

Supplementary topics; Separation anxiety

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1. Why do we want not to be separated from society?

The Strange: an essay in social psychology¹, intends to study, in terms of a general theory of interpretation, the typical situation in which a stranger finds himself in his attempt to interpret the cultural pattern of a social group which he approaches and to orient himself within it.

If we encounter in our experience something previously unknown and which therefore stands out of the ordinary order of our knowledge, we begin a process of inquiry. We first define the new fact; we try to catch its meaning; we then transform step by step our general scheme of interpretation of the world in such a way that the strange fact and its meaning becomes compatible and consistent with all the other facts of our experience and their meaning. If we succeed in this endeavor, then that which formerly was a strange fact and a puzzling problem to our mind is transformed into an additional element of our warranted knowledge.

The adaptation of the new comer to the in-group which at first seemed to be strange and unfamiliar to him is a continuous process of inquiry into the cultural pattern of the approached group.

Charles Taylor² recognized human being never as individual separated 'atomic being', but as 'the historical and cultural being'. I am going to handle this material more detail in sub-topic '4. why do we need society?'

¹ Alfred Shuetz, The Strange: an essay in social psychology

² Charles Taylor, The Malaise of Modernity

2. When we feel separated, how do we react?

According to Bion³, there are three ways to respond to anxious situations. Firstly, we can control the psychological pain by way of thinking process. Secondly, we can distort the real world by means of the defense mechanism (idealizing and underestimating the reality). Thirdly, we can escape absolutely via destructing the recognizing ability or totally having no concern about facts. According to Bion, the third way brings out ignorance.

3. Anxiety is stemmed from what?

Anxiety may be stemmed from Ignorance.

According to Kurt Riezler⁴, ‘what do we mean by knowledge and ignorance?’

We know this and that-철수 or 서울- there are other things we do not know-영희 or 전주. If our knowledge were merely of this kind-knowledge of some items out of an aggregate of unknown items-paralyzed by fear, we could not move or act.

Fortunately, we know more. We know what 영희 can be or is likely to be. She will not suddenly turn into an elephant and trample us down. She will keep within the limits of a definite order. We know, or assume we know, this order. Though we do not know what will happen, we know what can happen-either this or that. Every possible change or event will keep within the scheme of a certain order. This order we trust; it is the order of the world in which we live. By means of this scheme, we identify, classify, and characterize things. We give them a place in this order. If there are things we do not know, we merely mean that we do not yet know their place. But they have a place. The order is all-comprehensive. Thus a preformed scheme limits and specifies our fear and guides our action-whether we are primitive or civilized.

4. Why do we need society?

Let’s think about Identity. What do you think is identity? ‘who am I?’ it is the basic question about identity. The answer may be ‘I’m Changno, and I’m a nice guy, etc.’

All words above are originated? Or how can I know those words? Or how can I recognize my identity? Because I learned from society (family, friends, etc.)

³ Bion, W. R., Learning from Experience, London: Heinemann, 1962

⁴ Kurt Riezler, The Social Psychology of Fear

Identity is decisively dependent on the conversational relationships between other people and me.

5. How is the separation anxiety abused in political way?

Where the universe of discourse is eliminated, there may be an abusive use of the separation anxiety.

Have you seen the film 'Bowling for columbine?'

U.S. citizens have the weapon, of course not all, to protect themselves to robbery, or some criminal thing. But they do not feel safe because of having the gun. The gun fire accidents are becoming more frequently. N. R. A. uses these accidents politically. They say even in Columbine high school, 'we need a gun to protect ourselves.' Of course, due to an illegal act, they assert the need of the gun. But now, these guys are inspirations of anxiety to buy the guns.

They maybe want to eliminate the universe of discourse.

Conclusion

We need society, do not want to feel separated, but should not react abusively, namely, we should not get rid of the universe of discourse.