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A METHODOLOGICAL BASIS FOR JAPANESE STUDIES —WITH REGARD TO “RELATUM” AS ITS FOUNDATION

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Thus far Japanese studies conducted from sociological and anthropological viewpoints have used several key concepts such as “shame culture”, “vertical society”, “group ego”, “*amae* (dependency)”, all of which denote a lack of individual autonomy and independence in a social action. In these studies the Japanese are seen as group-oriented people who totally devote themselves to the organization to which they belong.

Such analyses depend on methodological individualism in the comparative study of societies and do not necessarily reflect the *emic* nature of the Japanese. This paper aims to correct a methodological problem in Japanese studies by shifting the paradigm from methodological individualism to methodological relatum-ism.

After discussing the concept of “paradigm” and “model”, two types of actor-subject, that is, the “relatum” and the “individuum” are differentiated. The former is the system constituted by the human nexus itself, and forms a referential “holon” or self-organizing system in a universal pattern. Here the concept of “holon” as discussed by Arthur Koestler and Hiroshi Shimizu is reexamined. The latter, the “individuum”, is thought to be a specific form of the “relatum”.

From the ontological point of view, the “individual” as a mere unit of society has a fictitious nature in itself and its existence cannot be presupposed without any reference to a specific “field” composed of the crossing of human relations. Thus a new human model called the “contextual” as the “relatum” is proposed instead of the usual “individual” model of person as the “individuum”.

Lastly the ontological foundation of the “relatum” is sought out, based on arguments by Nāgārjuna and Tokuryu Yamanouchi on ancient Buddhist philosophy.

Key words: JAPANESE STUDIES, PARADIGM, MODEL, RELATUM, METHODOLOGICAL RELATUM-ISM, INDIVIDUUM, METHODOLOGICAL INDIVIDUUM-ISM, HUMAN NEXUS, FIELD, HOLON, CONTEXTUAL(KANJIN), INDIVIDUAL(KOJIN), PRATYAYA(ENGI), TETRA-LEMMA, SAMŚRAYA(ESHI).

INTRODUCTION

Up to now comprehensive analyses of Japanese culture, civilization, society and nationality have been done by using several well-known key concepts such as *groupism*, *shame culture*, *vertical society*, *group ego*, and *amae* (dependency). Here, the Japanese have been characterized as a quite homogeneous people who lack autonomy in their actions and therefore have no unique opinions of their own and tend to bury themselves in the group or organization to which they belong.

Any Japanese would attest such characterization to be not necessarily true with respect to their own daily experiences. If Japan as a nation lacked autonomy or independence, how are we to interpret the high economic growth that Japan has achieved? Despite the facts available to us today, the Japanese still tend to be labelled as a non-autonomous and totalitarian people. This is because Japanese social scientists have until now accepted unconditionally the analytical

paradigm of Western origin with its heavy emphasis on individual-centeredness. In other words, they have: 1) accepted, as a self-evident tool of analysis, the so-called methodological individualism where individuals as actor-subjects behave in accordance with their own rational choices, and organize a supra-system called society by way of contract; 2) based on the dichotomy of “individual” vs. “society”, deduced from the above reasoning; and 3) further inferred that the Japanese, not being highly autonomous “individuals” in their actions, tended to regard its opposite extreme, i.e., “society”, as more important and to behave as a highly group-oriented people devoted to organizational activities.

Within such a dualistic frame of reference, namely, individual autonomy vs. organizational integration, the Japanese-type system has been understood as a pattern devoid of individual autonomy, and the term, “groupism”, implying anti-individualism, has been selected as the key term in an overall characterization of Japan. The terms *shame culture*, *vertical society*, *group ego*, and *amae* (dependency) were introduced by Ruth Benedict, Chie Nakane, Hiroshi Minami and Takeo Doi respectively as instrumental concepts to explain Japanese characteristics. What is notable here is the fact that “individual” system as entity is always presupposed as the model basis of analysis in these studies.

To fully grasp Japan in any immanent sense, however, one cannot be entirely satisfied with the analytical paradigm of Western origin. At one time the use of such a paradigm may have been convenient when an argument focusing critically on Japan from a modernistic point of view as a still developing country was popular. But Japan today is, in a sense, already in the process of constructing a super-modern civilization, and this paradigm may no longer be appropriate in explaining Japan as it is today. A fully theoretical ground for Japanese study must be sought elsewhere. Here, what is called for, is a fundamental shift in our analytical point of reference.

It is not easy, however, to find the most significant key concept and an analytical frame of reference capable of explaining Japan univocally. Rather Japan previously gave the impression of a nation without principle, or a nation full of contradictions. According to Yasusuke Murakami, the Japanese are introspective in admitting that they are lacking in clarity and consistency and are often ambiguous in their thinking in contrast with the Western intellectual tradition. This was also the criticism clearly expressed by progressive intellectuals of postwar Japan. In response to this, the criticisms directed toward Japanese culture by Western people tended to be in the main more negative than otherwise as can be seen in the use of such terms as unprincipled, opportunistic, double-dealing, amoral, and unreliable. The culture of a nation with a population of one hundred million, an economic super-power, and a relatively safe and stable country cannot be considered as suffering from such an anomic condition. The reason why it appears so is because, in Murakami’s words:

...the spectacles of people of other (than Japanese) cultures and nations are not projecting the principles and/or logics immanent in Japanese thought and society. Furthermore, the Japanese have been looking at themselves through the spectacles of other people since the time of rapid modernization of the Meiji Era. They are thus unable to see their own logic due to these foreign spectacles which are the transcendentalistic-progressive views of the Western tradition. (Murakami, 1992: 510)

From a methodological perspective, the aforementioned transcendentalist views and

progressivism, being the spectacles that may distort the real characteristics of Japan, often manifest themselves in the forms of subject-object dichotomy or unilinear evolutionary views of history. According to Murakami, the progressivist ideas, which actually laid the ground for modernization (industrialization) and scientific progress, assumed that the ultimate and sole ideal order (or the path toward it) could be recognized as something of univocal significance and, furthermore, such an order is attainable through great efforts. Underlying their views is a quite deterministic posture on humankind and society. In terms of comparative sociology, the progressivist stance espouses the so-called convergence theory in which various societies, in their attempts to reach one ultimate ideal, are viewed as developing in a unitary or unilateral fashion. The modern progressivism as applied in social science, then, presupposes the existence of objective laws where researchers need to rely on the viewpoints of observers transcending themselves. What is required here is an establishment of transcendental subject. Needless to say, this attitude is based on the ‘subject-object dichotomy’ originally proposed by Descartes. The progressivist ideas are thus connected to transcendental-scientific ideas. (Murakami, 1994: 7-9,24)

Responding to the transcendentalist thought, Murakami stresses a need for a hermeneutic approach in social science. In transcendental-scientific thought, a scientist defines himself/herself as observer always standing out far above an objectified world. He/she must always be separated from the self being observed, making an epistemological dissociation within the self unavoidable. In the case of social science where all social phenomena including the scientist himself/herself are the subjects of study, a scientist as an observing self is at the same time the self being observed and, consequently, the image of the world depicted here must include the picture of the self observing itself being looked at. Obviously the self in this case is not positioned transcendently. What is necessary, then, is to attempt to review constantly with a self-reference approach the image of the world wherein the self is also included and thus re-interpret the world. This is called a hermeneutic approach in social science and the process of interpretation as referred to above is termed *Lebenswelt* thought. In the hermeneutic-*Lebenswelt* thought, the observing self and the self observed are constantly overlapping each other. (Murakami, 1994: 25-27)

A civilization where the transcendental-progressive thought is given importance often destroys or absorbs an old image in search of a new image of the world. In contrast, in a civilization where the hermeneutic-*Lebenswelt* thought is dominant, ever-growing multiple images of the world are recognized to coexist and, according to Murakami, may be considered as a manifestation of multiphasic liberalism in terms of ideology. (Murakami, 1994: 28) Within this context, then, the existence of Japanese civilization could be justified, on the one hand, as one of the types based on the hermeneutic-*Lebenswelt* thinking, while we can express, on the other, our own doubts toward the universality of the Western civilization that has been built on the transcendental-progressive way of thinking. Murakami, however, is yet to present a clear-cut image of the world based on the hermeneutic-*Lebenswelt* thinking as it applies to Japan. He has not gone much beyond suggesting the possibility as well as the need for us to replace the spectacles in looking at Japan and to start re-examining Japanese culture and civilization from the immanent perspectives among the Japanese themselves.

Our search for a new paradigm that comes from cultural *emics* thus begins. What would be the basic model for this paradigm supposedly immanent in Japan? To what extent is its universality

tenable and what noticeable features does it present in comparison with the conventional “individual-centered” model? In what ways, furthermore, does the new basic model relate to the existing “individual” model? These are the issues to be explored further and discussed in this paper.

PARADIGM AND MODEL

As a basic frame of reference in any research, paradigms and models must be reviewed first.

According to the sociologist Merton, a paradigm connotes a compact outline of major concepts, assumptions, procedures, propositions and problems of a substantive area or a theoretical approach in sociological research analysis. Simply put, it is a device for presenting a succinct codification of an area of analysis. In other words, it can be understood as a thesaurus for concepts and problems. Merton has actually presented a group of propositions as a paradigm for the functional approaches in sociology. (Merton, 1957: 50-54)

A paradigm in Merton’s sense is a conceptual scheme proposed for the purpose of adding the precision of quantitative analysis to qualitative analysis which may contain degrees of ambiguity. Its meaning is similar to *Idealtypus*, or may be regarded as a “paradigmatic pattern”. He also explains that a paradigm functions in such a way as to point out and clarify postulates and/or tacit assumptions that remain latent in a given analysis. (Merton, 1957: 55) It is well known, however, that paradigm as an analytical postulate has already been advocated by Thomas Kuhn.

Kuhn explains that a paradigm concerns “universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners.” (Kuhn, 1962: viii) This contention presupposes the possibility of paradigm shifts between normal science and extraordinary science, thereby implying scientific revolutions.

The paradigm as such was re-designated as “disciplinary matrix” by Kuhn, being so self-evident that researchers had not acknowledged its existence. He explained further that:

The coherence displayed by the research tradition in which they participate may not imply even the existence of an underlying body of rules and assumptions that additional historical or philosophical investigation might uncover. That scientists do not usually ask or debate what makes a particular problem or solution legitimate tempts us to suppose that, at least intuitively, they know the answer. (Kuhn, 1962: 46)

Simply put, “While paradigms remain secure, however, they can function without agreement over rationalization or without any attempted rationalization at all...” (Kuhn, 1962: 48-49) Here lies the axiomatic nature of any paradigm. True, the searcher himself/herself may not be aware of the existence of paradigm upon which he/she bases research, yet it is doubtful whether he/she could abandon the task of establishing it from the outset. If we wish to seek an epoch-making development in research endeavors, then we need to grasp consciously the nature of existing paradigms, find their limitations, if any, and be ready to attempt a ‘paradigm shift’ to a better one.

A paradigm regarded as self-evident in the social scientific fields in both Western societies and Japan (which adopted its learning primarily from the West) has been that of methodological individualism. As a matter of fact, however, its scheme cannot be a precisely correct analytical

tool to clarify Japanese society and its cultural behavior. It is time for us to realize this fact and rid ourselves of our sole dependency on this conventional paradigm. We need to search for and examine an alternative paradigm in all seriousness. A considerable amount of courage and effort is required in this work as the task may mean for many Japanese scientists once to abandon their research results. They have accepted the theories and concepts of Western origin unconditionally as universal truths since the Meiji era. Nevertheless, this is an essential work in order for us to bring forth radical advancement in Japanese studies.

The conceptual tool utilized in scientific analyses pertaining to a certain paradigm is called a “model”. It is a pattern identical to reality, its design, or a group of its precise components. According to E.A.Gellner, three forms of a theoretical model can be considered;

(1) Actual physical model:

artifacts created artificially and suitably analogous to some other systems in terms of their parts, relations, and working;

(2) Conceptual model:

artifacts not actually built but only conceptually envisaged or specified in words;

(3) Model in simplification:

as the indication of a simpler and more accurately determinable state of affairs.

A model may be established by way of reducing variables and/or exacting their values in forming (2) above. Simplification and greater determinateness are the two essential conditions. Not a mere copy or reproduction of the real system by some other medium. With this simplified model, further consequences may be deduced; or its tentative reapplication to the real system, more complicated and elusive may be possible here. It is a kind of postulate.

(Gellner, 1964: 435)

In the analysis of social systems, (2) or (3) above is often adopted. In each case an image of the whole can be obtained by utilizing a reconstructed model on certain selected aspects of the real world out of all the research objects. Here, whether the said model is suitable or not may be determined, not by how faithfully reality has been reproduced, but by the extent of its effectiveness in analyzing the attributes and functions of the present research objects. In other words, the final evaluation concerning the propriety of the said model depends largely on the degree of its persuasiveness in interpretations, in theoretical construction, or in the estimation of ensuing situations. Based on such an efficiency of the model concerned, the validity of a paradigm may be determined.

In studies of comparative cultures, various models have been adopted and presented by way of contrasting them with each other within each ‘system level’. Some reflect differences in the basic paradigm, while others may show divisions in the developmental stages of a given system. Model types on a ‘meta-level’ have also been presented. These are exemplified in the following:

prototype system——matter/energy and information

existence system——individuum and relatum

actor entity system——organism and actor-subject

living system——ego-identity and proto-identity

action system—inside-out and outside-in
 decision-making system—integrated type and autonomously distributed type
 “human” system—the individual and the contextual
 life-space system—personality and *Jen* (personage)
 life-form system—culture and civilization
 social-organization system—modern and postmodern
 social-change system—endogenous evolution and exogenous revolution
 system-formation system—feedback and feed-forward (or self-organization)

When these models are combined in complex ways on variously interrelated system levels of life and action, a specific pattern may be noted. The two models may appear antagonistic to each other at first sight; yet they may connect flexibly under certain conditions and begin to function effectively toward the whole system. What evolves is a sort of structural dynamics that may be termed ‘correlative dualism’. For example, with regard to the Japanese-type system, the ‘contextual’ model may be adequately applied where the ‘cultural’ level or the ways of life resulting from firmly rooted historical traditions are concerned. As to the management of the Western civilization that was introduced to Japan as a result of her modernization, however, the ‘individual’ model is inevitably required in institutional aspects. Consequently, the whole system (of the present Japanese-type system) functions with the ‘contextual’ as one’s true underlying motive (*hon’ne*) coexisting with the ‘individual’ as one’s principle (*tatema*), as if both lie within one person. Conversely, the Japanese-style management system, originating from Japanese ‘culture’, is being accepted in the United States and other nations as one type of the universal ‘civilization’ on account of its high efficiency. This may be viewed as the case where a functional integration of the ‘contextual’ model with the ‘individual’ model is also intended.

Considering such a dynamism as described above, we begin to realize the impossibility of constructing a paradigm relying upon only one model. In order to establish a new, alternative paradigm for Japanese studies, therefore, we must first examine what combination of models may prove to be meritorious in terms of methodology and what other combinations may hamper us from overcoming the demerits inherent in the conventional paradigm.

THE INDIVIDUUM AND THE RELATUM

As described earlier, two types of existent forms for actor-subject can be identified. They are classified into two models depending on how the actor-subject system in question defines itself as it relates to the situations in which it exists (or the environment that is subjectively meaningful to the actor-subject). A primary principle here shall be to explain how the said actor-subject may deal with the situation, inasmuch as a human being exists as an “open system” where life is maintained through exchanges of energy and information with the environment, and is at the same time regarded as a “self-control system” (according to Tamito Yoshida) where it intends to adapt to and learn about the environment by way of autonomous selections of information. As forms of the actor-subject system, the ‘individuum’ that tends to sever intentionally its involvement with situations and the ‘relatum’ that tends to embrace it naturally can be identified.

The ‘individuum’, as an existent form, is equivalent to an ego or self where an actor-subject (the concerned system itself) attempts to control arbitrarily the territory secured by severing

intentionally the concrete and specific relationship with the situations in which it exists. It is a completely independent individual system.

The ‘relatum’ is an existent form of actor-subject, the kind of referential ‘holon’ or self-organizing system where the concerned actor-subject takes in the concrete and specific relationship with the situations wherein it exists as a given and unavoidable, and attempts to act by controlling referentially the mutual self-other territory (a situational self). This is a case of the actor-subject system constituted by the human nexus itself.

Following the definitions above, the ‘relatum’ may be considered more general and intrinsic as a system form, while the ‘individuum’ can only be seen as its specific form. This is because, objectively speaking, the relationship as a given persists between the concerned system itself and the situations even when the concerned actor-subject may have severed intentionally its relationship with the latter. The ‘individuum’ in this case is eventually forced to expand the territory of intentional self-control to include not only the concerned actor-subject itself, but also the other actor-subjects embraced in the situations concerned. George H. Mead has conceptualized this situation by defining “Me”. It can now be supposed that the ‘relatum’ existed from the beginning as a latent form despite the ostensible existence of the ‘individuum’.

In addition the ‘relatum’ is more akin to the prototype from the system theory perspective. Here the system connotes a group in which its collected components exist and act interrelatedly and show particular characteristics and movements as a whole, as if it were a single entity. (Matsuda, 1973: 24) Any system is regarded as having its own order as a group; yet what matters here is again the problem of orderly relatedness where an entity or its action will regulate the other entities or their actions. In brief, a system does not mean a group itself (as an entity consisting of components), but rather must be defined in terms of the way the group components are put together, i.e., the order prevailing in a group. Thus, even if the systems are made of the same entities, they are different as long as the ways the entities are put together differ.

It follows that the system approach is not concerned about *what* are put together, but rather *in what ways* the component elements are put together to form an entity; in short, the focus here is on the recognition of a group by way of a relationship concept rather than an entity concept. (Matsuda, 1973: 24) As Matsuda explains, within the logic of recognizing the whole-part relations, what is called a part does not exist as an entity from the beginning and can assert its existence only in relationship with others. What is of importance here is the functional implication of the ways the parts are related to the whole, which, in turn, is recognized as a composite of functional implications on the side of the parts. It will be reiterated that ‘relatum’ is regarded as a more generalized form, wherein the ‘individuum’ is included as its special case.

The system theory which aims at analyzing a relational structure of a phenomenon (a recognition system concerning the part-whole relationship) takes an opposite position to the so-called “nothing but-ism”, that is, an analytical method based on reductionism which maintains that a phenomenon as a whole can be explained by de-composing it into elements and only studying these elements. The paradigm of the system theory presupposes that each system involves emergent properties and is inexplicable by simply reducing a phenomenon into its structural units. The conventional paradigm involving the methodological individualism has completely overlooked this premise. Also on this point, a renovation of the paradigm is absolutely necessary.

The ‘individuum’ and the ‘relatum’ are two categories of an objective existent form of the

actor-subject system (placing the existence of an actor-subject on the objective side which becomes the object of observation and analyses by researchers). These types are also educed depending on whether one is seen as an individually self-reliant existence without any reference to other systems or is regarded as an existence mutually and indispensably referential or dependent on another, from the viewpoint of self-consciousness for the behavioral orientation of the actor-subject. This sort of subjective existent forms at the self-consciousness level of the actor-subject itself may be termed, an 'individuus' referring to the former, and a 'relatus' referring to the latter.

The human actor-subject is inherently capable of objectifying itself. Thus, while the 'individuus' might limit the objectified referent within itself, the 'relatus' type might expand the referent more extensively to include the self-other relationship. The extent to which objectification takes place, therefore, will determine the degree of autonomy within the behavioral orientation of the actor-subject as well as the necessity for mutual reference. In the case of the former, the 'individuus'-type actor-subject system, the identity in actions inherent in the concerned actor-subject must be confirmed before any relationship with other actor-subjects is established. This solipsistic actor-subject thus attempts to protect at all cost its own inherent identity as inviolatable. When such an actor-subject form as this enters into a relationship with other actor-subjects, an exchange of social actions (involving money, goods, and properties) takes place in a reciprocal manner between the concerned parties. The exchange as such presents a strategic problem in defense of the 'individuus' as its main purpose. In contrast, the latter, 'relatus' type actor-subject system, presents the case where the mutuality of relations is of value in itself and the self identity is established within the relationship between the self and others — as a referential subject which embodies interrelatedness of personal nexus. Presupposed also here is, of course, each existing 'individuus'. In this sense, therefore, the 'relatus' and the 'individuus' are related to each other complementarily.

THE FICTITIOUS NATURE OF THE EXISTENT 'INDIVIDUUM'

The essence of the 'individuus' has never been fully clarified because its existence had been regarded as self-evident. A careful examination, however, may reveal the fact that the fictitious nature of the 'individual' has been overlooked.

The word "ko" (piece) is defined as "An individual. A person. A unit for counting." (*Iwanami Japanese Dictionary*) And, as "One thing, One person. One among many...." (*Koujien, Dictionary of Japanese*). According to Norio Fujisawa, however, what is called an 'individual' as in the examples of 'recognition of an individual,' or 'hold fast to an individual's belief' contains, implicitly, much more meaning than the final and indivisible unit reduced into the "individuus" = "individual" = "atomon". Furthermore:

...in order for the 'individual' itself to be ultimately real, based on which all phenomena can be understood and explained in the end, it must be an existence, in the philosophical sense, as a self-sufficient 'substance', where each one of the 'individual' is more meaningful than being a mere 'unit for counting', and so independently self-reliant, and maintains firmly its unique existence.(Fujisawa, 1987: 3)

In short, the ‘individual’ by implication is an irreplaceable and independently existing ‘entity’.

According to Fujisawa, moreover, it is a matter of no importance for each of the ‘individuals’ whether or not they gather to form a whole, because the ‘individual’ can be self-sufficient as a ‘lone’ or ‘solitary’ entity. But such an ‘individual’ as this exists neither in nature nor in the human world. Thus,

...in actuality, the ‘individual’ is always one within the whole (group or mass) and establishes itself necessarily in relation with other ‘individuals’ as well as the whole, and, therefore, such relatedness mentioned here materially affects the ways of existence of the said ‘individual’, or forms the essence itself of the ‘individual’.(Fujisawa, 1987: 3)

Fujisawa also points out that the implication of the ‘individual’ as an irreplaceable existence involving qualitative and value-oriented differentials cannot be produced out of the ‘individual’ as a mere unit of existence itself, affirmed by way of reductionistic procedure. “A ‘unit’ is primarily neutral and equal to another; it has nothing to do with individuality or originality in terms of its quality or value.” (Fujisawa, 1987: 4) Thus, considering the theoretical and fundamental difficulty in defining the nature of the ‘individual’, Fujisawa concludes that the ‘individual’ as the ‘entity’ that is self-sufficient in the ‘solitary’ form, but is non-existent in reality, must be a fabrication.

Now the ‘individuum’ can be defined as a conceptualized ‘individual’ that is made to seem as if it were an ‘entity’. One dictionary defines the word ‘individuum’ as,”(I) [Philosophy] Individuum (Latin), i) an individual thing; ii) an integrated substance having qualitatively its own particular existence and character. A substance possessing its own integrity as one organic whole irrespective of the size” (*Koujien*). Also the word, “individual thing” is explained as:

[Philosophy] Individuum (Latin), das Einzelne: Einzelding (German) one and individuals. A substance directly sensed and occurring one time as this thing or that thing. An individual. (*Koujien*).

It follows that the ‘individuum’ can thus be understood to be an indivisible and self-sufficient unit which maintains its own and mutually independent existence. What is posed here as a paradigmatic problem is that this ‘individuum’, as a unique and organic whole, is adopted as the fundamental model of the methodological individuum-ism, with its substantive fictitiousness remaining unchallenged, despite the fact that it cannot be educed by reductionism. Due to the autonomy of this fabricated ‘individuum’, the relationship with its supra-system (i.e., group, society) might become discontinuous where an ‘organization’, for example, is assumed as a suppressive structure for an ‘individual’. Derived from this may be the controversy involving the issue of dualism of ‘individual’ vs. ‘society’ or social nominalism vs. social realism.

The substantive fictitiousness of the ‘individuum’ is not confined to human phenomena. Even in the theory of elementary particles, the notion of an individual has been a fabrication for a long time. Even the existence of a quark, thought to be the ultimate form of elementary particles, still remains a hypothesis. However, Hideki Yukawa, the first Japanese Nobelist, citing a poem by Li Po (“The universe is an inn for all things: The time and tide is an eternal guest.”), stated that, assuming a space as the universe and elementary particles as all things, the space may be

regarded as a *gekiryō* or an inn for elementary particles where “guests are not specifically named; but rather, the nature and activity of a particular particle shall be determined depending on which room a guest might stay in....”(Yukawa, 1964: 51) Here the substantive nature of an elementary particle is denied.

Yukawa further states:

I have been thinking that a space is something which provides a seat to a thing. There are various seats and the nature of a particle is determined depending on which seat it occupies. Particles are not identified by a given name, but they are known as a particular particle by the way they fill their seats. Time here refers to the changes in the ways the seats are filled. (Yukawa, 1964: 51)

The theory of the elementary area by Yukawa has not been fully developed, but his position still is in accord with the main thread of the ‘quantum theory of the field’ which assumes a particle as a locally condensed field. Not limiting our discussion to the elementary particles theory, the substantive nature of the ‘individuum’ in any case cannot be presupposed from the beginning, without any reference to a specific space or the nature of the relationship involved.

Kitaro Nishida, the philosopher, pointed out that a spatial nature (formed by crossings of relatedness) must be presupposed by the existence of the ‘individuum’. He thought that “we cannot help but regard an existence to be so existing in some place” and, therefore, “when we think of things, something like a place where they can be seen is essential....” The said place fundamentally existing, is not a mere place “reflecting the shadow of things”, but rather that “where things are at”; in other words, the referent is the general existence that is of the same quality as particular things.

He further stated:

In what ways are we to think of an individual thing? When we think about it, we have to consider first a limit in general existence in any sense. An individual thing may be considered in terms of this extreme in such a limit.(Ueda, 1987: 267-268)

Even in such an ontological argument in philosophy, the ‘individuum’ exists first of all only within the self-limitation of a general existence like ‘place’ and its *a priori* pre-existence, therefore, must be denied.

Yoji Inoue, a Catholic Father, in a way expanding the ontology of Nishida, has also conceptualized the “theology of the field”. He had felt the sense of incompatibility with Western thought as represented by the ‘substance’ concept of Aristotle, while he spent a long monastery life in Europe. Inoue stated the reasons by commenting:

As energy is condensed in a mass, a ‘field’ in actual existence might be thought as a ‘substance’ or an ‘individual’. In terms of ontology, therefore, the ‘field’ goes much deeper than the ‘individual’. I have been preoccupied with this thought ever since the time of approximately the fourth year of my stay in Europe. (Inoue, 1986: 2)

Inoue, who regards the foundation of Japanese thought to be rooted in the ‘field’ rather than the ‘individual’, has been examining the basic attributes of the ‘theology of the field’, because he thought such a study as this to be essential in order for Christianity to be truly accepted in Japanese culture. Such an attempt as his is of significance not only from a religious viewpoint, but also in terms of ontology, because it tries to relativize the European Christian tradition which has claimed only the ‘theology of the individual’ to be universally applicable.

HOLON AS THE ‘RELATUM’

In order for us to overcome the paradigm of methodological individualism and establish a new paradigm based on the ‘relatum’ or ‘relatus’ model, we need to review closely the ‘relatum’ itself from the perspective of the system theory, which explains an actor-subject in relational terms. Utilizing this approach, Arthur Koestler and Hiroshi Shimizu have attempted to advance a holon ‘relatum’ theory, which now merits our re-examination.

(1) *The Holon Theory by Koestler — A System Structure with Correlative Dualism* (Koestler, 1967)

First, let us examine “holon” as a focal system which has been proposed by Koestler. Here, every existent system, which is neither a complete ‘whole’ nor a mere ‘part’, is to be understood as the intermediary ‘nodes’ within a series of strata of a system; i.e., as ‘sub-wholes’. Somewhat like Janus, the god in Roman myth with two faces, one looking upward and the other looking downward, a holon can show an image of a complete whole against the subordinate units in the structure of a system, while also showing a dependent ‘part’ submitting to the upper system that includes the system. Any given system within the stratified structure tries to maintain a dynamic balance between its whole-ness (self-assertive tendency) and part-ness (integrative tendency).

Koestler declares that what is unconditionally defined as the ‘individual’ exists neither in nature nor in society, as there is no such thing as a complete ‘whole’. What does exist is, not a separateness or independency of the individual itself, but the fact of mutual co-operation and inter-dependence. Even if there is an independent self-assertive unit, it includes an interdependent feature as well as a tendency for integration simultaneously. In this sense, therefore, there is no complete ‘individual’ existing even within the coordinates of system of a hierarchy, but only the two-sided holon exists.

In Koestler’s judgement, as for the holon in the case of a living body, its presence is entirely self-evident and unquestionable. Take the example of symbiosis between a cell itself and the mitochondria which is an intracellular organ with its own DNA differing from that of living cells, or other cases of joint relationship among inter- and intra-species as well as the relationship between human families and the entire society. All of these can be understood as the holon phenomena.

It follows from the above, then, that the holon in terms of its structure and function, as applied especially to a living body, shows a special characteristic that may be termed two-sided dynamic dualism.

First, it is a ‘whole’ that manages the lower-rank systems, while it is also a ‘part’ being integrated into the upper-system (that is, a holon as a sub-whole and sub-part). In short, the holon maintains a dynamic balance in such a manner that as a ‘whole’ it copes with its own ‘parts’,

while as a part it aims at its own 'whole'.

Second, while a holon as an 'individual' maintains its own integration with what is on the same level as its own system (coordinates), it also tends to maintain mutually dependent and co-operative relations with other 'individual' or a group of 'individuals' (that is, a holon as a sub-individual). Even though such an organic holon may have a great tendency to attribute itself to the integrated structure built by the same type of 'individuals' born as a result of co-operation, this does neither mean it is completely confined in the said system nor may it turn into a miniature version of the integrated whole. Though it may bear the pattern of an integrated whole, its own individuality and free decision-making are allowed to some extent (that is, a holon as a unified sub-whole). In this case again a delicate balance is maintained between the individuality of a self and its conformity with an integrated whole.

To summarize, a holon maintains its balanced two-sidedness of sub-whole as well as sub-part, and also sub-individual as well as sub-unifier. It is a system where an autonomous 'individual' maintains its own integrated 'wholeness' and serves at the same time as an agent for integration while positioning itself as a 'part' (the sub-system) of a supra-system. Koestler proposed the holon so as to help us understand the structure and functions of a focal system in "holarchy" and herein suggested are the system characteristics of the 'relatum' or the 'relatus'.

The 'dynamic dualism' as described in the above-mentioned system may be difficult to be understood under the paradigm of 'methodological individualism', which has been regarded as self-evident in social science for some time. In this paradigm, it is simply supposed that a social group is formed linearly by the individuals who enjoy more freedom and consequently, a group phenomenon presents itself as a sum total of the autonomous actions of each individual. It is also assumed that a phenomenon of a society as a whole can be explained linearly in the form of actions taken by individually independent groups. However, each individual or a group itself, as long as it is a living system, bears a richly non-linear trait whereby the self is flexibly changeable by selecting information voluntarily within its mutual relationship with the upper-level or the same-level systems. If this point were recognized, the 'dynamic dualism' of a group becomes the most self-evident attribute of systems and what is of utmost necessity now is to develop a new paradigm based on this particular system attribute.

(2) *The Holon Theory as Bio-holonics by Hiroshi Shimizu — An Informational and Functional Relevancy Between a Part and a Whole* (Shimizu, 1984)

Let us now examine the concept of holon proposed by Hiroshi Shimizu, who pointed out as a scholar of bio-physics the non-linear nature of a holon from the informational-functional aspects of a living system. According to him, the word, holon, refers not to the Greek words, *holos* (whole) + *on* (particle), as Koestler who coined it explained, but rather is to be understood as meaning whole + one. The + in Koestler's sense, clearly indicates a structural two-sidedness of a singular system, while that of Shimizu connotes an informational as well as functional joint between a 'whole' and an 'individual'.

In other words, the holon in its original form, is a free 'individual' with individuality and autonomy, where the choices (freedom) of whether or not to cooperate may be freely decided. And at the same time, because of its freedom the individual joins voluntarily in the formation of the order within the entire system, thereby making up a 'whole'. Expressed differently, "while it is an element, 'holon' bears simultaneously a character of being a system as a whole," or it is "an

element ‘wearing the clothes’ of a whole-like order”.

Thus the ‘individuus’ as the “holon” refers to the kind of existence where “one can live in an orderly manner as long as it is surrounded by the order, in the formation of which one participated.” In a word, “holon” in bio-holonics in Shimizu’s sense can be understood as a system model of an informational-functional relationship between the focal system and its supra-system (a whole). Shimizu, as an advocate of bio-holonics, emphasizes the fact that a systemic order as a universal trait of life is formed gradually within the functional relationship between the individual and the whole or, in other words, within the information feed-back loop connecting the focal holon with the whole system including it. This process is called self-organization of a system and develops through the following stages:

- (1) The individuus as an open system pumps in matter and energy constantly from outside in order to activate itself as a “holon”.
- (2) The activated “holon” enabled to affect the surrounding holons, induces, under certain conditions, cooperative interactions among the holons.
- (3) Because of these cooperative actions, an order or function for the system emerges, though the order, of course, may not be maintained always, as it may possibly fluctuate or disperse on occasions.
- (4) The whole order then accelerates further co-operative effect of elements. With this effect, the individual “holons” may go through self-transformation so as to match the whole and to be integrated into the system. The process of integration is not passive but voluntary; the “holon” itself can select a form of interaction, cooperation or competition.
- (5) The whole system affects the individual “holons” through the information it gives out, but unlike the acts of ordering, the information here is given for the purpose of providing certain directions to the ‘fluctuation’, leaving room for free choices by the “holon” elements.
- (6) Within this feed-back loop of information, the “holon” exists as a determinant of its large order, while cooperating with it. It also assumes others to exist within itself, while maintaining its own order by the order it formed at the beginning. Strictly speaking, therefore, there is no longer self-other distinctions here, as the “holon” is now an ‘individual’ and a ‘whole’ simultaneously.

Shimizu called the completely organized parts of a system, ‘subordinative elements’. According to him, where there is no *yuragi* or fluctuation, neither autonomous choice is permitted nor any information need be coped with even if it were received; they need only to follow the orders from the upper level. Conversely, he called those elements with *yuragi*, acting without regard to others, or not sensing any mutual exchange of information, ‘independent elements’ and the system established by them a non-organizational system.

In the case of “holons”, this *yuragi*, congruous with their individuality and allowing their active selections, makes them capable of self-organization where mutually obtained information is sensed and an order within the system is created while they cooperate with their surroundings. A more accurate term for them may be “*zentaishi*” (holistically structured individuum). Thus, “holon” becomes an indispensable constituent of a ‘self-organization system’ which, in turn, may

be regarded as constituting what is termed the 'relatum' in this paper in a form relative to information.

The "bio-holon" proposed by Shimizu may be most appropriately understood as a "*kankeishi*" (the relational element). According to his explanation:

...the nature of an element (in a system) is determined according to the relationship it keeps. More often than not, it is difficult to foresee thoroughly any particular nature of an element as it relates to other elements by simply analyzing the nature of one element. Thus an element whose nature changes as it relates to others may be called "*kankeishi*" (a relational element). (Shimizu, 1992: 132)

In essence, a "*kankeishi*" is an element involving its relationship with others, and the information exchanged within these mutually dependent relations is fed back to the individual elements as the information concerning the 'field' within which a system is placed, while attaching a certain coherence to the autonomous functions of the element. This causes what is called "entrainment". (Shimizu, 1992: 90-92) In this sense, a human being as a "holon" can be regarded as the system actor-subject which is connected closely with the social 'field'.

In the bio-holonics model proposed by Shimizu, there is no clear-cut distinction between the self-organized group ('organization system') and the whole society, in the same way as it is difficult to distinguish the self-organized individual from its group. In this situation, a sub-system and a supra-system tend to merge themselves together through the process of self-organization. In terms of the social system, we may regard the individual members, their group and the whole society to come together as one entity within the information feed-back loop involving the self-organization, where the group as the 'organizational system' is its nucleus. Thus, the term, 'organizations' can be understood to connote the system as described above.

Normally, a social organization means an overall structure where social relations of group members or inter-group relations are relatively stable. However, we need to examine closely whether or not these 'organizations' are formed naturally through its self-organizing process. In the case of the human 'organization system', they are most frequently formal organizations with the planned arrangement of people, their mutual relationships and their roles so organized for the purpose of achieving certain goals. If the aim of a self organization is to promote efficiency through structural reforms of its own system, rather than mere adaptation to and improvement of the group environment, it would be unthinkable that these attempts are achieved without any sort of a design. Even though the holon theory of Shimizu does not discuss fully the structure of self organization concerning its external variables like system goals, it may be understood to deal with the process of 'social compilation' from the analytical angles of a 'relatum' or a 'relatus'.

THE 'CONTEXUAL' AS A 'RELATUM' MODEL

According to Shizuo Takiura:

...even though it is common sense for us or because of the very fact, that there is no doubt whatsoever in this world about the fact of people other than ourselves existing and the other person also being one "self", hardly any serious discussion in Western

philosophy on the existence of this “other self”(or “alter”) has taken place until recently. This is because, for one thing, the existence of others is so self-evident that the logic of self had simply been understood to be applicable to the other self as well. (Takiura, 1990: 6-7)

A paradigm utilized in clarifying ‘other self’ (or “alter”) by way of extrapolation of the concept of ‘self’ may be a typical case in the methodological individualism. However, an approach where ‘other self’ and ‘self’ are assumed to be equal ‘individuals’, and their mutual interactions and networks are the focal point of analyses, has become popular recently, as seen in what is called a network theory.

The term, ‘network’, in this case refers to the ‘ways of inter-connectedness of the constituent elements’. Though it implies common interests, conflicts of interests, roles and transactions, and other aspects inherent in it, there has been a tendency to assume only the ‘systems of interdependent relationship’ and/or ‘harmonious relationship’ in its discussion.(Imai, 1984: 4-5) Perhaps in opposition to this assumption of all-harmoniousness, some, stressing the importance of individuality, define ‘network’ as:

...a coordinate group of ‘units’ with individually determined will and independence, joining voluntarily of their own free will, where members are tied interdependently in any sense while insisting on their own differences from others, and enabling the system to have its meaningfulness and value within the relationship.(Kaneko, 1986: 8)

When Kaneko states above, “it is presupposed in networking that those tied together are individually ‘different’...,” his position is indeed within the limit of the methodological individualism. The point of reference is still laid on an assumed existence of different individuals. But this approach must have originally been proposed for the purpose of breaking the paradigm of the methodological individualism. Then we need to return to the original definition of the ‘network’ concept, where, as a mathematical concept, it is:

...a relation where relationship itself is a term, or a ‘physical system’ on which a series of system variables (as expressed by the range of function N) is placed, using the relationship as the coordinate variates. (Kumon, 1990: 163)

It must not be forgotten that the network is a system where a ‘line’ connecting one ‘point’ with another is the basic unit of analysis. Thus, the ‘network’ originally is a concept which should be constructed, not on the basis of an ‘individuum’, but rather on the basis of a ‘relatum’. It is difficult at this stage, however, to clarify human and social phenomena from this standpoint, because the logic of the ‘relatum’ and the adequacy of its conceptual model are not yet fully clarified.

Incidentally, Yoji Kimura and others have been analyzing, by way of computer simulation, the structure and function of the transmitting unit of information or what they termed “socion”. They distinguish the connecting units (nodes) of “socios” or the social network of information from the ‘individual’ in a pure sense of the word and call them “socion”. (Kimura, 1990) Though this study is an important attempt with its intention to reform the conventional paradigm in social

science, it has not yet reached the point of a radical shift in the human model of a 'concerned system itself'. Here, the social existence of human beings is explained only in terms of analogy with the neuron of the neurological circuit network, and, theoretically speaking, the study is not thorough enough. With regard to the much-needed fundamental shift in the human model, Hamaguchi has already proposed the concept of the "contextual" as a human model for the 'relatum'. (Hamaguchi, 1977, 1982, 1985: 289-321, 1988)

Citing Norio Fujisawa again,

...to enable us to grasp the 'individual' correctly and as it is, we must understand also the world as it is, or as a network-like whole where the distinction of a 'thing' as a quantitative unit is neither absolute nor fixed. In other words, we need to re-discover the world which, in a fundamental sense, is full of quality and value. Each 'individual', then, will reveal its own specific value while integrating its relationship with the whole as well as the other individuals into one's essence, and this constant recapturing of the values will eventually manifest itself as a convergent core for self-identity. (Fujisawa, 1987: 4-5)

Clearly the 'relatum' is presupposed in this case as a basis of analysis. Here, an 'individual' as a 'relatum' is captured, constituting what is termed the 'contextual' in a human model, which can be regarded as a human version of the "holon".

The Japanese in actuality do not show the Western type individual autonomy where they insist on their own wills in a group. They are not individuality-intensive individuals who are self-reliant and solipsistic, but rather tend to be relational actor-subjects, i.e., as the 'contextual', who, more often than not, keep in mind the ways to maintain a relationship based on the organic and mutual expectations with others they know. In a word, they are relation-intensive persons.

The "contextual" or *kanjin* and the "individual" or *kojin* can be understood as two types of human model. A human as an actor-subject system is capable of objectifying itself. Thus different human models will be constructed depending on whether the focus is only on its own actor-subject or the view includes the relationship between its own actor-subject and other objects (or other actor-subjects). In the case of the former, a self as a single individual is objectified and the 'individual' existence here means, in a sense, a solipsistic "individual subject". The objectified referent in the latter case is an actor-subject as it relates to other actor-subjects (acquaintances, close friends, organizations to which it belongs, etc.). The actor-subject system in this case is a 'referential subject' or the 'contextual' which includes within itself the interpersonal nexus. It may be regarded as a human who is placed at "*hito to hito tono aida* (Between Person and Person)" in Bin Kimura's words. That is, 'human being' refers to a person as a 'relational actor-subject', who recognizes the relationship itself in personal context as himself/herself. The "contextual", or *kanjin*, therefore, is *ningen* (human being) as an embodiment of "*aidagara*" or "*jinkan*" (human nexus) as expressed by Tetsuro Watsuji. As Bin Kimura explained, "...the Japanese are devoid within themselves of the basis for their own existence...." (Kimura, 1972: 75), but this does not mean the Japanese lack an established identity. Their behavioral identity as the 'relatum' or 'relatus' is quite evident. For example, their awareness of 'shame', the dilemma they feel between the sense of 'obligation' and 'human feelings' are the manifestations of their

relational subjectivity.

The ‘*kojin*’ (the “individual”) as an independent actor-subject may be seen as a kind of social atom. The interaction among the individuals (interpersonal relations) takes place outside of the life space of each individual, and is regarded as a mere object strategically manipulable. The ‘contextual’ or ‘*kanjin*’, in contrast, may be seen as a kind of social molecule, where each individual person, in a manner similar to the case of inter-molecular linkage, possesses within its own system mutual interactions of ego and alter ego as a ‘connecting link’ within a molecular structure formula, that is, the common life space to which both ego and alter ego belong together.

For this reason, the interpersonal relations among the ‘contextuals’ and those among the ‘individuals’ are different. In the case of the ‘individual’, its interpersonal relations may be thought analogous to the segment as the ‘local points connection’ combining any two points on a plane. In contrast, the ‘contextual’ relationship is formed by way of the criss-crossing lines on a plane (each person exists as a part of the line) and can be regarded as the ‘connection between lines’ corresponding to a non-local ‘field’ or a situation constituted by the criss-crossing lines.

For example, the intimate relationship of the Japanese who are close to each other cannot be defined in terms of a simple and tentative relation based on reciprocal interactions (a deal-like give-and-take) as in a dyad of self vs. other self (I and thou). Rather, it is formed as a sub-system of an interpersonal network (though its rational recognition is impossible) that expands indefinitely in time and space by what is termed “*en*” (ties or *pratyaya*). And here mutual benefit is sought after and the maintenance and expansion of the said interpersonal nexus (‘human terms’ or *aidagara*) is of utmost interest. Usually, the fairness in mutual beneficence is supported by the concept of “*ongi*” (indebtedness), but when voluntary and unilateral services are not exchanged smoothly, the obligation shifts into the area of “*giri*” (‘obligatory duty’), i.e., as the form of somewhat compulsory bilateral services. However, it differs fundamentally from the form of ‘contract’ where duties and obligations are stipulated when an equivalent exchange of values takes place between the ‘individuals’.

In the ‘*aidagara*’ relationship, ‘I’ (a self), according to Arimasa Mori, is ‘thou’ for ‘thou’, i.e., ‘you’s you’. (Mori, 1971: 103) The actor-subject in this case is not a self itself in an ordinary sense, but rather the objectified self (a transposed actor-subject) viewed from the standpoint of the other party. It is due to this that the Japanese tend to deal with matters by placing themselves in the position of others.

THE METHODOLOGICAL RELATUM-ISM AND ITS ONTOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

Let us call the paradigm based on the ‘relatum’ model, where the “contextual” is the reference point of analysis, the “methodological relatum-ism”. It compares with the “methodological individuism” (of which the ‘methodological individualism’ is one type) that has been the basic paradigm in the conventional scientism and social sciences of modern times. The new paradigm is proposed here as a methodological supplement to make up for the shortcomings or demerits of the reductionist analyses of the methodological individuism, that is, the unproductiveness of the dualistic thinking on the issue of ‘individual-society’; or the dichotomy of ‘individualism’ vs. ‘collectivism’ as not necessarily universal from a global perspective.

The “methodological relatum-ism”, moreover, is suggested here as the most realistic reference point of analysis for clarifying the Japanese-type system which depends on the ‘contextual’

model. More precisely, by adopting, as a human model, the 'relatum' in the form of the 'contextual' which embodies the 'nexus', the human being on the individual level and the social system as a whole are grasped, not in terms of the dualistic 'individual-society' or 'partness-wholeness' schema, but rather as coordinates. The new paradigm, therefore, is proposed to clarify this organic relationship between the 'individual' and 'society', both of which should be regarded as nothing but the 'coordinates' of the 'contextuals' in different phases.

By shifting the paradigm to the position of the "methodological relatum-ism", we may be able to understand better the peculiarity of the Japanese-type system brought up in the neo-capitalism controversy that arose surrounding the issues of economic friction between the United States and Japan as well as the collapse of the socialist systems of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. From the American viewpoint, where fair and free competition among enterprises and maximization of profit in business are the two accepted principles, the Japanese economic institution having *keiretsu* (seriate or continuous business deals) as a matter of course may appear closed, heterogeneous, and anomalous. But the basic pattern in Japanese economic civilization, where the same kind of industries cooperate among themselves while continuing severe competition between companies for market share, is beginning to be understood as a new model.

According to Iwao Nakatani, the mere market mechanism is not a driving force here, but:

...it is now widely recognized even in academic circles that the network-type industrial system that had been enabled by a long-term and continuous cooperation among businesses closely connected to exist played a great role in strengthening the competitive power of Japanese automobile and electronics industries. (Nakatani, 1992)

The basis for the Japanese economy, thus, can be understood more precisely by presupposing a business enterprise in terms of the 'relatum' model.

According to Masahiko Aoki, whose research focused on a comparative institutional analysis of the economic systems of various societies, the Anglo-American system with dominant tendency for the market general equilibrium model (Perfect Competition Model) in the sense of M.E.L. Walras is not necessarily a universal model and the economic rationality with a continuous parts-supply system also should be recognized. Furthermore, in terms of the corporate governance within the Anglo-American system, a major issue is how to control top management in order for the shareholders to realize the maximum share price, while the form of 'contingent governance' is more dominant in Japan. In short, as long as health is maintained in corporate finance, the controlling power rests upon the management executives who are the insiders; whereas once business deteriorates, the power shifts automatically to some specified outsiders, i.e., the main bank. (Aoki, 1995, 19-21)

In the comparison of economic systems as the above, the American system, where the shareholders as the 'individuum' are centered in its economic activities, exhibits a striking contrast to the Japanese one where system dynamism at the 'relatum' level is at work even in the area of corporate governance, as exemplified by the *ex post facto* monitoring by the main bank. The Japanese-type economic system, therefore, cannot be understood without grasping the features of the Japanese-type system dynamism described here.

It would be difficult, however, to find the ontological basis for the 'relatum' as the principal paradigmatic model within the conventionally existing theories of Western origin. In short, we

cannot depend on Cartesian ontology where an existence of the ‘individual’ is assumed to be self-evident, because:

...in the Western ideological traditions, there has been an overwhelming predominance of the actor-subject which represented the other side of an existence (Being). (Nakamura, 1989: 236)

In the ontology of the ‘individual’, the relationship with others fell entirely within the category of the object and was never discussed in terms of its reference to the actor-subject.

Thus we may take note here of a philosopher of ancient India and the founder of Mahayanistic Buddhism, Nāgārjuna (150-250 AD?) who advocated the ontology of the relatedness in connection with the actor-subject. We shall examine his theory of *engi* or the ties (for example, Nāgārjuna, *Madhyamakārikā* [Kumārajīva, tr., *Churon* (neutrality)]) This is a new approach to clear the ontological basis of the ‘relatum’ from the viewpoint of Buddhism. In this case, we confront the problem of incompatibility between the ‘self’ (*svabhāva*) and ‘ties’ (*pratyaya*) and the antinomy must be solved one way or another.

The ‘selfness’ is a ‘substance’ or ‘entity’ that exists independently as a self and has a peculiar essence distinct from others, and constitutes an ‘individuum’ as is in the case of the ‘otherness’ (*parabhāva*). Though the ‘selfness’ and the ‘otherness’ exist independently, they are related in actuality. They are independent, but also interdependent on each other. In short, “The self does not exist unless others exist, while others cannot exist unless the self exists.” *Engi* or ‘ties’ refers to such an interdependent relationship of things as seen in the connection between the ‘selfness’ and the ‘otherness’.

Mutually independent ‘selfness’ and ‘otherness’ are essential prerequisites to the establishment of ‘ties’. However, each of the self-reliant ‘selfness’ and ‘otherness’ in itself must be denied because ‘ties’ or the relationships involve mutual reliance between the two things as their main attribute. This is an antinomy similar to the principle of uncertainty postulated by Heisenberg in which the position of an electron and the momentum (mass × speed) cannot be measured precisely and simultaneously.

According to Yokichi Yajima, who made an exposition of the work by Nāgārjuna:

...in order for the ties to be established, the self is required and at the same time is rejected; likewise, the self, for its establishment, requires the ties as part of the mutually dependent relationships, but it also rejects the ties. What is contradictory cannot exist and, therefore, cannot help but being a void in the negative sense. However, where everything is contradictory and dominated by a void, the void loses its negative meaning and cannot help but become affirmation. (Yajima, 1983: 199-200)

Thus in his attempt to overcome this contradiction in existence, Nāgārjuna proposed a religious sublimation by advocating the ‘neutrality’, as the ‘Void’ on a higher dimension than the mere ties or ‘*sūnyatā*’.

Three levels of ‘*engi*’ (ties) may be distinguished. The first is the ties initially pointed out by Nāgārjuna, that is antinomic with the existence of each ‘individuum’. The second is the ‘ties’ or ‘*engi*’ (‘Void’) in a broader sense where the ‘selfness’ (or ‘otherness’) must be denied because of

its own contradiction. This pertains to (3) of the 'tetra-lemma' theory (consisting of: (1) affirmation; (2) negation; and (3) denial of both affirmation and negation; and (4) affirmation of both affirmation and negation). Item (3) above belongs to a logical judgement higher by one level than (1) and (2) where the logic concerns the law of identity, contradiction and excluded middle, and is, therefore, characterized by "*sho-gi*" (religious orientation) transcending worldliness. The third is the 'ties' as an upper system that absorb both 'ties' and 'selfness' (or 'otherness') as having absolutely interdependent nature because of (3) where both affirmation and negation are denied. It may be regarded as the 'ties' in more higher abstraction, that is, meta-'ties' as seen in (4), which is a paradoxical affirmation.

In order to develop the ontology of this meta-'ties', it is necessary to follow Tokuryu Yamanouchi and consider the relationship of the concerned two items by dividing them into '*soutai*' (confrontation) and '*soudai*' (interdependence). The former refers to the situation where each 'selfness' exists and faces each other independently, while the latter assumes the distinction of mutually related self and others where the self can only be in existence by waiting for the other to come into existence. Thus the 'confrontation' presupposes the 'interdependence' and if 'interdependence' cannot take place unless the self is distinguished from the other self, then the '*soutai*' and '*soudai*' can be regarded as complementary. (Yamanouchi, 1949: 80-81, 106-114) Thus this complementary relationship of the 'ties', or *paraspara-apekṣā*, becomes a key concept which may clarify the ontology regarding the relatedness on a secular level or in terms of social reality.

Yamanouchi proposed "*eshi*" (*samśraya*) (setting up the boundary to confine mutual dependence) as an instrumental concept to explain the above. He said:

In order for things to enter into the relationship of '*engi*' (ties), while having no 'selfness', it is necessary for each thing to become mutually '*samśraya*' where each is not only the base of dependence, but also must set a boundary that this dependent relationship stops....*Samśraya* is dependency on the one hand, while it stops dependency. By stopping, it helps establish a mutually dependent relationship between 'self-ness' and 'other-ness'. (Yamanouchi, 1949: 122-123)

He also noted, "...what may come out of the 'ties' is not selfness, but *samśraya*...." (Yamanouchi, 1949: 122-123)

In summary, '*samśraya*' means the key point or an appropriate boundary where dependency should stop so that the mutually dependent relationship and the 'individuum' may coexist simultaneously. Thus '*samśraya*' may be said equivalent to the common life space where the "contextuals" interflow with each other and the 'relatum' here is equivalent to the system of mutual '*samśraya*'. In other words, the 'selfness' within the 'ties' relationship maintaining '*samśraya*' is to be understood as a 'relatum' that is conceptually distinguished from the 'individuum'.

In this respect, the 'front structure' proposed by Seiichi Yagi is also quite similar to the 'relatum'. For example, the front of a thing, like a wall between two rooms, while being a front of one room, constitutes a part of the other room which is not the concerned thing. (Yagi, 1985, 1988) Yagi states, "...I find in any aspect or any part of myself others dwelling or manifesting themselves...." (Yagi, 1988: 41) Within these discussions, we may be able to find the ontological

basis of the ‘methodological relatum-ism’. (Hamaguchi, 1989, 1995, 1996)

The concept of the ‘relatum’ or the ‘relatus’ can be further analyzed in terms of system theory by reviewing its ontological basis and eventually a new model, universally applicable, can be established. Such a model like this will not stop at being simply appropriate for the Japanese-type system, but will be fully tenable as a new civilizational model in the world amidst fast globalization.

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—— 日本研究の方法論的基礎 ——
— 「関係体」の原基性をめぐって —

—— 濱口恵俊 ——

要旨：従来の社会学的・文化人類学的な立場からの日本研究においては、「恥の文化」「タテ社会」「集団我」「甘え」等のキー概念を用いて、日本社会・日本文化・日本人の国民性が分析されてきたが、それらの概念は、総じて日本人の社会的行為が自律性に欠けることを指摘するものであった。そこでは日本人は、所属集団に隷属する集団主義者だと見なされていた。

そのような分析は比較社会論における方法論的個人主義に立脚するものであり、必ずしも日本人の内在的特質（イーミックス）を正しく表明していない。本稿は、日本研究におけるパラダイムを、「方法論的個別体主義」から「方法論的關係体主義」へとシフトさせることによって、方法論上の改善を図ろうとするものである。

「パラダイム」「モデル」概念を検討した上で、「関係体」と「個別体」という行為者主体が区分される。前者は、人的脈路（間柄）そのものによって構築される人間システムであって、普遍的な形態で、関与的な「ホロン」や自己組織系を形成している。アーサー・ケストラーや清水博の「ホロン」概念も、ここで再検討された。「個別体」は「関係体」の一つの特定の形態である、と考えられる。

存在論的観点からすると、社会の構成単位としての「個別体」は、それ自体としては虚構性を帯びており、人間関係の交差から成る「場」との関連なしには、その存立を仮定しえない。そこで、「関係体」としての「間人」という新しい人間モデルが、従前の「個別体」としての「個人」モデルに代わるものとして提起される。さらに、「関係体」の存在論的基礎が、龍樹や山内得立による、古代仏教哲学に関する論議に基づいて探求される。