differ greatly in content, what Watsuji seeks to explain is what they all share in common as moralities. It is not so much that he is seeking a common set of rules but rather a common outlook on the basis of which all possible ethics is both necessarily and justifiably founded. (Carter 1996, 331)

This is the essence of Watsuji's theory of ethics. From a "common outlook" of our true nature as *ningen sonzai*, a framework arises for any ethical system, as long as it remains beneficial to those involved. Enforcement of an agreement is often required (e.g. the police, the military, etc.) but those who deviate from this agreement do so due to their own personal needs or greed and not from lack of awareness of the rule of law. They choose to willfully disregard society's laws. Despite those who are determined to act in ways contrary to our agreed-upon moral framework, most of us go about our daily lives acting in accord with the community's needs in order to remain stable, functional, and prosperous. To do so, we must possess a level of Trust in each other that is foundational to our ethics.

Such a level of Trust must be in existence in order for any ethical theory or ethical action to be viable. It is a natural part of our betweenness and is a fundamental part of our moral agency. In simple terms, I argue that trusting each other is required for any community to thrive and generate an ethical system. Stephen Covey, in his book *The Speed of Trust* explains it like this,

Trust is an integral part of the fabric of our society. We depend on it. We take it for granted – unless it becomes polluted or destroyed. Then we come to the stark realization that trust may well be as vital to our own

well-being as water is to a fish. Without trust, society closes down and will ultimately self-destruct. (Covey 273)

Society need not share location, or theology, or caste. These are core rules all societies operate upon and through which ideas such as “killing is evil”, “crime warrants punishment”, “betrayal is bad”, etc. are made manifest. Trust becomes the foundation for any type of ethics; an *a priori* condition of all ethical theorizing. We spend our days working, relaxing, and playing; believing we have pure autonomy and free will. But at some level, we live with the automatic Trust of others behaving as we behave because we have gestated in the same community as everyone else. Our shared humanity and human qualities mean that no matter how diverse our interests or philosophies, there exists a commonality among all people regardless of skin color, age, or background. It is my claim that this level of commonality is so pervasive and fundamental that most of the time we do not even recognize it. We may not be aware of it but the reality of our interconnectedness means that a deep level of Trust exists. Alphonso Lingis, in his book *Trust*, argues that,

...trust is everywhere – in pacts and contracts, in institutions, in forms of discourse taken to be revealing or veridical, in the empirical sciences and in mathematical systems. Everywhere a human turns in the web of human activities, he touches upon solicitations to trust. The most electronically guarded, insured individual is constantly asked to trust. (Lingis 66)

Trust exists because of our inherent inseparability and the constant movement of negation that connects us via the spatiality of our true nature (as we saw in the preceding chapter). Out of this awareness are generated proper normative ethics, moral thinking, expectation, obligation, etc. We see our interconnection and so become compassionate and empathic toward those in our communities, understanding that the separateness we experience is an illusion. We see the other as an extension of our selves, or, to put it more accurately, that

what we define as ourselves really exists between each of us (Watsuji's betweenness). In order to better understand how we can be ethical agents, a better understanding of how Trust shapes our lives is necessary.

If we give cursory examination to more common ethical theories, we can see Trust is a required element, albeit hidden to the casual observer. The Utilitarian maxim of "greatest good for the greatest number" assumes that each of us should act in accordance with the same maxim. Caring about "the greatest number" would indicate a level of empathy towards others. This empathy develops from Trust because knowledge of the needs and desires of others is something important to consider in a moral calculation. If not, Utilitarianism would state "the greatest good for myself". We need to care for others and be compassionate in order to have such a maxim that is applicable to more than just ourselves. The Trust that each person will behave in ways aligned with society's norms must exist for any ethical theory to be more than a moral goal within oneself. Now, this may seem strange, as one could argue that it is only oneself that must abide by the Utilitarian maxim in order to be ethical. But can we really say that an ethical theory is, in any way, relevant and useful if it remains the guiding principle for only one person? To suggest something like that, morality would have to be measured as a universal, external force so that one's own moral calculus can be compared to it. If only one person followed the Utilitarian maxim, that would not make him or her moral. For ethics to strive for "good", and to have that "good" carry some ontological weight, there must be either an external, perhaps transcendental, force of "good" or an agreed-upon "good" against which an ethical theory or decision can be weighed. I do not want to devote time in this paper to the argument that an ethical theory or morality must be

agreed upon to be practical and useful, so I will be concise: society, to be ethical, must possess agreed upon morals in order to function. With Utilitarianism as an example, it cannot remain within one's head as a moral measurement or guideline but must be social and universally applied in order to be practical and useful as a theory.

To see that this is true, we need only to examine what society would be like if each of us followed our own individual ethical theories. Assuming a multitude of theories to equal the population of a society, each person would live by separate rules and there would be no agreed-upon set of ethics with which to resolve conflict. We would not necessarily be selfish but consensus and agreement on ethical actions would be unlikely. Most of all, we would not be able to trust our fellow citizen to behave in a way unregulated by society's laws. For example, if I thought that my neighbor believed murder was all right and justifiable, I would not trust myself to be alone with him. He may have wonderful morals but because I knew he did not share some overarching elements of my internal ethical theory, it would be hard to relax in his presence, thereby preventing the formation of a good and stable relationship. We all need to trust that others follow similar ethical impulses else we would be unable to form relationships where we could let our guard down.

Similarly, Kant's categorical imperative also requires that Trust be in existence for us to expect that it will not be just Kant who is abiding by his own theory. Virtue theory as well would ask of us to agree on a select number of virtues that, in existence, would allow any of us to behave ethically. What is important to recognize is that Trust itself is not an ethical theory or maxim or virtue. Perhaps we can see trustworthiness as a

virtue, and a common one, and this is a virtue that is a result of the primacy of Trust⁷ in our lives. Authentic Trust (as I am differentiating and defining it) is, however, the source of all ethical theories. An awareness of Authentic Trust leads to recognition of our interconnections which then leads toward the formation of ethical thoughts and, eventually, agreed-upon theories. This is my distinction, drawing the line between what I see as two types of trust, one within the other. Watsuji does not differentiate between the types in his writings but I believe this is lacking in his analysis. As we shall see, there is the type of trust we commonly understand as trusting that someone will return a loaned book, or a trust that a spouse will not have an affair. This, in my mind, is different from what I'm calling Authentic Trust and we shall examine my designation next. However, in all ways, Trust exists as the fertile ground from which the flowers of ethical thinking bloom.

Authentic Trust is not so much a consciously aware trust (the trust chosen willfully) but an unconscious trust that cannot be avoided and that functions as the basic lubricant of society. It is the implicit assumption in our lives that others will behave in a similar way to how we behave. I will refer to the other type of trust as 'chosen trust.' This, the type of trust we have toward those we love, is also evident and crucial to our happiness, but this type of trust can be broken or taken away. It can be developed and reinforced through our will and experience. It can be gained and lost. Chosen trust is taught to us and practiced throughout our lives in all of our interactions. It is most always a conscious choice made in our minds. But what I call "Authentic Trust" (a term

⁷ I am making a distinction here in using the capitalized version. This is mine and not Watsuji's. However, in order to decrease confusion over the concept that Watsuji and I both feel arises from our interconnectedness, I chose to use my designation. Watsuji does not differentiate between the two types of trust that I do.

borrowed from Robert Solomon and Fernando Flores) is a broader concept that defines the inherent understanding or expectation, however subconscious, that other humans will act ethically. We have Trust in the moral agency of those around us; and through that similarity to our own ability to be moral, we come to understand that we play by the same rules and find empathy with those in our community. This, in turn, creates moral societies and communities, fostering well-being, safety, and a livable life different from a place where distrust and fear would reign. We can have disagreements or differing viewpoints in any ethical discourse. Nothing herein would claim that we couldn't deliberate between what is right and wrong, examining our ethical choices. Certainly, we can run the risk of very totalitarian thinking if we insist upon agreement. It remains, however, that at a deeper level, all communities agree that morality is important while remaining open to argument over which morality is important.

We do not normally consider Authentic Trust in our deliberations, as it is often invisible to most people. Throughout our entire lives, we are shaped by the lessons and experiences shared and passed-down within any community. This interconnection is inescapable and prevalent at all times. My claim, in this thesis, is that this type of Trust is different from the common definition of trust (which I refer to as chosen trust) in that it is the implied understanding that arises out of the wider definition of what it means to be human that Watsuji calls *ningen sonzai*. Our inescapable spatiality means that we all have an accepted understanding of our connection with other humans. We may only think this applies to those in our families, or on our team, or in our close-knit communities, but however we define those connections, there is a fundamental level in our unconscious or subconscious where we expect those in our community to behave

with the same desires and methods that result from existence in a shared milieu (Watsuji's *Fudo*).

The problem I see in Authentic Trust is that because we are not consciously aware of this interconnection, we can often fail to act ethically towards others. This does not mean that an awareness of the reality of Authentic Trust is necessary to the ability to be ethical. Certainly people can be either accidentally ethical or purposefully ethical while still remaining ignorant of our spatial qualities as humans. In fact, people normally intend to act ethically towards those close to them, but this is because those in one's proximity are culturally understood to be connected. When we look toward being ethical to those not in our immediate community, being aware of how we all are interrelated and interconnected will bring about ethical options that were probably not previously considered. The consideration of which charities to donate money to tends to fall along lines of familiarity, in that people donate money to causes close to them. I will not make the claim that it is more or less ethical to donate to charities that are not close to our personal ideals or feelings⁸, but being aware of the greater connections between all humans would offer more choices of charities to which one might donate.

We normally see ourselves as pure individuals and thus make our decisions with a desire to see the outcome serve us alone or those we perceive as related and similar to us. We choose not to kill others not because we have a connection with the other person but because we fear what will happen to ourselves. We may go to prison. We may incur a god's wrath. But were we to be aware of our interconnections, aware of the inescapable

⁸ It is not my claim in this chapter to put forth a normative ethical system. Authentic Trust is a metaethical concept that, through examination, can lead us to adopt various normative theories.

reality of Authentic Trust, we are more likely to see that we are not individuals and that we have the same fears, the same desires and the same drive to be happy as others.

From a place of this compassion and empathy, I argue that we can then choose to trust (chosen trust) others in all sorts of situations that would lead to better morality. We shall see in our final two chapters the benefits of trusting others. Moral reasoning is a result of this empathy, as the concern over our actions is, in my mind, a concern over the impact they would have on others. Trust as commonly discussed, however, is downstream from the fundamental Trust that is part of who we are as humans.

This is the summation of my thesis. Our nature as temporal and spatial beings (*ningen sonzai*) entails an interconnectivity that is fundamental to our identity as humans. The awareness of this interconnectivity leads us to awareness that we share our desires and dreams and such with everyone around us. We recognize the shared desire to be moral, to be successful in life, to achieve our goals and be happy. This brings us a sense of compassion and empathy toward others, including those not normally assumed to be part of our immediate family and friends. This, then, leads to the ability to trust and make better ethical decisions. And so, in short, if we can learn to be more conscious and aware of our inseparability from community (our spatiality), our ability to make better ethical and moral choices in any situation will be greatly enhanced.

In this main part of my thesis, we will examine Watsuji's account of trust, including a discussion of how *ningen sonzai's* (human being's) communality is realized through Trust as a way we are and should be; the two main types of trust, Authentic Trust and chosen trust; whether we have an obligation to Trust others, or whether Trust is unavoidable; how Trust is possible, and how Trust functions as part of an intercommunal

existence in ethics. It is through this discussion that I will demonstrate that we cannot have any ethics without Trust at the core of our interactions with others. An awareness of Trust is an essential quality in any theory and it cannot and should not be removed from the ethical calculus.

Watsuji's Account of Trust

When Watsuji speaks of Trust, he is referring to the Trust that exists as our state of betweenness within our existence as *ningen sonzai* (human be-ing). As we saw in the previous chapter, if we are spatial as well as temporal beings, an awareness of the unity in all of us becomes evident. This unity is not based on individual qualities or attributes as much as it is based on common qualities in all ethical beings. This commonality that we all share informs our shared morality. Particular ethics can differ among people, but the desire to be ethical or the desire to adhere to morals is common in all of us. The fact that we exist in a shared framework confers upon us the ability to see that others have the same behaviors and ethical "habits". The awareness of our connection becomes the source of our ethics. Each of us can reason and will his or her actions in accord with his or her wishes. Our decisions and actions may be influenced and affected by our existence within the community, but our willpower remains under our control. Certainly we may not have the complete freedom of will but we can all make our own moral choices and can also find it exceedingly difficult to will someone else to make a particular choice. Watsuji is trusting, as we all are, in the inner independence of another person to make a moral decision; complete individuality (no connection to others) need not exist for us to have the ability to make choices.

We should not view this as necessarily a metaphysical claim (yet). Watsuji is appealing to the need to alter our perceptions in such a way as to not ignore the full extent of who we are. As *ningen sonzai* (human be-ing) we are more than what we, in the West, typically consider the extent of our selves. To fully open oneself up to the true reality,

...the loss of the self is, in fact, a gaining of a new sense of self as related. When we truly love another, we step outside of ourselves, so to speak, and in some sense, metaphorical or real, we merge with the beloved person. We speak of losing ourselves in nature, as when D.T. Suzuki urges that ‘the real flower is enjoyed only when the poet-artist lives with it, in it; and when even a sense of identity is no longer here.’ This results in an opening of self to a sense of relatedness – intimate relatedness – with the greater whole, whether it be that of people in love or that of family, group, nation, or even some sense of cosmic consciousness. (Carter 1996, 334)

Out of this framework, Watsuji brings up a quality that is part of this interconnectedness called Trust. Trust is the understanding that we are all alike and not as separate as we normally assume. All of us have Trust built in to our lives by virtue of being raised in a society where we share a language, belief system, culture, etc. Watsuji asserts that this is commonplace in our world. He states,

Even a cursory glance [sic] at our everyday life is enough to show just how much trust is in evidence. This is no less the case even with life on the street, where the connection of human beings with each other is weakest, than with the intimate communal life of a family or a friendly relationship. People walk in the midst of a crowd without having to be prepared to defend themselves. Precisely because they take it on trust that strangers have no more intention of inflicting a wound on others than they themselves have they are able to walk at ease with an unguarded attitude. (Watsuji 267)

This is where the example of our innate Trust is evident in our lives. Wherever you are reading this paper right now, you trust everyone around you to some extent almost by default. At such a level, Trust is a requirement for society to function.

Trust is present in all social interactions according to Watsuji. It is not so much a decision to trust as the inevitability that we live in an environment of Trust and automatically Trust in others to some extent. It is not a decision left up to any individual whether or not to trust as we have some shared connections ingrained in us from birth. For Watsuji, it is present and essential in all our choices and actions. We cannot, no matter how much we strive to do so, eliminate Trust from our relationships. Robert Carter explains, "...all such social interconnection is inescapably based on some sense of trustworthiness and the expectation that one will tell the truth." (Carter 1996, 344) He continues,

What quickly becomes clear is that the structure of existence (sonzai) appropriate to human beings (ningen) is a mutuality of coexistence that expects and depends on truth and trust in human relationships. Trust and truth are not intellectual demands made from a purely theoretical interest, but are to be found in the actions of human beings through and by which they are connected with one another. Truth and trust occur spatio-temporally; that is, in the world in which we live, as living, breathing, self-conscious bodies. And even those who act in such a way as to reject truthfulness or trustworthiness in their relations with others – those who lie and cheat, break promises, and do physical harm to the persons and property of others – nevertheless rely on the expectation of others that they will act truthfully and in a loyal and trustworthy manner to carry out their nefarious deeds. The very fabric of social interaction of civilization in any of its forms, is based on that network of trusting relationships and truth telling without which our lives together would be nasty, brutish, and short. (Carter 1996, 343-344)

When we examine ethical decisions in our lives, we can find Authentic Trust present. In a situation where one person is drowning and another is nearby to rescue him, the drowner pleads for help with the expectation that the other person will come to the rescue. He trusts that the other recognizes the predicament and possesses a natural compassion and empathy and so will willingly attempt to save him. Else why would he attempt to cry out for rescue? Because we exist with Authentic Trust in our lives, we

expect others to have the same desire to live as we do. Watsuji argues, “In danger, one does not necessarily call for rescue to one’s parents and brothers or friends alone. One calls to other persons as well; that is, to human beings in general. One calls to them because one places one’s trust in them as helpers from the outset.” (Watsuji, 266) Also, the expectation is that while the rescuer may not know the victim, he will feel a natural obligation to provide aid (this would arise out of compassion for the person drowning). For Watsuji, obligation comes from a general understanding of the plight of our fellow man and recognition of the desire to stay alive through an awareness of both our temporality (in the obligation sense) and spatiality (in the understanding of our fellow man’s plight). A social contract between the two may or may not exist, but each belongs to a community and therefore they have both learned similar moral lessons as they aged. They are aware of the other’s similar needs and desires and out of this awareness arises a compassion stemming from our interconnection. We all behave within a similar framework and automatically reap the benefits of cooperation. If the rescuer were not willing to help, not only would he be breaking an assumed agreement in society that we help others in need, but he would be attempting to reject the Trust we subconsciously have for all of those in our communities (in addition to being vilified in the community for failing to act). Watsuji points out,

...to hear a voice calling for rescue is at once to grasp a state of affairs in which there is need of rescue and to hear a voice of trust. Then it is that one feels the value inherent in the state of affairs called the preservation of life, and at the same time, one tries to respond to this trust. (Watsuji 266)

This “value inherent in the state of affairs” is a basic understanding of our interconnectedness and the state of betweenness of which Watsuji speaks. Our spatial condition connects us in such a way that we have an understanding, however

subconscious, that we all are acting toward the same goals; these being human rights, the value of life, and so on. This is a different sense of Trust than we normally attribute to people's actions. It is not about a sense of obligation to help a fellow human (perhaps an obligation purposefully taught to a young person to help others), but a far deeper and expansive Trust, where we have a fundamental understanding of the other's recognition of the connection that we all share as human beings. Trust becomes a condition for the possibility of making ethical decisions and being fully human. Indeed, Trust is a necessary condition for the generation of ethics and ethical reasoning. We may not be (and in fact most likely are not) aware of it, but our actions arise from this understanding of everyone's relation. Learned lessons, wagers, obligations, and assumptions therefore grow from a deep awareness of this web of interconnectivity that we cannot escape.

Even in our everyday lives, Trust exists beneath the surface of our actions. We automatically act as if we trust that our loved ones do not lie to us about their feelings, our family will support us, our government will protect us, and our doctors will heal us. It does not matter if we know these people intimately or not. To exist as a community, certain behaviors and rules are taught so that chaos and disorder do not develop. How successful would any society be if we could not trust our hospitals to send ambulances when we call for one? Or that the police will come if called to the scene of a violent altercation? Could we as a society survive if we couldn't trust our neighbors not to burn down our homes or attack our children? Watsuji argues that this sort of Trust is not only unavoidable but also essential to the continued functioning of any society. He says,

Trust of this sort is found not only in the special case of a human life in imminent danger. **It is of necessity existent whenever a human**

interconnection is performed in one way or another, in everyday life.

(Emphasis mine) When one loses one's way, one readily asks for help from a stranger on the street. Even when we have no information about who this person is and what he is likely to be prepared to do we entirely trust that he will attempt to get us back on the right road without deceiving us. Otherwise, we would not ask him. (Watsuji 266)

Watsuji's explanation focuses on the temporal aspects of expectation and obligation.

This is in line with Heidegger's *Dasein* and common among many of those who discuss trust in the Western milieu. What Watsuji brings to the discussion is this

"interconnection" that is ignored or dismissed elsewhere. The spatiality Watsuji argues is inherent to our humanity becomes as much a part of who we are as the temporality espoused by other philosophers. Though both are equal, in Watsuji's writing the focus is primarily on spatiality; and when it comes to Trust, our interconnection is as crucial a factor to consider as our temporality in a discussion of ethics. This is what Watsuji brings to the conversation that is unique. He acknowledges these qualities of a human being that many others, such as Heidegger, do, but through his ideas on culture's effects on each of us Watsuji comes to the realization that there is more to the human being. Our interconnectedness and the law of double negation affect our ethics too.

We can arrive then at the realization that if Trust exists in all areas of society, then there must be different types of Trust. We can speak of the common idea of trust as a choice evident in situations where perhaps a newcomer enters an established group and everyone consciously decides whether or not to trust the newcomer. Additionally though, there is a level of Trust that exists at the core of our lives where I recognize and trust in the will of the person at the table next to me. Trust can function in regard to the person driving the car on the highway in front of me (I trust that she or he won't brake suddenly for no reason, yet I watch for it) or to my becoming a good father or husband. But to

discuss the particular and possibly unfamiliar level of Trust Watsuji alludes to, the same one at the core of my thesis, we need to define it as something other than the common “trust” that we consciously decide to enact.

Types of Trust

To speak of the type of trust Watsuji describes, it's important to differentiate between what he calls trust and what we, in society, normally define as trust. There is the small “t” trust, which I have called chosen trust. This is familiar to us as the way we normally define “trust” in our relationships. This is the type of trust in evidence when we speak of the virtue of being trustworthy, the trust we calculate when meeting a stranger (the mental thought, however unconscious, of “Should I trust this salesman/person?”), and the trust that we say is lost when we discover someone lied to us, plagiarized a term paper, or cheated. We learn over time to trust those we interact with on a daily basis because they exhibit behavior that we find trustworthy; this is the type of trust that exists as a requirement of living in a community. Big “T” trust, or Authentic Trust, is the type of trust that exists at a fundamental level in all societies. This is almost never specifically a conscious part of our normal thinking and yet it is a necessary part of our societal existence. Authentic Trust is the source of the implicit assumption that our fellow human beings are able to and desire to function in a similar ethical manner to ourselves.

Authentic Trust is an outgrowth of our human nature. It is as undeniable and essential as our will or imagination. It remains up to us whether or not to acknowledge it. Ignoring Authentic Trust does no harm to it and will not lessen its impact on our lives. It is, however, an important point that acknowledging it or (as I am claiming) being aware of it offers choices that result in better moral decisions.

To some extent, all people have some awareness of our interconnections. We normally strive to make ethical decisions that do not negatively impact the people we love. We see our connection with our family and friends and so choose to do right by them. People we commonly define as compassionate (Mother Theresa is a common example) tend to see our commonality and unity as a wider circle than the average person would. Mother Theresa, therefore, would be more aware of Authentic Trust than the average person because she saw that the interconnections between people were greater than most realize. To be fully aware of our interconnections, the subtle level by which we all trust each other, we are provided a wider and grander view of everyone's interconnection, thereby making sure that fewer of our decisions do harm (at least intentionally).

So what does this mean exactly? I do not assume, for example, that the woman sitting next to me in the café will pull out a gun and assassinate me. If I truly lacked in any Authentic Trust that others are somewhat similar to myself, I would not be able to sit and drink my tea with any confidence in my safety and continued existence. I would constantly look behind me in case a knife be hurling toward my back. I would cower in fear like a small animal in a dangerous spot. I would be in a constant state of readiness, anticipating some attack. This is clearly a ridiculous manner in which to live one's life, and requires we dispense with ethics and devolve to "Fight or Flight" as our method of interacting with others. Instead, to be functioning members of any society, we all automatically act with a basic level of Trust in our daily lives. This allows society to function smoothly as well as evolve and grow beyond the more primitive Fight or Flight state.

As Watsuji mentions, we act as if each of us in our community will continue to behave in accordance with society's rules and customs. We do not assume that our next-door neighbor is stealing food from our refrigerators while we sleep. If I lacked any awareness, however unconscious, of Authentic Trust, I may not be able to close my eyes at night and get any rest. We also do not assume that the government is plotting to destroy our efforts to live a fruitful life. There is this level of Trust in effect at all times in order for us to function as a community. It should go without saying that were we not to function together as a community, many of the systems in place that we rely upon for our survival would collapse. Medical care, food distribution, education, electricity, clean water, banking, human freedom from governmental oppression, and such would be impossible to provide were we all to stop caring for and cooperating with others. The systems all modern societies require in order to flourish would be unavailable without this level of Trust in our fellow citizens.

But more than just practical cooperation, the moral rules by which we abide are taught to us at a young age and the assumption that we all follow similar rules (different perhaps in ways of religion, origin, and other various factors) must exist in all relationships at all times. Each person in any society by default acts within some structure of agreed morals to receive the benefits that society provides. One can think of this agreed-upon level of moral thinking as a membership of sorts in the club of common society. To be an American, for example, one must agree to certain moral beliefs about freedom, inalienable human rights, edicts like "Killing is wrong", etc. We may disagree at some level regarding these, and they may often be reviewed and discussed, but in essence we buy into such ideas so that we can become functioning members of the

community. Those breaking the laws do so in reaction to the moral white noise of society; and laws exist to counteract such rejections. However, all in all, we go about our daily lives in accordance with a Trust in our fellow citizens or community members.

This Trust allows within it both the natural desire to be ethical and attempts to be unethical. Ethics therefore, for Watsuji and myself, are an Aristotelian first philosophy, the wellspring from which any normative theories can be generated. Our natural state of being, conscious, subconscious, or unconscious, is within a space of automatic moral cooperation and agreement. If we can see the distinction between this type of Trust and the more typical usage of trust, chosen trust, we are able to discuss the effects of Authentic Trust and how being consciously aware of it can, as a result, provide us opportunities, should we wish, to be more moral.

Any act we normally claim to be immoral, whether murder, theft, or lying, cannot and does not exist in any form without Authentic Trust being evident. It is like the law of gravity in that the law of *ningen sonzai* cannot be broken. Authentic Trust cannot be avoided or rejected. It is as fundamental to who we are as humans as the air we breathe. For example, a criminal must react against the assumed state of things in order for his actions to be contrary to the community's "approved" behaviors. If being a criminal requires that one break society's laws, then a criminal must react contrary to the law that is already in existence. This is an obvious statement, but these illegal actions are actions that betray the Trust society places in its constituents. Betrayal, distrust, and chosen trust are all facets of the same jewel that exists as a subset of our automatic Trust in others.

It is important to note that while my natural language occasionally makes it sound as though Authentic Trust is gained, lost, or learned, it must be remembered that because

ningen sonzai (human being) arises from Watsuji's betweenness, Authentic Trust becomes an inescapable element of both our spatiality and temporality (henceforth "spatio-temporality") – it is fundamental to our human nature. This differs from chosen trust, which is born only out of our temporality. Clearly, trusting of this type would indicate a need to accept a person's temporal nature so that we can have expectations, hopes, obligations, and such. But in referring to Authentic Trust, we must remember that it is born out of more than just our temporality. Our spatiality necessitates these interconnections that make up who we are. We are either aware of them or we are unaware of them. Being aware of our interconnections, I claim, provides us better moral options. Authentic Trust is just the natural state of Trust within which we exist. One can still choose to be ethical or unethical in one's life, but one cannot remove the summation of one's *Fudo* so that he or she can become truly independent. We must give up the notion of separateness since it is impossible to fully separate oneself from society. Morally as well, we are interconnected in such a way that our behavior is aligned with our fellow humans.

These two types of trust may seem to have certain overlapping magisterium⁹ that can make it hard to decide as which type of trust to classify an event or moment; as if an event requires us to choose between chosen trust and Authentic Trust. However, any example of chosen trust relies on the automatic existence of Authentic Trust. One is the source of the other; Authentic Trust is the ground from which we can consciously choose to trust or choose to distrust. Normative declarations such as "one benefits from trusting

⁹ This term is used here merely to point out that both types of trust have areas where, it can be argued, there are similarities. It is not a term to denote any fundamental quality of Authentic Trust.

others” or “trusting is a good thing for society” are not about Authentic Trust, but are statements that come from an awareness of our interconnections. Certainly, we can see benefits in choosing to trust in others, in our government, or whatever as pretty easy claims to support. We shall discuss some of these benefits later in this paper. However, any and all normative claims are possible only as a choice in our lives and not as a fundamental state of our ability to “get along”. Authentic Trust is our natural state as humans.

Being aware of our natural state expands the number of interconnections we can see. We normally believe that those in our family or immediate communities are like us. Therefore, we tend to act ethically toward those like us and unethically toward those we perceive as different. Being aware of more similarities, therefore, opens up a wider circle of people toward whom we are more likely to behave ethically. Simply put, being aware of our interconnections expands our ethical circle.

We do this in raising little children. We teach them to see past physical differences such as hair color, skin color, or genetic abnormalities. At a later age, society educates children on seeing past differences in religions, communities based on locations, or sports teams (we have loyalties but insist that children act with “good sportsmanship” and congratulate the other team after competition). In these cases, we are creating awareness in our children of our interconnections. Authentic Trust, as I am arguing, is yet a deeper level of our interconnection than skin color or physical abnormalities. We can learn to see past the differences highlighted by those less aware of our similarities (whether it is between large-scale religious societies, patriotism, or other ingrained views of difference). Once we can see the Iraqi people as interconnected with us at some level,

for example, it becomes much harder for people to act unethically toward them. The natural inclination is to feel empathy with others we see as similar, so being aware of the interconnections we have with Iraqis would provide us more options in our natural ethical behavior than we may have had previously. Authentic Trust is our natural state, but our awareness of it can lead to normative claims and good ethical behavior.

An Obligation to Trust

If we see the interconnectivity and spatiality of our true nature, we identify and recognize a similarity with others in our lives. We feel sympathetic pain, we understand the situation, and are aware of some connection between us. If we were to act authentically, we would naturally feel some obligation to take care of someone we love who may be in pain. Any ethical system would argue that standing by and ignoring someone who is hurting is callous and immoral. Think of a friend who is going through a hard time. We feel sympathy toward this person because we know, almost automatically, what that person is probably feeling and how he or she is suffering. Within us, memory and awareness of that experience arises. We feel sad or despair to see our friend suffer. Such is the source of our ethics...the desire to do good things or to not hurt those in our lives. Coupled with the need to keep society functioning, one could argue that we need to trust in others in order to maintain relationships and participate in the society or community in which we desire to participate. Therefore, we may have an obligation to trust ("chosen trust"); otherwise we would be needlessly cruel and uncharitable. I don't think anyone can argue for the likelihood of a safe and continued existence in such an untrusting environment. But we must be careful not to conflate an obligation to trust with an obligation to Trust.

The idea of obligation, or duty, is prevalent in Kant's ethical philosophy for example. When applied to the idea of trusting others or being trustworthy, one could easily argue (as I have earlier) for the fact that society would break down if people stopped trusting one another. And while Kant's approach stems from a purely individual, conscious decision arising out of internal discourse, the idea of duty can apply to our discussion on Trust. For example, in order for Kant's theory to function, it needs to be applied throughout society, not just for Kant himself. We cannot expect each of us to have a different, self-relativistic approach to ethics else we could define good behavior in any manner we see fit and undoubtedly many problems would crop up from that. Instead, we must come to some agreement to abide by the same rules. We are obliged to play on the same team in order to reap the benefits of being on the team ("the community"). I've already argued that we need to agree to some ethical theories, or act with similar moral rules, for society to function. Doing so allows for dissent and disagreement as part of daily life without invalidating the necessity of agreement at some level. We may bicker on what constitutes murder versus manslaughter, for example, but we all should agree that killing is wrong if we are living within the same society¹⁰. Unity in an ethical framework can allow for disagreement without destroying said framework. Nonetheless, larger ethical theories need to have some basis of consensus in order for them to work. Otherwise, our measurement against what is and isn't ethical remains relative and completely up to each individual. Watsuji, in fact, would claim that non-

¹⁰ A good example of this would be animal rights. It is commonly accepted that killing animals is wrong (as we see with laws against torture, vivisection, dog-fighting, etc.). Where most animal rights ethicists seem to spend their time is in when is it acceptable to kill an animal when benefits to humans (or other animals) are present. The moral agreement that killing is wrong allows for much discussion and disagreement within such a claim over the extent, impact, necessity, and such.

agreed upon ethics and morals are not taken seriously, as all of us grow up in a climate or milieu where good and bad, right and wrong, taboo and permitted, are all written into our psyche through our shared lessons and experiences. Avoiding these sorts of shared ethics (or ethical thinking) is as impossible as ignoring one's own primary language.

Watsuji claims that Trust is essential to our functioning as a community. But he adds one more crucial point, that even in acts that would jeopardize the idea that we are obliged to trust each other, "such basic trust does not crumble. Indeed, its constancy enables a pickpocket or a blackmailer to engage in his activity." (Watsuji 267) Trust, in this case, seems pervasive. It exists at such a fundamental level of society that we simply can't find an occurrence in life that doesn't have Trust existing at its core. Criminal acts exist in the presupposition of Trust. Unethical behavior, from lying or stealing to inflicting physical pain or even murder, are considered wrong due mainly to the fact that their result is the breaking of this bond or connection, however unconscious, that we call Trust. So from Watsuji's perspective, there isn't so much an obligation of trust as there is an inability not to Trust. It is impossible to avoid. Obligation is irrelevant in this sense. In order for society to exist in the first place, Authentic Trust must be in evidence and it does not matter whether we feel any obligation to be more or less trusting. We can argue, however, that while there may be no obligation to trust, it is a wise choice. Investing "chosen trust" in others does bring positive benefits. But in the sense that we must choose to trust each other in order to sustain society it seems superfluous.

Watsuji also is aware that an obligation must consider one's temporality in order to trust. Trust presupposes some future event, even if it is seconds away. John Maraldo mentions, in his essay *A Japanese Vision of Being Ethical*,

To trust, Watsuji says, means to assume a definite attitude toward the future, a future that is connected to the past in the moment of trusting. We base our trust in others on their reliability or trustworthiness, but we also make a wager concerning the future. (Maraldo 8)

This wager is not ignored by Watsuji, but given less attention, in the *Rinrigaku*, than spatiality. As we shall see, many other philosophers have argued for trust in some aspect or another, but they fail to either see Trust's primacy in our lives or they fail to account for spatiality. They conceive of trust as a risk in the hopes that a future event comes to pass. Watsuji felt that trust is certainly a risk taken against a future hope, but that our interconnections, in the moment, are also where Trust is realized. Watsuji devotes an entire chapter to the importance of temporality as well as spatiality in *ningen sonzai* and says, "[t]hat *ningen sonzai* is spatial at once means that it is also temporal." (Watsuji, 181) This isn't so different from most accounts of trust with regard to obligations and wagers. Where Watsuji's theory differs from so many is the importance it places on spatiality in our ethics. The outgrowths of Authentic Trust may bring us to consider the temporal nature of others in our obligations, but Authentic Trust is generated out of our spatio-temporality, not one or the other.

In order to fortify ourselves against those unwilling or unable to act in a trustworthy way, we enact laws to regulate certain actions (moral and otherwise). These laws may originate from a need to reign in disruptive elements in society or from people in power imposing their will on others. In a society where people are raised being taught moral lessons, laws become safeguards against those whom may make bad choices or mistakes, or intentionally rebel against a law. In fact, we find countless examples of people violating just laws that the government enforces simply because many people aren't trustworthy (can't be depended on) to act in ways proper to the maintenance of

society. But Authentic Trust exists as the source of our ethical thinking, for even if we attempt to be unethical, we are reacting against this reality of Trust's primacy. Any duty or obligation we may feel to trust is additional to the underlying substructure of Authentic Trust in our lives. Watsuji points it that "...trust is an adventure or a wager. Any human relationship, whatever it may be, is based on trust of this sort: 'trust is a capacity necessary for communal society.'" (Watsuji 270)

The Metaphysics of Trust

To understand the shift that an awareness of Authentic Trust can bring, we can try to illustrate this idea by looking at the ways a molecular biologist or physicist would perceive the universe. To gain a better understanding of the nature of our bodies or the universe, the scientist works to get his or her perception to smaller and smaller levels of reality as they go from molecules to atoms to quarks and so on. Each new level generates a new discovery and a deeper understanding of the universe's true nature. To clearly see what I purport is the relevancy of Authentic Trust, we can do the same thing but in reverse. Humans start out learning to trust those closest to them. At birth, we automatically trust our parents. Watsuji points out "A child is, from the outset, trained in this way to approve of what its mother approves of." (Watsuji 127) As we grow, we begin to trust our larger family, friends, our community, and then possibly our country or government (while we may distrust leaders and people outside our comfort zone, we still trust in the enactment of laws, rules about owning property, the basic philosophy that drives our country, rules about driving vehicles, etc. Patriotism could even be seen as a strong trust in the character of one's own country). Our ability to trust grows in size with

age. To see Authentic Trust in action though, we must further expand our perception and view the human race as one large being¹¹.

It may be that we belong to certain religions, ideologies, countries, or conversations (by conversations, I mean the ongoing communication of ideas like human rights, democracy, and basic news stories that cross geographic borders). But as humans, we all Trust that we desire sustenance, have feelings of love toward our children, willfully participate in our society, and possess the basic qualities of being a human. It would not be too far off the truth to claim that a person I have not met in a faraway country desires the same comfort, warmth, and understanding of the world as I do. This person I've never met, regardless of location or ideology, feels happiness, feels fear, acts in accordance with his or her own philosophy, etc. These points may seem obvious in some respects but my awareness that this stranger has human qualities is a glimpse of the reality of Authentic Trust. Their existence in society requires Authentic Trust because this is the place from which any and all ethics arise. We can see, for example, that as societies become aware of our interconnectedness, human rights becomes an important ethic. An acknowledgement of another's needs and value brings about an understanding that others, even in distant societies, are connected to us and desire the same treatment by others and by communities. Ads on TV use emotional language to create connections between us and those individuals on the screen (perhaps to convince us to donate money or food to the poor). Successfully convincing us of the connection results in an empathy toward the person in the advertisement and from this we desire to act ethically (donating

¹¹ It is an interesting idea that the Gaia Hypothesis would be an expression of a level of trust where the entire human race sees its connection and its law of *ningen* expanded to include the entire biosphere. While we won't be discussing the topic in this thesis, Authentic Trust and Environmental Ethics would be a fascinating topic to explore.

money, writing our congressman, etc.) This is an example of how compassion and understanding arise from an awareness of the true law of *ningen sonzai* (human be-ing).

We can better understand this concept of Authentic Trust as we expand our sphere of trust. Our ability to make proper ethical decisions grows out of this understanding of the oneness we all share. It is the source of empathy and compassion in each of us.

Robert Carter explains Watsuji's idea as,

That is to say, whereas most ethical theorists in the West have based their pronouncements on the assumption that human beings are, foremost, individuals, who then set about establishing community, Watsuji argues that we are foremost both social and individual and that ethics is established, in its true sense, as a unity of these two, which leads to an emptiness, a selflessness, a nonduality that expresses itself as benevolence or compassion. (Carter 1996, 331)

Once we understand that ethics arise from this place between the imaginary individual and the community, we possess the means to act ethically toward those less and less close to us. Our ethical decisions therefore rely less on prescriptive-based rules and more on a perspective-based vision of reality and our true state of human be-ing. We are reminded of Watsuji's earlier comment, "To trust in a person is to place one's trust in the inner independence of this person." and can begin to see that our best ethical choices and theories inevitably arise from this understanding (Watsuji 268). We avoid decisions that are selfish and malevolent when we consider others in our decision-making. We do not need specific ethical theories necessarily. Our moral choices are a response to the empathy and compassion Authentic Trust generates.

The Effects of Trust in Our Lives

If Trust is in existence in all social interactions and relationships, and we cannot escape its effect on us, is it a good choice to consciously decide to Trust? Why should

we even care about it at all if we can't avoid it? Because being aware of Trust in our lives allows us to develop proper and right actions, particularly in instances where the correct moral choice is not usually clear to us. In such a case, being aware of our interconnections would possibly offer some clarity to our question of what is right and what is wrong. Authentic Trust is a framework and being aware of it provides us a choice of ethical options more likely to fit any situation, as opposed to simple, narrow edicts that may have previously been our focus.

As I have argued thus far, Authentic Trust is the notion of understanding our similar desires, fears, and needs. Being aware of it brings about an empathy and compassion that allows for a better understanding of our interconnectedness. Being unaware of it, conversely, limits our ethical choices as it clouds us to the reality of our true spatial nature. If we look to those in our lives that we trust the most, our decisions often consider their interests; whether or not the effects of our choices negatively or positively affect them. We would not normally act in such a way as to hurt those to whom we are close and with whom we have much in common. We are wired to choose to trust those in our immediate family. Our first years are such that we are wholly dependent upon our parents and easily find our lives completely consumed with the need to trust. So imagine then if we were to expand our habitual level of trust to people we know less intimately? While I would or would not be hurt or damaged by a choice I made, I'm more likely to include others when I'm aware that they are interconnected with me. The compassion that arises from this understanding of our deep, fundamental connection helps inform my choices, better formulates and augments my ethical theory, and leads me to make better choices for myself and for them.

Now we can further expand our circle of trust and see that perhaps people we do not know, in a different country, have the same human qualities that we do. Would we be less likely to go to war with other countries, to ignore abuses perpetrated by their governments, or to ignore the fight for their basic human rights? Moral behavior, such as donating food to the poor, comes about because we feel compassion toward those who are hungry, even though they may be a world away. This is because we recognize the desire not to be hungry is a universal desire in all humans. Watsuji recognizes this expanding approach too.

But, in my opinion, this circle, which may well have a variety of different centers, cannot be conceived of except as a unity of contradictories. Yet this is impossible, at least insofar as a finite circle is concerned. Therefore...the radius of this circle [is] infinite...each center indicated the individuality of personality, and the circle, with an infinite radius, indicates the infinity of personality. In infinity, all phases of discrimination terminate in identity. (Watsuji 16)

We may not trust strangers with the keys to our homes, but not trusting strangers is a practical rejection of chosen trust. Not everyone is trustworthy. We can still Trust that the stranger is a human and has the same human qualities as we do (and is fallible as we all are) but we don't have to trust that they will make the same moral decision we would make. This is the difference between chosen trust and Authentic Trust. Later, we will see specific examples of the effects of trust if we are to expand our circle of awareness to levels of business and corporations as well as international conflicts.

Let's look at an example to illustrate the powerful effects of having an awareness of Authentic Trust in our ethical lives. Imagine you come home one day to find a burglar in your house robbing you. It is a basic human reaction to fear for your own safety. There is nothing morally wrong with defending yourself and your loved ones from a

dangerous or aggressive person intent on harming you. But is the best ethical action to immediately see a burglar as an evil person and retaliate (shoot him, barricade him in a room, call the police) without pause? I don't think anyone would fault you for taking action to protect yourself, punish the person who betrayed your trust (and society's) by entering your home uninvited, or protecting your possessions. But when our awareness of our connectedness is expanded, and we approach the problem from a place that is mindful of Trust, more options are available to us than previously considered. If you were to become aware that the burglar was not out to hurt you specifically, you may come to the conclusion, through empathy and compassion, that the burglar's motives were, perhaps, less sadistic than just robbery. Perhaps there are other situations that may have caused the burglar to commit the crime. Your moral eyes would be open to more possibilities than previously imagined. His act of betrayal may be a desperate action from a man without many other options. He may also have been misguided into making a poor decision. It would be out of this empathy that you might defend yourself as well as decide not to call the police, press charges, or even make the decision to charitably help solve the problem that drove him to steal. The recent example of the victim of a mugging buying the mugger a meal after the attempted crime demonstrates well the idea I set forth here.

Admittedly, at first blush, this doesn't seem too realistic or practical. Having had my house broken into and my possessions stolen, it felt good when the culprits were caught and jailed. I even installed a security system out of a lack of chosen trust in my neighborhood's safety. But when we look at the problem with the understanding that our actions stem from the same places in each of us, regardless of the decision, other avenues

of ethical behavior and more moral choices open up to us. We are better able to act morally and not be tied to a set rule of behavior. Trust allows us to be aware of the common qualities that we all share, regardless of race, class, or opportunity. Most ethical systems speak of turning the other cheek, helping those less fortunate, and acting from a place of compassion. I do not argue that those who break society's laws should not be punished. I do, however, assert that we can examine our moral choices and find the best answer when our understanding of our interconnectedness is developed.

Is Distrust a Challenge to Watsuji?

What Watsuji and I are claiming is that Trust is the foundation of ethical thinking in such a way that our ethical decisions arise as a byproduct of an awareness of our interconnection, our betweenness, rather than initiating from a prescriptive law or set of rules. Rules and laws are a result of compassion and empathy we feel toward others but they are not the source of our empathy. Prescriptive laws cannot account for the inclination we all feel to be ethical and good toward those about whom we care. One must care about another to willfully choose to act ethically toward the other. Authentic Trust, however, is present in all cases and the source of all ethical thinking, theory, or action. It is a byproduct of the betweenness Watsuji describes and its existence in our actions makes it a requirement for all ethical thinking.

To act in opposition to chosen trust is to act in what is most likely an unethical manner. But as I have argued one cannot act at all in opposition to Authentic Trust. An awareness of Authentic Trust, however, is an awareness that others will behave as we behave, that we are all linked by common lessons and cultural guidelines. Not trusting one's fellow human beings would require one to act in ways counter-productive to

community needs (and therefore one's own). In order to be in a community, even if one chooses to reject being part of a community, one must unconsciously accept that there is a level of Trust in existence throughout our lives. But one may ask why people need to be in a community. I spoke to this earlier when I argued that one couldn't escape one's community. The traditional definition is limited to proximity while Watsuji's community is more of a culture. Even remotely, we behave in traditional ways, use our native language, and think in ways that are culturally conditioned. The community itself exists because of these shared habits and customs and only continues to exist when those within the community jointly consider others to be part of the same. It is the result of a lifetime of teachings and one's climate imprinting upon our illusory individualism an ethical framework and allows us to behave ethically. In reality, we are an amalgam of the millions of influences that bombard the human even before he or she is born. To reject that is to reject one's community and even the source of one's own individuality, or even human "be-ing". *Ningen sonzai's* spatial quality is the essence of being human in any community. Temporality allows us to exist within time, to have duration and a predictable future. The fundamental quality of being human is our connection with other humans through this idea. Watsuji elaborates when he claims,

The moral personality brings feelings of obligation and of responsibility into a system. It emerges when individuals of the tribe are developed to their fullest extent. In this sense, the fullest development of the moral personality can be said to be the *terminus ad quem* of moral development. And the educational influence of society is important in this development. Therefore, an individual moral personality can be said to be a product of the tribe. (Watsuji 127)

Watsuji claims here that our ethics and moral selves are in essence a product of the community in which we are raised and develop. We can try to reject the teachings and

influences of the tribe but we would in essence be rejecting the summation of influences that have made each of us who we are. Each and every lesson we've ever learned has been a result of community influence or existence. Some lessons may be location-specific; religion, or language, or food for instance. Other lessons are shared among larger communities; such as human rights, celebration of holidays, or a desire for peace.

So if we were to reject the Authentic Trust in our community, what would be left outside the layers of our humanness that have formed to make us who we are? The answer is nothing. Our individuality is a product of our separate perceptive abilities (seeing, hearing, memory, etc.) but, as Watsuji has demonstrated, this is an abstract quality of *ningen sonzai* (human be-ing). Rejecting one's community is therefore, in essence rejecting all the qualities that make up each of us. And while it may offend our (abstract) ego that we are not individuals *in toto*, this awareness connects us with each person we encounter. We cannot separate ourselves from the sum of our influences and so cannot reject Authentic Trust at all.

An example is suitable here. Let's picture a person who, for reasons unknown, is unable to trust others. His doors have multiple locks, he carries firearms to protect himself from others, and he lacks any real interaction with society. We could even go as far as someone who may grow his own food and generate his own power so as to remove all dependency upon, or interaction with, others. This person attempts to "zero out" his level of trust (maybe he has a cognitive condition, or experiences that resulted in trauma, etc.). Perhaps he even finds a way to so completely remove any chosen trust in his life that he never sees anyone and rejects all visitors. This person is, as far as we can conceive, completely lacking in trust. It is evident now, however, that this non-trusting

person still depends upon Authentic Trust just to be in existence. The locks on his door assume that someone will ignore society's trust by breaking certain laws (in this case, breaking and entering). His avoidance of human interaction assumes that others enjoy common human interaction. Even the most closeted recluse becomes a willing devotee of Authentic Trust in order to rebel against society. In fact, this hypothetical person had to have grown up within a community long enough to know when and how to rebel. He had to learn how to grow his own food, the cultural habits of receiving or barring a visitor (such as door locks), and where to purchase his home, his own power generation, etc. To the extent that any person could live a life without Trust, and I think that this is impossible, they cannot bring their desired lack of Trust to true fulfillment while remaining an actual human being.

I have shown the fundamental reality that Authentic Trust is in our nature as human beings as well as the necessity of chosen trust in our interactions within our communities. Also, I hope that it is clear now that society cannot function without each and every one of us trusting in each other's "inner independence". "Human action cannot...take place apart from the presence of trust to one degree or another." (Watsuji 268) There is not much about each of us that isn't a result of the qualities that climate and community have built within us. But while Trust may exist whether we acknowledge it or not, to be ethical and make good ethical decisions, an awareness of and focus on our interconnectivity are helpful. And the more we focus on our spatiality and understand that we are as much a part of our community as we are individuals (the double-negation aspect of *ningen sonzai*), we find that our awareness expands to include larger and larger

groups. By doing so we widen our ethical circle and can become better ethical agents, if we so choose.

“Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.” - Martin Luther King, Jr

“When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.” - John Muir

Western Approaches to Trust

A cursory examination of Western philosophical literature would show us that Trust, as a factor in ethics, is not solely the product of Eastern thought. Book after book regales with examples of how trust, factored into a situation, develops a better result. Most see trust much like a virtue, something nearly tangible that can be gained or lost. Philosophers and writers, such as Alphonso Lingis, Eric Uslaner, Robert Solomon and Fernando Flores, are aware of the importance of creating bonds through trust, registering the knowledge of the importance of interconnectivity while stopping short of seeing it as something more than an act or a path to a goal. These are chosen trust approaches as I define them, downstream in our moral river from feelings of empathy toward others. Only Heidegger, with his concept of *Dasein*, cuts close to the mark with a re-envisioning of the definition of Being. But each of these still fail to see the extent to which who we are is a product of our community and therefore fail to see Trust as the source of our empathy, further upstream than any morality.

Watsuji’s approach differs from common ethical theory discussions in the West. Most theories are individual focused, relying on each person to make the right decision in accordance with a rule or virtue. Watsuji’s approach rejects the individual as a concrete object separate from the world around us. By ignoring our connection with the other as a fundamental part of being ethical, we are bound to come upon disagreement and end up resorting to force or coercion in order to ensure the other person adheres to whatever

ethical theory we purport. Who is right and who has the best ethical theory is left to argument and war to resolve. If we open ourselves up and take the risk trust requires we find that conflict becomes unnecessary and counterproductive.

Western Perspectives of Trust

One way to see clearly what Watsuji and I claim is the fundamental quality of Trust in our nature as humans is to look at some comparative views of trust. These views, almost without exception, are what I define as chosen trust, the trust decided upon during one's day-to-day activities. One such writer on the topic of trust is Eric M. Uslaner, a professor of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland. He argues that there is a moral foundation of trust. Trust, for him, arises out of our sense of morality. He focuses on what I defined as "chosen trust," calling it "strategic trust," and sees it as a factor in the connection between individuals. This connection isn't at a fundamental level however. He is correct in seeing trust as a quality to strive toward, as a doorway through which one becomes moral. Certainly, it is my claim that through trusting we become moral as well. To do so, however, Uslaner looks to us to first assume the other person is trustworthy in order to relate to him or her in a moral way. He writes,

Presuming that strangers are trustworthy can't be based on evidence. So it must have a different foundation, and I maintain that it is a moral foundation (cf. Mansbridge 1999). Trust in other people is based upon a fundamental ethical assumption: that other people share your fundamental values. (Uslaner 2)

Uslaner sounds like he is speaking about Authentic Trust here, where there is the assumption is that others share values. In some ways, he does come very close to the same definition, but I think he does not go far enough to see that Trust is the source of, instead of the result of, the awareness of our interconnection and our

shared values. He points out instead that in order to trust others, they should have, to borrow a phrase, “a belief in the goodwill of the other” (Seligman 43) and share fundamental values (these values are actually a common belief that “the world is a beneficent place composed of people who are well-intentioned (and thus trustworthy)” (Uslaner 2)). This seems rather circular, that trust comes out of a shared belief that people are trustworthy. Now, it would be ridiculous to claim this makes trust purely illusory, as it is clear that the act of trusting is common in any relationship. Uslaner, however, asks us to trust others for the positive improvements we would see if this were applied. “...moralistic trust is a commandment to treat people as if they were trustworthy. It is a paraphrasing of the Golden Rule (or Kant’s “categorical imperative”), which can easily be seen to demand trust.” (Uslaner 18) He is discussing the recognition of our spatial quality as humans, but this is not recognition of our nature but a recognition that trust as a normative tool needed to be moral. Instead of expanding our awareness, as Watsuji suggests, we are asked to agree to learn or be receptive to “demand”. Because Uslaner appears aware of our innate trust of strangers at one level, I think he defines both Authentic Trust and chosen trust (my definitions) in propinquity in that both occur after morality exists. This is not what I claim in this thesis. I argue that there is a specific type of trust (Authentic Trust) that occurs before morality and ethics and is not normative.

Uslaner does appear to understand the interconnectivity aspect of trust. He states,

But at some fundamental level, people accept the argument that they have common bonds that make cooperation vital. And these common bonds rest upon assumptions about human nature. (Uslaner 2)

These assumptions, the previously stated optimism that people are trustworthy and the world will continue to become a better place, are not the point being made in this paper. Uslaner sees trust as necessary, and through cooperation and assumptions about good will, we find ourselves to be more ethical. But we are only seeing part of our interconnectivity if we ignore Authentic Trust. Uslaner wants us to see people in a good light, in a positive way and I do not think this is required in order to become a moral person. He writes,

This moral foundation of trust means that we must do more than simply cooperate with others we know are trustworthy. We must have positive views of strangers, of people who are different from ourselves and presume that they are trustworthy. (Uslaner 2)

Here we see Uslaner “presume”-ing that others are trustworthy again. Trust “demands” that we view others as trustworthy according to him. We must trust in order for everything to get better. I don’t disagree with the sentiment, but real trust, even the chosen sort, doesn’t necessarily require a positive outlook on another’s behavior. Very compassionate people often trust others despite the person’s bad intentions or actions. I can trust that my friend will lie to me again, or trust that a drug addict will not succeed at rehabilitation, and still be ethical in my interactions with him. Trust is an understanding of our shared nature and how we arise from our movement of double negation, no positive outlook is required.

In the end, Uslaner believes that trusting in others is somehow dependent on optimism and utility. We trust others because we think that things will get better and each of us will be treated more fairly. He writes,

A culture of trust depends upon the idea that things will get better for those who have less and that it is in our power to make the world better. While trust in others does not depend heavily upon our individual

experiences, it does reflect our collective experiences, especially on the linkage between our sense of optimism and the distribution of wealth in a society. (Uslaner 3)

He is not incorrect in what he writes. Certainly, I've argued that trusting in others assumes the temporal nature of *ningen sonzai*, according to Watsuji, as well as recognizing the connections (spatiality) between the truster and the trustee. You can see shades of Watsuji's *Fudo* (Climate) in the above quote also; he seems to understand the importance of "collective experiences". But the idea that trusting cannot support pessimism and inequality seems a stretch. I cannot see any reason why one needs to depend on equality and optimism to trust others. Trust can occur among a variety of incomes, ages, and backgrounds and we do not need to think the person will improve in order to have Trust in their states as morally-able individuals. One need not work toward the betterment of someone poorer or richer to be aware of the Trust that exists. The recognition that people desire to be ethical and moral is as trustable as the recognition that people can sometimes be selfish or make bad decisions. To remain steadfastly optimistic would make it hard to depend upon anyone over time as experience may show us that trust (chosen) is a bad risk to take. Nonetheless, Uslaner argues that,

If we believe that we are connected to people who are different from ourselves and have a moral responsibility for their fate, we see that trust is a fundamentally egalitarian ideal. When we take others' moral claims seriously, we are treating them as our equals. A belief in hierarchy is inimical to moralistic trust. (Uslaner 3)

A simple refutation of this idea will be found in our discussion of Trust and Business Ethics in a later chapter where I demonstrate that trust between unequals (in this case, a boss and his or her employees) is not only possible, but ideal. For now, I do think that Uslaner is strong in his understanding of the interconnectivity aspect of trust while

missing the point on equality and “a sense that we can make it better.” (Uslaner 4) This is very optimistic of him but it has placed trust as a utility, or tool, that we use to make better relationships. He sees trust as a chosen virtue or action, not the true state of each of us.

The late Robert Solomon, a former Professor of Business and Philosophy, and Fernando Flores, current President, Chairman, and CEO of Business Design Associates, Inc., focus less on the temporal nature of trust (like Uslaner’s optimism) and instead they see trust as a skill to learn. But one similarity between their idea and Watsuji’s is that what they define as “authentic trust” (a term which I’ve adopted and capitalized) includes, like Watsuji’s trust and my Trust, the possibility of betrayal.

The focus of trust – or what we will call authentic trust – is not just the hoped-for outcome of this or that event or transaction. Trust is not merely reliability, predictability, or what is sometimes understood as trustworthiness. It is always the relationship within which trust is based and which trust itself helps create. Authentic trust does not necessitate the exclusion of distrust. To the contrary, it embraces the possibilities of distrust and betrayal as an essential part of trust. (Solomon 6)

This is a strong point of their argument, that trust is more than just one half of the dualistic relationship of trust and distrust. Trust, for them, is encompassing of both trust and distrust, turning it into a less fragile idea than most think. They argue,

Without the possibility of betrayal there can be no trust, only reliance and predictability... Trust involves risk, and authentic trust involves knowingly going into the unknown – together. The consequences of such risks are often disappointment and failure. That does not necessarily mean that the trust has been betrayed, or that the trust has been destroyed. (Solomon 128)

I agree with them that trust exists whether we accept it or not¹². This is a good argument for them to make, as this agrees with what Watsuji pointed out previously that in order to break trust, one must react against the existence of trust. But Solomon and Flores fail to recognize the metaphysical aspect of this idea of a more encompassing Trust and instead see it as a skill to develop. They compare it to love in that we choose to love another, we do not just fall into it.

Trust, like love, is an emotional skill, an ongoing, dynamic aspect of relationships.... we do not simply find ourselves trusting, after months or perhaps years of comfortable familiarity. We make decisions to trust. We make promises and tacit commitments. We see them through.... Trust isn't something we 'have', or a medium or an atmosphere within which we operate. Trust is something we do, something we make. (Solomon 7)

I agree that some types of trust (what I call "chosen trust") are conscious decisions. We even make so many that often the thoughts are barely noticeable and have long receded into the background noise of our minds. This eventually ends up a learned skill like breathing (we don't usually think of breathing anymore) or speaking our native language. Like Uslaner, "[w]e must have positive views of strangers" and learn to see our relationships differently so as to improve them. But I do not believe we can really say that we always consciously choose to do so. Watsuji uses the example of a drowning man calling out for help. In such a case, he is not consciously choosing to look to the closest person for rescue. He acts with the automatic assumption that the person nearby would attempt to help. Trust exists before any thoughts arise because Trust, I argue, is innate and part of our nature. It is not a situation, to use this example, where a person will take a moment and choose to trust someone on a dock based on past experiences or

¹² I use their non-capitalization to illustrate their usage of the term. I do this throughout the chapter.

sociological divides. There is a level of Trust that Solomon and Flores miss that I purport. Our interconnections run much deeper than is realized.

Alphonso Lingis also speaks of trust as a strong method of interconnection. But this interconnection is not one of a realization of the true nature of our humanity but as an act that should be risked against a lack of knowledge.

Trust, which is as compelling as belief, is not produced by knowledge. In trust one adheres to something one sees only partially or unclearly or understands only vaguely or ambiguously. One attaches to someone whose words or whose movements one does not understand, whose reasons or motives one does not see. (Lingis 64)

This contradicts with Watsuji in the understanding of the depth of Trust's involvement in our lives. Lingis says trust is a chosen act, done despite uncertainty and not with clarity. Watsuji disagrees with this where he says "Human action cannot...take place apart from the presence of trust to one degree or another." (Watsuji 268) For Watsuji trust is a state we exist in, like water to a fish, while for Lingis, it's a risk taken despite assumed contrary evidence (Lingis references such evidence in statements like "The act of trust is a leap into the unknown" (Lingis 65)). By his account, we should make such a leap ignoring our lack of knowledge. This is not, for most, standard operating procedure in our lives, if we intend to be rational people.

This seems like a common refrain in Western thinkers, that trust is given or taken, risked or earned, and has similar qualities to most virtues. And I agree with the idea that trust given generates a reciprocal return of trust from others, thereby increasing the recognition of trust and connection between two or more individuals. It is after all, my claim that trusting brings about better moral choices and behavior. As we shall see later, there are numerous positive effects that are born out of a trusting relationship. It is wise

to take the risk to trust; to consciously work to treat others well. But Trust, for all these thinkers, remains something separate from our person, acquired and not a realization of our true nature. Watsuji sees the more fundamental or metaphysical aspect of trust as part of *ningen sonzai* (human be-ing) and in our existence, whether one has ever consciously learned to trust or not. They see trust from the wrong direction, looking through chosen trust to see morality when in fact, morality is born out of Authentic Trust and results in the ability to learn to trust and treat others as we wish to be treated.

Dasein, Ningen Sonzai, and Trust

Watsuji, in the *Rinrigaku*, is influenced greatly by Heidegger's *Being and Time*. He found much interest in Heidegger's concept of *Dasein* and notes that the concept of the spatio-temporal nature of *Dasein* resembles his definition of *ningen sonzai*. *Dasein*, in Heidegger's words, is "[t]his entity which each of us is himself and which includes inquiring as one of the possibilities of its Being..." (Heidegger 27) and is translated to mean "Being-there". Like *ningen sonzai*, *Dasein* is a concept of the self that leaves behind the subject-object distinction where the individual is separate from the world. Heidegger, thinking the question of being had been ignored by previous philosophers, desired a concept of the self that allowed us to ask questions about Being. Watsuji recognized the similar concepts of "losing the self" in both ideas, but he criticizes *Dasein* as seeing the loss of self as a negative and inauthentic result. In addition, Heidegger fails to see the connection between the ontological review of Being and our natural ethical state. Watsuji writes,

The annihilation of the "self," taken in this sense, is the negation of the negation of authenticity and constitutes the basis of every selfless morality

since ancient times. The loss of the “self,” as expounded by Heidegger, does not at all imply the aforementioned negation of negation. What is given by Heidegger’s position merely buries selfness in oblivion and is far from being capable of establishing self-conquest, sacrifice, self-denial and so forth. (Watsuji 225-6)

He continues,

What he describes as the public (*das Man*) is simply the “loss of the self,” in the sense that the authentic “self” loses its characteristic feature of being a self and stands under the sway of the “other,” an averaged individual deprived of his unique characteristics. He falls victim to finitude as a manner of individual being. This has nothing to do with the realization of an authenticity that goes beyond an individual in a nondualistic way. To regard self-negation only as the “loss of the self” is the result of his having identified the “self” with authenticity. Here Heidegger loses sight of the important significance of “self-denial” and any way of understanding it. (Watsuji 226)

Watsuji saw that *Dasein* ignored the double negation aspect of the *ningen sonzai*, instead treating the interconnected culture as an inauthentic way of *Dasein*. Watsuji, on the other hand, saw the communal nature of a culture as a source of ethics and therefore a positive thing and an anathema to the individual-focused ethic. Since Watsuji’s *ningen sonzai* has so many similarities to *Dasein*, I thought it would be important in our analysis of Trust to look at *Dasein* comparatively in order to better clarify the distinction Watsuji developed between his philosophy and that of the wider philosophical audience of the German school. For if Trust is generated out of our movement of double negation as an essential aspect of our being, then *Dasein*, to Watsuji, lacks the obvious connection to our ethics, relying on the integrity of one’s own *Dasein* and less on integration with the other.

Watsuji acknowledges the step Heidegger has made in his conception of the human as spatial. He says, “in his attempt to make spatiality constitutive of the being of the subject, Heidegger advances a step forward over Bergson”. (Watsuji 174) But in doing so, Watsuji argues that *Dasein* misses the point of human interconnectivity. The

spatial nature of *ningen sonzai* is constitutive of the communal nature of our lives. As explained earlier, we exist with myriad shared experiences, beliefs, and knowledge. Heidegger's error was to see this as undesirable and to be avoided inasmuch that it is possible. Watsuji instead sees the interconnectivity as inescapable and unavoidable, even if one adopted the life of an ascetic. The space of human interconnections, our ongoing shared cultures, is our spatiality.

...the spatiality inherent in 'a being there' is, in the final analysis, attributed to the relationship of concern between I and tools and has nothing to do with the relationship of communication among human beings. (Watsuji 174)

The relationship of communication among human beings was of paramount importance to Watsuji. But here he makes a mistake here in his analysis of Heidegger's point. He, I believe, misreads, in Heidegger's philosophy, the relationship between humans as that of between *Dasein* and a tool. What Heidegger refers to as "Others" are not tools in the sense that a hammer or computer is a tool. They are the same as us, being-in-world. He argues,

...even in this characterization does one not start by marking out and isolating the 'I' so that one must then seek some way of getting over to the Others from this isolated subject? To avoid this misunderstanding we must notice in what sense we are talking about 'the Others'. By 'Others' we do not mean everyone else but me – those over against whom the 'I' stands out. They are rather those from whom, for the most part, one does not distinguish oneself – those among whom one is too. (Heidegger 154)

For Heidegger, we share the world with Others and each person is like us, a Being-in-the-world. He doesn't equate people with tools, and he doesn't dismiss the fact that "entities are neither present-at-hand nor ready-to-hand" (Heidegger 154). Instead, Others exist as much as each of us does and they do not fall into

the same hierarchy of objects as tools or anything ready-to-hand. In this, Heidegger comes close to what Watsuji argues is the nature of *ningen sonzai*.

Watsuji believes that there is a problem in Heidegger's spatiality and argues that he also prioritizes temporality over spatiality (Heidegger has yet to publish *Being in Space*). It is not clear that Watsuji has supported this claim with enough evidence though. He writes,

This is why spatiality, even though it was conceived of as that structure which is characteristic of the existence of the subject, still stopped short of being a spatiality inherent in the practical interconnections of human beings. This is why he considered temporality to be of far greater importance than spatiality. (Watsuji 174)

Heidegger does not think this way in my opinion. While he does not make the metaphysical leap Watsuji does in being aware of our double negation (Heidegger only sees a single negation), he does see *Dasein* as having a spatial quality. Heidegger noted,

In utilizing public means of transport and in making use of information services such as the newspaper, every Other is like the next. This Being-with-one-another dissolves one's own *Dasein* completely into the kind of Being of 'the Others', in such a way, indeed, that the Others, as distinguishable and explicit, vanish more and more. (Heidegger 164)

This sounds suspiciously like Watsuji's claim of the influence of the community, or "Climate", in which one is raised and the abstraction of the true individual, separate from the universe. Heidegger did see that there is the possibility of negating the individual (to use Watsuji's terminology) and dissolving into the community in such a way as to be inauthentic. This was, however, a loss of self not espoused by Watsuji. Heidegger was aware of *Dasein*'s connection to Others. Instead of being a source of ethics, however, the connection runs the risk of dissolving into the Them and losing its true nature. This is exactly what Watsuji argues is part of our natural state and a strong similarity between

Dasein and *ningen sonzai*. Heidegger however fears for an ontological dismissal of the self in order to be like others. Watsuji's claim is that this is impossible though, as the double-negation aspect of our selves prevents the true possibility of this concept of self-loss. We share the same experiences, are connected in our behaviors, and act together in our reactions to the world around us while retaining some individuality. This cannot be avoided. Heidegger comes close to seeing the equal nature of spatial and temporal humanity when he concludes,

Thus with *Dasein*'s spatiality, existential-temporal analysis seems to come to a limit, so that this entity which we call "*Dasein*", must be considered as 'temporal' 'and also' as spatial coordinately. (Heidegger 418).

But Heidegger fails to make the connection from the examination of our selves to the source of our ethics. What Watsuji does so innovatively is dismantle the assumption of separation between our selves and our community in such a way as to see that our behavior in our community arises out of the true state of our nature as humans. We come to understand ethics from an ontological review of our true nature. This connection that I call Authentic Trust is left out of Heidegger. Watsuji illuminates the connection that exists between our recognition of our interconnectivity and our actions toward others. *Dasein* has many similarities with *ningen sonzai*, but Heidegger seems to fail to grasp the outgrowth of *Dasein* as it pertains to ethics, missing our treatment of others (Ethics) entirely.

“Every kind of peaceful cooperation among men is primarily based on mutual trust and only secondarily on institutions such as courts of justice and police.” – Albert Einstein

“Our distrust is very expensive.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson

Trust and Business Ethics

So far we've looked at Trust, its metaphysical existence, and various descriptions and definitions of trust in Western society. However, if Trust is so integral to our lives as humans, a question is raised. Should Trust also be evident between groups of humans (a community)? And if so, what effect does Trust have on the ethics of that group? There are few community structures more successful and widespread than businesses; we can see enterprise everywhere, from large corporations to family-owned restaurants. Civic groups, clubs, and other forms of communities have nothing resembling the enormous success of a community based on capitalism. Within the business world, ethics have become important, as incidences of ethics violations are better identified than before.

In my attempt to propose that an awareness of Trust brings about ethical thinking and behavior, we should examine Trust between businesses, their customers, and employees and discover its applicability to the sorts of ethics businesses desire. The awareness of Authentic Trust should be able to illuminate the value of business ethics just as it illuminates our interpersonal lives. This will offer new options on how to conduct business in a world where contracts and distrust are the order of the day. In essence, I argue that a lack of the awareness of Trust, and a lack of an environment that supports and fosters trust, is bad for business.

The Damage of Distrust in Business

One of the most common elements of any business is the use of contracts. From the smallest family-owned shop to the largest corporation, we utilize contracts to ensure that our businesses run smoothly. This is seen as a prudent and cautionary measure that should be practiced in order to lessen risk and increase stability in our capitalistic society. Banks have loanees sign contracts so the bank can ensure the loan is repaid. Corporations use contracts to ensure employee actions don't irreparably damage the company by levying penalties upon the breaking of the contract. Businesses use contracts between other businesses so that, in the competitive landscape, both are held to an agreement. But what each of these has in common is that the contract is an attempt to remove risk from a partnership. Previously, I indicated that trust requires an acceptance of risk in any relationship. Therefore, contracts are, in essence, the written manifestation of distrust.

This leads to some problems. As a bank, it would not be wise to trust my customer to pay back the loan without some sort of contingency, which is why the contract stipulates a penalty for the breaking of the agreement. So it is the case with contracts in larger corporations or between businesses. We create and apply contracts to protect ourselves from possible misbehavior, malfeasance, or from a fear of repeated past experiences where our trust in another was broken. This is a prudent approach, as any businessman will explain that the nature of the competitive free market economy offers some benefits, at first blush, to a business willing to dismiss an agreement to gain a competitive advantage. One often hears that "free markets encourage competition" as if the best option for an industry is to adopt the stance of being in constant warfare with its competitors. But as we shall show, the price we pay in protecting ourselves from damage

is an unwillingness to take a risk and trust in our competition, our partners, our employees, and our customers. This brings with it controls and compliance (either internally designed or externally forced upon). And as we shall see, controls and compliance may not be the best way to ensure good ethical behavior by an organization but also may be detrimental to the continued growth of a business. To many, not having legally binding contracts is naïve and opens one's business up to voracious enemies. Frankly, this is probably true to some extent. Without legal recourse, businesses would not loan money to people dishonest or unwilling or unable to repay. But are we doing damage to our economy and our true business growth opportunities by avoiding this risk and not trusting in each other? One can see elements of this in the current mortgage crisis if you believe that the collapse of the housing market is a result of untrustworthy borrowers not repaying their loans. However, this is not the case as I think you can point to the relaxed loan guidelines and the trading of mortgages between lenders to mean that financial solvency was not as important as broker's commissions. When home values reversed and began to drop, a number of factors occurred that led to borrowers being upside-down on their homes and without equity thereby becoming unable to pay the mortgage. Could this and other situations been avoided by taking a different approach and focusing on Trust? Could we have a better chance at success by focusing more on Trust? This doesn't need to be a positive trust (I can trust that someone will not repay a loan) but instead a Trust that leads us to a better understanding of each other?

The contract-heavy approach sends the wrong message to all parties involved. It may be that a business or corporation feels safer by requiring that a contract be signed to establish a relationship. Contracts are intended to protect (ideally) both parties from

malfeasance. But in the signing of a contract, both parties are also given the message that they aren't to be trusted. "We do not trust you so need to hold you legally accountable for your integrity" is the message sent by contracts. Legal teams require that each and every message a company communicates is safe from even the possibility of a lawsuit (hence the concept in any organization of a "legal review"). In doing so, a company loses its ability to communicate directly or meaningfully to its customers or partners due to the copy filtering every legal department enforces in marketing. Additionally, all parties are left with the understanding that they are not to be trusted to make their own decisions. The creation of fear and distrust by this process may minimize risk at one level, but as I will show, it also increases risk and cost while lowering productivity, responsiveness, and a workforce that is able to think for itself. Strong relationships are based on mutual goals, cooperation, and loyalty; and without trust, these needs of any business are undermined.

Take, for example, the situation where a corporation hires you for a great job. You have been excited about this opportunity, as it will enhance your career and bring you a lot of pride (perhaps you are a customer and so are proud to work for a company you genuinely believe in). On your first day, as part of your HR orientation, you are required to sign a few documents. Some of these documents are invariably contracts required by legal to protect both you and the corporation. One is a requirement to provide 30 days notice of resignation. Another would be a nondisclosure agreement so that you do not leak information about the corporation to their competition. A third would be an agreement for random drug screening or perhaps a list of reasons a company can legally fire you. Each of these were created and made a requirement due to probably

previous infractions that hurt the company (a lessons-learned scenario). But the message this sends, after each one is signed by you, is one of distrust by the corporation of you, their new employee. You've not even begun working and even though the organization may have courted you for the role, you begin with the assumption that you cannot be trusted.

Now, is it likely that you will be more trustworthy or less by signing this contract? Are you likely to be more loyal to a company that requires these types of protections? You may be an ethical person or you may not be, but you have been shackled and curtailed from exercising good judgment and asked to obey instead of cooperate. Conversely, it may be more likely that you would be trustworthy to a company that said "no need to sign an NDA. We trust you." We may have established processes for legal oversight of business practices and partnerships, but it is my belief that we may be creating a snowball effect where the aversion to risk creates more risk and an aversion to trust creates more distrust. For a company to succeed in business, and create a strong relationship with others, it may be necessary to trust your customers, employees, and partners in lieu of legal shackles. Stephen Covey, in this book *The Speed of Trust* makes the case that

When leaders fundamentally don't believe people can be trusted, they create systems and structures that reflect that belief, such as hierarchy, multiple layers of management and cumbersome processes. In turn, these systems and structures ultimately help produce the distrusting behaviors that validate the leaders' perceptions that people can't be trusted in the first place. (Covey 248-9)

We will address the effects of low-trust communities on the functionality and success of business later.

In small businesses, there are far fewer needs for contracts. Relationships are the cornerstone of business success. Loyalty of the staff and loyalty of one's customers are very desirable qualities in building a successful company. Many small businesses are started by families, allowing for greater success in reaching the same goal. After all, families are very close-knit communities where an awareness of one's interconnections is clear and evident¹³. The formation of a business is an environment where trust in one another is valued. So sympathy and compassion are more prevalent among people in small businesses. This extends to the customer-company relationship where good relationships, feelings of sympathy and compassion, and a general understanding of the interconnections create loyal customers and a sense of trust from the customer to the company. Big business, or corporations, lose this at a certain point and along with it, slowly erode the trust and loyalty of their customers. In corporation marketing, building trust of their customers is a main goal, particularly in marketing of organizations dependent on trust (banks and emergency services are a good example). But like a small business, they seek the trust of their customers in order to succeed. The problem is that it is hard to trust a company that requires contracts in order to protect itself from the person signing the contract. Francis Fukuyama, in his book *Trust* points out the negative effect contracts, and other "low-trust" factors, have on the business marketplace.

The twentieth-century American system of industrial labor relations, with its periodic massive layoffs, book-length contracts, and bureaucratic, rule-bound personal interactions, would seem the very model of low-trust social relations. (Fukuyama 255)

¹³ A family may be a strong communal group or in disarray and nearly nonexistent. However, how we define families is crucial here, as we are raised within some group we can define as a family. And despite any events that may splinter or sever relationships in a family, they remain the very definition of a close-knit community. One would normally stop referring to their family if it no longer existed.

It is clear then, that trust is a major factor in businesses and we can see an awareness of Trust being essential to how a company interacts with others and itself. This is the power of Trust on business ethics and a company's success.

We can see the same effect in compliance regulations. One of the major results from the recent spate of scandals that have affected large corporations is the Sarbanes-Oxley act. This new compliance law attempted to restore trust and faith in the American marketplace while placing penalties on corporate agents for misleading investors and employees (as well as the government). Due to the actions of some CEOs, distrust had been sown and so this regulation is an attempt to prevent that from reoccurring. But this hasn't been the success it hoped for. While these regulations may be a finger in the dike of economic trust, there has been a chilling effect on business success. Stephen Covey explains,

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act was passed in the U.S. in response to the Enron, WorldCom, and other corporate scandals. While it appears that Sarbanes-Oxley may be having a positive effect in improving or at least sustaining trust in the public markets, it is also clear that this has come at a substantial price. Ask any CEO, CFO, or financial person in a company subject to Sarbanes-Oxley rules about the amount of time it takes to follow its regulations, as well as the added cost of doing so. It's enormous on both fronts. In fact, a recent study pegged the costs of implementing one section alone at \$35 billion – exceeding the original SEC estimate by 28 times! Compliance regulations have become a prosthesis for the lack of trust – and a slow moving and costly prosthesis at that. Again, we come back to the key learning: When trust is low, speed goes down and cost goes up. (Covey 14)

Covey looks at these costs as a "Trust Tax", listing the various effects as Redundancy, Bureaucracy, Politics, Disengagement, Turnover, Churn, and Fraud (Covey 250-254), and argues that compliance regulations don't actually provide the benefits of increasing trust. In all business, the model for success requires that

costs remain low while speed must remain a priority. Any company with high costs and a slow speed will soon be outperformed by its competition in our marketplace today. Regulations may lower risk but don't necessarily increase trust. So the myriad layers of rules and guidelines and policies do the exact opposite of what they attempt; they foster distrust and doubt in the organization.

Covey points out that

The problem in organizations, however, is that many 'ethics' solutions focus on compliance. The compliance definition of 'ethics' is not one of integrity or integratedness; it is a watered-down, devalued definition that essentially means 'follow the rules.' Ethics training, therefore, is then focused exclusively on conformity to Sarbanes-Oxley and other regulatory and rules-based legislation – and not on clarifying values and fostering integrity to those values and to enduring principles. (Covey 61)

Contracts, or any system that places controls on a relationship, put everyone at a disadvantage. Not only could it be argued that the signing of a contract removes risk from the relationship and therefore removes trust and an awareness of Authentic Trust but if a contract is broken, distrust also is generated. This is a lose-lose situation to get into. And while sometimes the risk trusting requires may be too costly for a business to prudently allow, ethics in business can be better managed if a business was willing to take some risks and trust the stakeholders in their community. Corporations may be too complex, with too many factors in play, to survive without some type of legal protection. I may have to acquiesce here and say that regardless of the overwhelming existence of Authentic Trust, a corporation, as it is commonly defined, will often find it in its best interest to protect itself and remain risk-adverse. In fact, in the earlier example of banks, a customer may end up trusting a bank more if the bank shows evidence that it does not trust anyone. Protecting one's assets would take priority as a business model over being

willing to risk failure in trusting another company. But this seems like short-term thinking and in the end, growth, not mitigation of risk, is the real goal of business. To not see the interconnections and fail to trust those the business interacts with, via the establishment of controls like contracts, hurts the business and ignores all the dependencies that lay between the business entity and those it supports and relies upon. The creation of strong relationships is the foundation of a successful and long-lasting company. These relationships cannot be founded and maintained on the basis of distrust and suspicion. A company creates wealth inexpensively by just demonstrating that it trusts those in its community. A great example of this is what happened to McDonald's during the L.A. Riots. After the Rodney King verdict came back, stores were trashed, looted, and burned. The loss was calculated to be in the billions. But among all the rubble, McDonald's Restaurants were left standing. Why? Covey explains:

Obviously the question arose: Why would the McDonald's buildings be left standing when nearly everything around them was destroyed? The responses of local residents carried a common thread: "McDonald's cares about our community. They support literacy efforts and sports programs. Young people know they can always get a job at 'Mickey D.'s." No one would want to destroy something that does so much good for us all." McDonald's sense of social responsibility created societal trust, and that trust produced clearly observable and measurable results. (Covey 272-273)

Trust is generated then, because a company takes risks (investing in its community for example) and therefore generates a measurable return. Any company would have to have considered, in the decision to invest in the community, the interconnection they have with the community. This is recognition of one's connection with one's community and a company that can do this will not see the "taxes" distrust generates. Instead, one will see what Covey calls "Dividends". These are positive results of trusting such as Increased

Value, Accelerated Growth, Enhanced Innovation, Improved Collaboration, Stronger Partnering, Better Execution, and Heightened Loyalty. (Covey 254-257) These strengthen the awareness of the interconnection and when people see themselves as connected, as this thesis demonstrates, better ethical behavior results. Having legal contracts and regulations do the opposite, they create distrust and remove any positive benefits one would receive without them.

The Benefits of an Awareness of Trust

While Authentic Trust is an unavoidable consequence of our lives in a community, it is important that a business be aware of it in its organizational model. This awareness fosters the compassion and empathy necessary for an organization to act ethically and if we build trust into our operating procedures, we generate better ethical behavior. We've seen this illustrated earlier between individual humans, but this is also effective between large-scale groups. The two common ethical views normally ascribed to businesses are "stakeholder" and "shareholder"¹⁴. The stakeholder view argues that a business is "owned" by more than just its immediate investors but also "employees, consumers, suppliers, and even the community" (Deinhart 1). The shareholder view argues that "ethics and business intersect primarily at the market level". (Ibid) And whether an organization is beholden to its investors or the community at large, it has an ethical responsibility to someone. The willingness to consider an organization's ethical requirements, outside of compliance laws and contracts and such, is what an awareness of Authentic Trust brings. What is needed in business is this awareness so as to prevent

¹⁴ I will use the term "stakeholder" in this paper in order to account for all parties involved.

malfeasance and lessen compliance and control requirements in order to be a successful business and remain ethical to stakeholders. Authentic Trust therefore gives us the awareness of proper ethical behavior, which will therefore provide business the speed and prosperity it seeks to be successful. This, in turn, benefits all stakeholders.

One of the virtues that arise out of an organization's awareness of Authentic Trust is integrity. We find that an organization that we can trust, that sees our interconnectivity, tends to act in ways that define the quality of integrity. Marvin Brown, in his book *Corporate Integrity*, states early on that,

Integrity could become our standard for corporate conduct because it is closely tied to the implicit issue raised by both the critic's disdain for corporations and the supporter's disappointment in corporate scandals: the issue of trust. If people have integrity, then we can usually trust them. If we could design corporations with integrity, people could trust them too. They could work in them and with them to develop a viable future for us and for our children. (Brown 2)

Now it may be easy to see how its customers or people in its relationships could trust an organization with a lot of integrity, but it is also true that integrity comes out of an awareness of our nature as human beings and the reality of Authentic Trust. When we see our true nature, we act in such a way as to look out for each other's needs, work for the betterment of all in our community, and feel a connection with those in our lives. Businesses can do the same and this behavior is the same behavior we see in people with integrity.

A business is deeply interconnected with the community within which it exists, with its stakeholders. The environments, the economy, the schools and communities nearby all are affected by the existence of a business. As Covey pointed out earlier, the

proper focus of business ethics should be developing a corporation's integrity (as well as its values). He makes a good case for doing so.

According to a study by Warwick Business School in the UK, outsourcing contracts that are managed based on trust rather than on stringent agreements and penalties are more likely to lead to trust dividend for both parties – as much as 40 percent of the total value of the contract. A 2002 study by Watson Wyatt shows that total return to shareholders in high-trust organizations is almost three times higher than the return in low-trust organizations. That's a difference of nearly 300 percent! An education study by Stanford professor Tony Bryk shows that schools with high trust had more than a three times higher chance of improving test scores than schools with low trust. On a personal level, high-trust individuals are more likely to be promoted, make more money, receive the best opportunities, and have more fulfilling and joyful relationships. (Covey 21)

It may seem pedantic to bring up the importance of ethics on a business' relationships with employees, customers, and such, but corporations seem to often ignore the interconnections in its behavior. Brown points out that,

Corporate integrity does not focus so much on the identity of corporations (are they citizens or not?), as on relationship among corporations and the other members of the whole to which they belong. (Brown 132)

Trusting in one's own employees is the first step to better ethics in business. The effects of trust are most powerful when dealing with the people involved in the business. This, in turn, generates cooperation toward a common goal. There are many examples of a business, particularly large corporations, treating their employees with distrust, apathy, and downright hostility. These qualities do not arise from the company being aware of their interconnectedness with their employees. A company must understand that their relationship with their employees is the most important relationship they have. In order to decrease turnover, establish loyalty, and ensure that all parts of the organization are working toward the same goals, a company needs to have trust, compassion, and empathy

with those in their employ. Additionally, it always costs more for a business to recruit and train new employees than the cost of retaining and educating one's current employees. The awareness of the law of *ningen sonzai* brings with it an awareness of our inescapable interconnectedness. This, in turn, brings about compassion, trust, and empathy toward those with whom we are connected. And from here, we become interested in being ethical and treating those in our community correctly.

So within a business, all levels and employees need to work together for the success of the business (otherwise, the employee not working toward the same goal should be and would be fired). In order to get everyone working toward the same goal, we can either force an employee to work within certain rules or we can treat each other ethically (fair employment practices, opportunities for growth, and environment of high trust, etc.) and create a desire in the employee to behave ethically. A company can do this when it sees itself as a community of individuals and not as a "person". This is how an organization behaves ethically toward its employees and generates loyalty and trust. And from this we see better working environments, less employee-driven sabotage, and the desire in all to see the business succeed. When a business behaves ethically, it reinforces the high-trust environment that allows it to behave ethically. Covey points out the difference between the two types of environments,

While a flat, open global economy thrives on behaviors such as talking straight, creating commitments, and extending trust, a closed, terroristic society thrives on counterfeits and opposites – on deception, hidden agendas, justifying wrongs, disregarding commitments, blaming others, and trusting none except those in an elite 'inner circle.' Even then, trust is fragile and is subject to the whims of those in charge. (Covey 274)

So one should not, as a business, try to control everything. We foment the very behavior we wish to curtail in most cases. Instead, the right approach would be to take risk and

make Trust a centerpiece of a company's value statement. Recognition of the shared goals between employees and a business is as important as common values like Integrity, Loyalty, and the current "Do No Evil". Covey agrees when he says,

By contrast, when leaders such as David Packard, Blake Nordstrom, and David Neeleman fundamentally believe that people can be trusted, they create systems and structures that reflect that belief, such as open storage bins, one-page employee manuals, and home reservationists. These systems and structures reinforce and ultimately help produce the trusting behaviors that validate the leader's perceptions that people can be trusted to begin with. Thus, the paradigms and the behaviors work together to create a virtuous, upward cycle. (Covey 249)

The *Keiretsu*

One great example of a business that understands its interconnectivity is the Japanese institution of *Keiretsu* (there is no direct translation of the term, but a good approximation would be "family of affiliated companies" or "cartel"). This business model relies upon the support and interconnections between all levels of the organization; it is an awareness of the importance of spatiality on the success of a business. This focus on our true communal nature strengthens the likelihood of prosperity for a corporation as well as improves the ability to make ethical decisions in the organization. This approach contrasts with a popular, established American model of business, also called Taylorism. Invented by Fredrick W. Taylor, and associated with Henry Ford, this was an attempt to codify the mass production stream to maximize labor efficiency and lessen rogue factors that can impact a production line. Francis Fukuyama, in his book *Trust*, uses the comparison between Taylorism and a method developed by Taiichi Ono, Toyota's chief production engineer, that he calls "lean production". (Fukuyama 259). He elaborates that

In lean production, the degree of trust shown in the lowliest assembly line worker is extraordinary by Taylorite standards.... The workers' job is not

to manipulate a simple operation on a complex machine as in Adam Smith's pin factory, but to contribute their judgment to help run the production line as a whole. (Ibid)

The lean production system therefore, places trust in the hands of every employee. The company is aware of its dependence on employees and so provides them the opportunities to cooperate with the overall organization to achieve its goals. It is almost as if they are inviting their own employees onto their team. Every employee is entrusted with the power to stop the production line, in essence pausing the business, to fix whatever errors he or she finds and to make sure that his or her own integrity is reflected in the final product. In effect, the employee's power of decision carries as much weight as the CEO's. This is a powerful example of interconnectedness, as not only does the business sacrifice the speed of its production line, but gives the employee a sense of self-worth and an awareness of how the employee himself is a part of the greater whole. Interestingly too is the fact that the sacrifice that a business may assume is not really a sacrifice at all. In this case, fixing the problem early on keeps a business from passing a poorly made product on to the consumer, necessitating expensive recalls, a rise in customer service calls, and a negative reputation that may be generated due to a company focusing on profit instead of integrity and attention to detail.

Contrast that approach with the approach of the traditional Tayloristic model of mass production. Fukuyama explains

The consequences of Taylorism for labor-management relations in the industries in which it was implemented were both predictable and in the long run, quite harmful. A factory organized according to Taylorite principles broadcasts to its workers the message that they are not going to be trusted with significant responsibilities and that their duties will be laid out for them in a highly detailed and legalistic form. (Fukuyama 226)

This is the exact situation that we saw earlier in our discussion of the Sarbanes-Oxley regulations and the effects of contracts. We ignore the reality of Authentic Trust and instead focus not on relationships but on profits, regulations, and lowering risk. But the dividends in that approach just never materializes and history is full of examples of businesses failing due to poor ethical decision-making, labor disputes, environmental penalties, etc.

The *Keiretsu*, on the other hand, is dependent upon the trust within all levels of a business has replaced outdated models (such as the Japanese *Zaibatsu* or “money clan”) with the realization of the interconnectivity required to be successful in a more modern marketplace. Fukuyama points out that,

The trust relationship is particularly critical in maintaining the supplier network, and it flourishes in the context of Japanese keiretsu relationships. In a purely market-driven assembler-supplier relationship, the purchasing company has an incentive to play its suppliers off against each other in order to get the best price and quality. This in turn creates a gulf of suspicion between the assembler and supplier: the latter will be reluctant to provide the former with data about costs or proprietary manufacturing process for fear that the information would be used against it. ...The keiretsu relationship, on the other hand, is based on a sense of reciprocal obligation between the assembler and supplier: both know that they will be dealing with one another over the long term and will not switch to alternative partners based on a small price differential. Only if there is a high degree of mutual trust will a supplier permit the parent company’s engineers to look at cost data and have a voice in how to share the economic returns from productivity improvements. (Fukuyama 261)

In the *keiretsu* relationship, one recognizes the fundamental existence of Authentic Trust, sees relationships as a value to the success of the business, and acts in such a way as to invest in that trust. This brings the dividends that Covey refers to, something unavailable to a business that cannot see itself as interconnected (even with its competition) but as the lone warrior engaged in a battle. To take that latter approach, a business is unaware of its

reliance and dependence on all the stakeholders in its community. It focuses on control and penalties instead of openness and trust. It is an approach that will bring short-term gains with long-term losses. A business that ignores Authentic Trust and fails to create a high-trust environment may win the battle but inevitably lose the war.

“To beat back the threat of openness, [terrorists]...have, quite deliberately, chosen to attack the very thing that keeps open societies open, innovating and flattening, and that is trust.” – Thomas Friedman

"Our vision of interconnectedness resonates with new networks of world citizens in nongovernmental organizations linking from numberless centers of energy, expressing the emergence of a new organic whole, seeking unity within and across national lines... If governments and their leaders, bound by hierarchy and patriarchy, wedded to military might for legitimacy, fail to grasp the implications of an emerging world consciousness for cooperation, for peace and for sustainability, they may become irrelevant." - Dennis Kucinich

Authentic Trust as a Precursor to Just War Theory

When we come to understand the alternatives that are clear to us when we are aware of our interconnectedness, applicability in different circumstances becomes a natural outgrowth of the understanding of the source of our desire to be ethical. The unique power of Authentic Trust is that any moral theory that grows out of this metaphysical truth of our existence as humans has, in its formulation, this desire in each of us to act ethically, or at least to care whether or not our actions are ethical. In business, this awareness is in existence so that a company desires to be ethical to one's stakeholders as part of its capitalistic endeavor. However, in international relations, the stakes are certainly higher.

In times of war, because the costs are the lives of soldiers and civilians, the desire to be ethical seems, to me, to be an important thing to keep in mind. Watsuji himself points out that a breakdown in trust (this is the trust I define as chosen) generates the condition for war to occur. He states, “War, where one deals with other persons as if they were fierce animals, brings the trust relationship almost to the brink of extinction, and

there is almost no *makoto*¹⁵.” (Watsuji 276) Notice how he carefully mentions “almost” as he wants to remind us that we can’t completely eliminate Trust from our lives and our relationships. The state or nation, as well, has the same conditions that the individual has. Watsuji points this out early on in the *Rinrigaku* where he argues,

We can follow it pyramidically, from the simple *sonzai* community connecting two persons up to the complicated one of the national connection. Each stage has its own structure of solidarity and in this way each of these structures exhibits a particular form of the law inherent in the *sonzai* of *ningen*. (Watsuji 24)

He continues,

The significant of a “nation” consists in the fact that the totality of *ningen* is formed as particular types. Hence, as a climactic and historical product, *nation* must be clarified through an investigation into its origin. That the investigation of *nation* is usually carried out through its connections with wars against other nations is itself based on climactic and historical conditions. (Watsuji 26)

Much like the connection we’ve established between two individuals, we see the same reality in larger organizations at all levels, including entire nations. War, however, is a state as close to complete distrust as we can get. Authentic Trust exists but we no longer even recognize the other as a part of our greater community and treat them as “fierce animals”. Conversely, one puts an enormous amount of trust in one’s fellow soldier. Lines of trust are drawn so as to make it easier to kill and injure another person. This is the condition required for war in our society and occurs when we are unable to recognize the full extent of our interconnections. So when we wage war, without some sort of ethical approach, we end up in a state that cannot exist as a stable society, that of constant animalistic behavior and lacking in all ethical thinking or concern. Ignoring our

¹⁵ “Makoto” is the Japanese word for “Truthfulness”.

interconnections, in other words being unaware of our natural state as human beings and that Authentic Trust is present at all times, closes doors of choice in our ethical deliberations that could save lives. In fact, the act of having an enemy in battle is an ignorance or dismissal of our interconnectedness and the existence of Authentic Trust. To address this and prevent war from being anything less than necessary, Just War Theory has developed and evolved.

For some, Just War Theory and its framework are an attempt to mediate the difference between the justifiable need or requirement to go to war and the maintenance of a strong moral stance in the world. If this were not so, we would not see the desire of a country to wage a just war. We strive for the ability to use force, if necessary, to defend our country or retaliate against aggressors without making the mistake of succumbing to unethical actions so as the ends justify the means. It is my belief that our awareness of our connection with others is the source of our desire to be ethical and therefore Just War Theory, in its exercise, is our attempt to do so on a grand scale. Just War Theory affirms the recognition of the reality of Authentic Trust and our interconnectivity by demonstrating the voluntary desire to be ethical and consider the needs of others, including our enemy, in our ethical calculus.

Distrust's Power in Wartime

It seems easy at this point in human history to take for granted our behavior in military conflicts. We consider it obviously important to care for the wounded, feed our prisoners, sign peace treaties, and attempt to engage the opposing military in hopes of winning. A cursory review of history however shows that this was not always the case.

Prisoners of war, for example, were routinely killed, tortured, or enslaved. Very little distinction was made between combatants and civilians and there was no thought to the care or treatment of the enemy. Winning a war was everything and the method of doing so was irrelevant. It has always been assumed, in war, that one needs to trust one's own "side" while distrusting the enemy "side". It is a recent phenomenon to see any attempt to wage war in an ethical manner and consider the enemy as part of one's ethics. The Geneva Convention, the formation of the United Nations Security Council, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights all are somewhat recent manifestations of a worldview that sees us as more intimately connected, desires to limit immoral activities in war, and finds a way to ensure our conflicts are as just and moral as possible.

This is not to say that unethical behavior doesn't still exist. Chris Hedges, in his book *War is a Force That Gives Us Meaning*, lists just a few of many examples of crimes during recent conflicts. Most people see these as reprehensible and not appropriate results of a conflict and yet, just in the 1990s,

2 million dead in Afghanistan; 1.5 million dead in the Sudan; some 800,000 butchered in ninety days in Rwanda; a half-million dead in Angola; a quarter of a million dead in Bosnia; 200,000 dead in Guatemala; 150,000 dead in Liberia; a quarter of a million dead in Burundi; 75,000 dead in Algeria; and untold tens of thousands lost in the border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the fighting in Columbia, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Chechnya, Sri Lanka, southeastern Turkey, Sierra Leone, Northern Ireland, Kosovo, and the Persian Gulf War (where perhaps as many as 35,000 Iraqi civilians were killed). In the wars of the twentieth century not less than 62 million civilians have perished, nearly 20 million more than the 43 million military personnel killed. (Hedges 13)

It is hard in light of such brutality to see the desire to be ethical as a realistic likelihood. These sorts of events are an anathema to a moral consciousness. But when we look at various attempts to limit behavior such as the wanton massacre of civilians, we

understand that other lives are as valuable and important to them as ours are to ourselves. They have the same desires, fears, and beliefs as everyone. This is a result of an empathic understanding of others. Our desire to limit civilian casualties, for example, results from a sense of empathy and compassion toward others. And as we have seen, our source of empathy and compassion stems from an awareness of Authentic Trust and our fundamental interconnectedness. Horrific crimes, such as the ones chronicled above, occur due to an ignorance of our true state of human being. We see others, in such cases, as different, alien, and dangerous. We purposefully ignore the similarities and focus on irreconcilable differences. Would we really treat people the way described if we were aware of how we are connected? Even if it can be argued that our natural impulse is to hurt our enemies “[a] person does not succumb to natural impulse if he is honest with himself.” (Watsuji 268) Even our reaction of disgust at such occurrences are a testament to our compassion and desire to see others as safe and devoid of harm as we wish for ourselves.

We can also see the connection between Authentic Trust and Just War Theory when we examine incidences where the awareness of Authentic Trust is purposefully obscured in order to convince a population both to go to war or to take specific actions against the enemy. This does not mean that Authentic Trust is not present. As I have by now made clear, one cannot remove or destroy Authentic Trust in any situation. Authentic Trust, as I have laid out, encompasses both trust and distrust as qualities or factors within itself. But one can convince a community to ignore or forget about the connections that are at the core of our natural state, the existence of the Authentic Trust that exists as part of who we are. One successful way of doing so is via propaganda.

This attempts, however subconsciously, to remove any moral hesitation a population may have against the killing of others. In the case of propaganda, we can see a good example in Tokyo Rose and the Zero Hour radio program in World War 2 Japan. Here was a Japanese-American woman, trapped in Tokyo, who broadcasted anti-US propaganda for the Japanese Imperial government. On the other side, the US used propaganda to paint the Japanese as “devils” and dehumanize the Japanese, making it easier for the public to support the war. Removing the awareness of Authentic Trust between both populations makes it easy for each nation to take up arms against the other. The distrust that occurs makes crimes that would normally offend our ethical sensibilities common and rationalized.

We can also see examples of how the destructive force of propaganda negatively impacts Authentic Trust when

[d]uring the war in Bosnia, many Muslims called the Serbs “Chetniks,” the Serbian irregulars in World War II, who slaughtered many Muslims. Muslims, for many Serbs in Bosnia, were painted as Islamic fundamentalists. The Croats, to the Serbs and Muslims, were branded “Ustashe,” the fascist quislings who ruled Croatia during World War II. And there were times when, in interviews, it was hard to know if people were talking about what happened a few months ago or a few decades ago. It all merged into one huge mythic campaign.... The goal of such nationalist rhetoric is to invoke pity for one’s own. The goal is to show the community that what they hold sacred is under threat. The enemy, we are told, seeks to destroy religious and cultural life, the very identity of the group or state....”The principle of the movement is whoever is not included is excluded, whoever is not with me is against me, so the world loses all the nuances and pluralistic aspects that have become too confusing for the masses,” wrote Hannah Arendt in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. (Hedges 14-15)

The spreading of false rumors, lies, and the attempt to make truth out of these lies (what Hannah Arendt calls “nihilistic relativism”) succeeds when we forget that the enemy is similar to ourselves. In the case of the Bosnian war, this created divisions between what

was previously a common nation of people. These are not unintentional accidents of war but specific, conscious examples where people or governments chose to paint the enemy as different, as non-human, or as a threat to our “way of life”.¹⁶ Our awareness is clouded, or blinded, and we can therefore easily ignore or sublimate our empathy and compassion and instead identify with only our own immediate community while seeing the other population as “devils” or “fascists” or such. The true state of our human being is ignored and so war is waged, common moralities are obfuscated, and excuses are made that comfort us and muffle that moral voice in our heads disagreeing with our actions.

Trust and Just War Theory

Just War Theory (hereafter JWT) is a recent attempt to establish a ruleset, usable in all cases, where going to war (Jus Ad Bellum), behavior in war (Jus In Bello), and our actions after the end of a war (Jus Post Bellum) are considered just and moral. The establishment of a codified ruleset like JWT makes it easy for a nation to weigh its decisions and actions against guidelines agreed upon by the international community. The adherence to this type of idea, however, is voluntary. We see nations acting in disregard of the criteria of JWT all the time. Those nations that do choose to adhere to JWT in order to wage more ethical wars (and thereby not incur the wrath of the international community) come out of a desire to be ethical in their actions. It is no longer a case of a country being unaware of the concepts of human rights or

¹⁶ One wonders what way of life we could possibly have that differs from those in other nations. Do they not eat food? Do they not enjoy time off from work? Do they not love their families?

noncombatant immunity. The choices made in conflict reflect support of, or a rejection of, the criteria set forth in JWT and therefore a desire to wage a just and ethical war.

For those nations desiring adherence to JWT, we can say that this may be partly a reaction to international outcry at previous behavior, or an attempt to maintain the moral high ground and not impede a nation's reputation, but it also is in part out of an understanding that those in conflict have a connection with each other. To recognize that a foreign person, someone of a different nationality, is connected as part of the larger human family and to make efforts to ensure that person is treated fairly and ethically, arises out of the awareness of our true selves and the state of Authentic Trust in our lives. Such a nation does not wish to wage war without the consideration of the rights of the opposing side. These are not just the common human rights or justice but a recognition of the commonalities of desire and fear; the recognition that our interconnections go beyond national borders. JWT is followed as a guideline out of a desire to keep wars just, to limit undesirable actions during conflict, and to ensure that nations remain in existence for the long term.

JWT, in its acceptance as the proper ruleset for a conflict, comes out of recognition of Authentic Trust and our interconnection as human beings. We desire these limits on our conflicts to ensure we remain ethical in warfare and because we recognize that enemy combatants or civilians are enemies in ideology or action, not in essence. We see the value of limiting our methods of waging war than had been previously in history so that we can ensure we curtail damage. We see the value of human rights and the desire to see people of other nations achieve the same goals that we achieve not out of a prescriptive adherence to rules but because the nation desires to be ethical. If we did not,

we would not adopt JWT as a guide to our actions. We would simply wage war as we see fit, making decisions in order to succeed in battle and disregard other considerations; decisions made purely to generate the best results for ourselves. In essence, we are aware of our fundamental level of interconnection, despite the differences that led to war, and endeavor to maintain those connections even in light of an ongoing conflict. We do so by adhering to what Just War Theorists call “External Rules”; rules such as Benevolent Quarantine, Civilian Immunity, the Doctrine of Double Effect, Engagement in Harm, and Proportionality. (Orend 106-118) It should not be necessary to discuss each separately, but to recognize that these external rules ensure we maintain the well-being and dignity of all humans, both those who are engaged in the conflict and innocent civilians. Our awareness of Authentic Trust brings compassion toward those involved, however indirectly, in war. We limit our behavior willingly to ensure we do not become a nation that tramples on the same basic rights that we all value for our own citizens and ourselves.

One good example is the reaction to the Holocaust of World War 2. The horrors discovered led to the creation of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This then led to the 1977 Second Amendment to the Geneva Convention and the “Paris Minimum Standards”. These

enshrine(d) a list of human rights which are to be regarded as “non-derogable” – which is to say untouchable or absolute – even in such a public emergency as war. These rights include: life; not to be tortured; not to be enslaved; not to be taken hostage; “minimal judicial guarantees”; non-discrimination; not to be subject to medical experiment; not to be subject to retroactive laws; recognition as a legal person; freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; a fair trial; a subsistence level of food and water; and special protections for children. (Orend 128)

This is a result of a desire, by the people of all nations to be guaranteed in having a good life. Orend continues “A minimally good life is one where we are both assured...of having a life...and of leading that life as well.” (Orend 129) If a country did not value the rights of its own citizens and the rights of all citizens, why would there be any need for the enforcement and allegiance to ideas such as the Paris Minimum Standards or any Human Rights charter? I think one can make the claim that a country would do so to prevent the wrath of other nations. But this doesn't seem to be the whole story since, after all, the choice to uphold these rights are voluntary. The nation may choose to adhere to JWT for many types of benefits (as we shall see in a later example) but these are additional benefits and not the core of a country's adoption of JWT. At the heart of the decision lies the recognition of the similarities of all humans and the awareness of their interconnections. We should treat others as we wish to be treated. An awareness of Authentic Trust can offer nations the ability to be inclusive of all humans in our moral calculus.

So an awareness of Authentic Trust can offer nations alternatives to traditional approaches in dealing with wartime behavior. Historically, wars have been waged to defeat the enemy at any cost. Collateral damage, the deaths of innocents, and other effects may have been considered unfortunate, but did not weigh as much as the need to win and defeat the enemy. They certainly weren't recognized as impediments to winning. But there have been some notable examples where being aware of our interconnections have led to better outcomes. One such event was the behavior of the United States in post World War 2 Japan. In the Pacific Theatre, when Japan capitulated to the US and surrendered, the Japanese expected the US to behave in ways similar to

historical behavior in the East. In fact, the United States' behavior up to that point was very aggressive toward the Japanese nation (ala the firebombing of Tokyo and nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki). Typically, a country would invade, wipe out societal infrastructure, remove resources, enslave populations, and either claim the territory as its own or thoroughly destroy the territory to quell uprising and generally humiliate the population. It was never trusted to broker peace, leave wealth in the hands of the citizenry, or approach its post-war behavior in an ethical manner. "To the winner goes the spoils of war" was the common experience. The Japanese themselves acted in this manner toward the other Asian nations it invaded during that period (the familiar Rape of Nanking being a prominent example) and so this type of behavior, both during and after war, was expected. The US, however, seeing Japan as a sovereign nation with self-interests that matched its own and a population that was not necessarily supportive (and quite tired) of the war, chose a different path. The US rebuilt destroyed cities, established a more democratic government (removing the Emperor from his seat of power and giving him only symbolic weight), improved education, medical care, population health, and other improvements. These were not just to repair the damage from the nuclear attacks and firebombing, but a genuine hope of improving the lives of the population. The desire of the US to be ethical in its approach to postwar Japan was unique. This behavior shocked the Japanese and, despite the existence of military bases that occupy the country even today, has turned the Japanese from an enemy of the US to an ally.

This is the power Authentic Trust has to change our international relations. By recognition of our commonality and working toward the same goal as the population of

Japan (better and safer lives), we engendered a level of trust in the population. We behaved ethically (on a grand scale. Certainly crimes were committed in postwar Japan by the Americans but these were on an individual level and not a result of policy or national intent) and the Japanese recognized it. In doing so, we quickly changed an enemy into a friend. This behavior has brought about solid relations with the Japanese for over 50 years now. Nations that trust each other share resources, intelligence, research, and other qualities that improve the lives and well-being of both populations. They lift all parties involved to greater wealth, safety, and success by cooperation and looking out for each other's self interests. The desire to behave ethically is born out of the recognition of shared goals and desires. The converse is a situation where a country that takes willfully from a defeated nation finds that both countries suffer. One suffers from the lack of available resources and security and the other from a lack of moral authority and a greater challenge to bring about a good relationship with other countries that may look down on such approaches. Distrust is sown and generations may remain hostile to the force that defeated them. So the reality is that through the practice of Just War Theory, countries have an ethical stewardship to ensure the safety of civilian populations while waging war for necessary and just reasons. Distrust offers very few options in international relations but fostering trust brings a nation many choices in engagement, many nonviolent. This is but one example of the different approach a nation can take in dealing with wartime conflict.

It is interesting, therefore, to look at JWT as not a limiting factor that excludes certain actions from a possible palette of choices a nation can make, but as an inclusive approach that sees humanity as one in unity. We do not adhere to JWT with regret and

frustration, seeing it as a straightjacket on our ability to defeat the enemy. We see JWT as an opportunity to ensure and promise the world that we recognize our interconnectedness and are aware of the spatial quality of each of us. JWT becomes empowering instead of disempowering. It becomes a standard to achieve and not an impediment to our success in battle. And like in business, trust is manifested between nations when one endeavors to be trustworthy. We wage war only in the most dire of circumstances and even then, limit our actions to be the least damaging, over the long term, and maintain a strong stance of human rights support. Imagine entering a war ensuring the nation we are engaged with that their civilians will not be targeted, our attacks will remain proportional, and we will only be violent under the direst circumstances. Maybe the display of an ethical approach to war would provide us a reputation of moral righteousness and virtue that would be effective on the world's stage. It may even decrease enemy resistance and gain the support of other nations in a conflict. After all, we are likely to come to the aid of a friend that requests it. Similarly, other nations would be willing to support us if we were intending to adhere to JWT in our actions in war. It seems possible this approach could even counteract enemy propaganda and limit situations where civilians support a malicious dictator or wage guerilla warfare. The possibility would exist where citizens could take to the streets to protest immoral actions or even assist the opposing country. By seeing the basis of JWT in Authentic Trust, we are aware of better options for our behavior in international relations and these options may allow us to prevent war or, at minimum, provide us with more ethical options. And despite the possible inevitability of conflict, we act out of empathy and

compassion toward all engaged in war and create better opportunities for the formation of an ally where there had been none previously.

“All things are connected like the blood that unites us. We did not weave the web of life. We are merely a strand in it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.” - Chief Seattle

“"Independence"... middle-class blasphemy. We are all dependent on one another, every soul of us on earth.” - George Bernard Shaw

Conclusion

Watsuji's theory offers new and alternative methods of being ethical, as well as illuminates the foundation of many ethical theories. We become aware of our true nature, seen as a true representation of *ningen sonzai*, and through this awareness we see a powerful structure on which we can hang a normative ethic or prescriptive morality. The importance placed upon a more communal outlook of one's sense of self offers us a greater selection of moral actions and ethical rules that we can use to be the ethical people we strive to be. We are not necessarily ethical people because we trust or can visualize our interconnectivity and our spatiality. But via this framework, it can become easier to make the right decision in an ethical or moral conundrum and so find ourselves better equipped than someone adhering to one prescriptive theory will. Our chances of becoming ethical increase when we maintain an understanding of our true nature as human beings, become aware of Authentic Trust in our lives, and strive to make this world a better place.

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