

HUMAN RELATIONS IN THE JAPANESE SOCIETY¹

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I. *Problem of Methodology*—A critique of American psychological studies of the Japanese, especially of those by Ruth Benedict—

1) On the methodology in general

Ruth Benedict was as important a figure as Margaret Mead in the American social anthropology. When we examine the content of their studies, however, they are in marked contrast to each other on various points. Especially on the method of social anthropology they are definitely opposed to each other.

In the social anthropology of Mead, the technique of psychology is applied to members of a primitive society. Out of a collection of such individual case studies, she tries to abstract a psychological characteristic or character common to members of the society.

On the other hand, Benedict mainly tries to reach the cultural characteristic or the pattern of culture of a primitive society through the various aspects of cultural life in the society.

Consequently while Mead puts more emphasis on the collection of data by means such as the interview of individuals, the observation of children's behavior and photographic recording, Benedict tries to collect materials in group behavior or institutions, to understand the culture as a whole.

In other words, while Mead is interested in reaching the social psychology through the individual psychology, Benedict interprets the individual behavior from the social psychology of the people as a whole.

It is clearly seen in "the Chrysanthemum and the Sword" as well that Benedict uses mainly a descending method against the ascending method, so to speak, of Mead. There Benedict traces the cultural history of Japan, especially the development of moral thought, to abstract a pattern of culture, or "some degree of consistency" in "a system of value by which to live, and to make a design of living."²

¹ Part I of this paper is a slightly modified English version of the original article, *Shakai Shinrigaku no Tachiba kara* (From the standpoint of a social psychologist), *Minzokugaku Kenkyu* (The Japanese Journal of Ethnology), Special Issue on the Chrysanthemum and the Sword, Vol. 14, No. 4, 1949, Pp. 271-274. Part II is an excerpt from a final chapter of author's book, *Nihonjin no Shinri* (The Psychology of the Japanese People), 1953, Iwanami, Tokyo.

² Benedict, Ruth; "The Chrysanthemum and the Sword" 1946, P. 12.

Benedict then tries to find out the Japanese ways of life and "Japanese assumptions about the conduct of life"³ by analysing the content of Japanese literature and movies.

In either cases, books on Japan which were available in wartime Washington could not be complete, to our regret, and her materials were not reliable for the proper understanding of Japan after 1930 in particular. Moreover, Benedict was not thorough enough in the analysis of the more basic political and economic structure in studying Japan.

This will find a proof in the following statement of Benedict showing her over-confidence in her own field.

"Other social scientists who were studying Japan were using libraries, analysing past events or statistics, following developments in the written or spoken word of Japanese propaganda."⁴

This statement reveals that Benedict did not pay enough attention to the recent studies on of the Japanese political and economic structure written by many outstanding social scientists both in America and Japan. Of course, she was helped a great deal by the historical studies of Herbert Norman, Hugh Borton, and other American specialists on Japan. However, her understanding of Japanese history after the Meiji Restoration, especially that of the contemporary history, seems very doubtful.

This weakness resulted in another serious limitation to her method of study. That is the interview technique she used.

Benedict understands that the ways of life or the culture of Japan have been almost stagnant after the middle of Meiji era. This is due to the unhistorical view that social anthropologists often commit. It is quite natural that she, understanding the Japanese culture fixed like this, interviewed the resident Japanese in Washington as samples for the case study of the Japanese.

Benedict, as a social anthropologist, could not omit the case study using interview technique. Being disposed to the above-mentioned descending method against Mead, however, Benedict believed that she could study the Japanese culture by "asking the Japanese reared in Japan about the concrete facts of their own experience."⁵

At this point we must raise the question of whether or not those resident Japanese selected for this interview were appropriate as samples both in number and qualification.

As to their qualification, she seems to have selected considerably old generation as samples since she was mostly concerned with the stagnant character of the Japanese culture. Most of the resident Japanese are those who have "pure-cultured" the Japanese culture in Meiji or at the beginn-

³ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

ing of Taisho era. They were born in Japan in Meiji, and came to the U.S. with the contemporary culture of Japan. Since then they have been confined in a group of the Japanese in the U.S. without influenced much by either the development of culture in Japan proper or that of the U.S.

As a result of interviewing samples which included such a special group of the Japanese, it became naturally very difficult to understand properly the contemporary Japanese culture.

Japanese movies, that Benedict saw with the Japanese and was helped in their interpretation, were not necessarily those carefully selected to represent the contemporary Japanese movies.

Furthermore, the limited amount of materials she could have for analyzing the Japanese literature and plays, of course, could not be anything close to be of any help to throw a proper light on the complex social psychology of the contemporary Japanese.

Thus we come to know that her study of the Japanese culture, despite her most conscientious efforts in wartime Washington, did have inevitable weakness due to the difficulties of gathering appropriate materials.

Another point which is open to arguments is her opinion on the interview technique. She claims that in an interview to find out the Japanese way of life "one quickly reaches the point where the testimony of great numbers of additional informants provides no further validation," "who bows to whom and when, for instance, needs no statistical study of all Japan."⁶

Holding that "socialists and psychologists are preoccupied with the 'scatter' of opinion and behavior," she criticizes them for not trying to understand the basic way of life or the culture.⁷

She is right as long as she criticizes the mechanical quantification and overestimation of statistics which are the shortcomings often found American social scientists. However, it is doubtful whether the adequate number of samples in an interview can be determined so easily as Benedict thinks. It should be considered relative to the quality or representativeness of sample as well. In this connection, it is suggestive that her sample consisted, as indicated above, of mostly those with the pure Japanese culture.

Thus "the Chrysanthemum and the Sword" can not be called a proper and dynamic understanding of the contemporary Japanese culture, being handicapped by the inadequate selection of basic materials and the lack of thoroughness in its historical perspective. Despite these handicaps, however, Benedict undoubtedly found out various aspects of the Japanese culture through channels which we Japanese could not think of.

2) On the concept of "the Japanese"

Using a method as examined above, Benedict intends to find out the

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

pattern of culture of Japan. What is called the pattern of culture in this case is the "design for living"⁸ as quoted above, or "certain ways of meeting situations, certain ways of sizing them up"⁹ in the social life, or "Japanese assumptions about the conduct of life."¹⁰

Those who feel uneasy about such a vague definition of the pattern of culture will find the following statement, as they proceed. "This book, then, is about habits that are expected and then taken for granted in Japan"¹¹ and "the ideal authority for any statement in this book would be the proverbial man in the street."¹²

As is clear from the above, the pattern of culture in Benedict's sense is the design for life among the proverbial man in the street or "anybody." Assuming such anybody in a society first, a pattern of culture is defined as a system of their common agreements on the social behavior.

Benedict naturally meant an average man by 'anybody.' Although it may be a concept fairly appropriate to a member of a comparatively simple and uniform society which social anthropologists are usually accustomed to deal with, it can be a complete nonsense when applied to a complicated modern society?

Then what kind of people shall we mean as 'anybody' or an average man in Japan, a modern society?

Firstly, from the viewpoint of social classes, he will be the one that stands at the middle of the social scale. Then he will be a petty bourgeois or one from the so-called middle classes.

Secondly, statistically or quantitatively speaking, a man who belongs to the largest social class will be called an average man. Undoubtedly there is a big lower class of labourers and farmers in Japan.

Another concept will be an abstract one, an aggregate Japanese. It is a personification of various characteristics extracted as a pattern of culture of Japan. Although it can never be a real existence, any Japanese is considered to have something common with this aggregate Japanese.

"The Japanese" which is often used by Benedict seems to be the first one of the above three concepts, since she refers to "anybody" or a "proverbial man."

However, she also defines "the Japanese" statistically, using a vague expression as "all men." For instance, in her discussion of the Japanese prisoners of war, she gives a verdict that they are all for the Emperor except very few, and employs such expressions as "He (the Emperor) was all things to all men,"¹³ or "all this unanimity in reckoning the Emperor

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁹ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹² *Loc. cit.*

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

above criticism"¹⁴ or "an all but unanimous Japanese veneration."¹⁵ In these cases, the average man is a statistical concept representing the majority of the Japanese. They are of course considered as a sample taken from a cross-section of social classes in this case, and in this connection she also makes a statement as "they represented a cross-section of opinion in the Japanese Army."¹⁶

In other words, her statistical average man does not represent a social class that occupies the largest portion of the national population, but it is merely a type crosscutting those strata of the Japanese people who have in common a certain social attitude such as the Emperor worship. There will be no need to point out the danger of using such an expression as "all the Japanese."

It is also clear that the concept of "the Japanese" proposed by Benedict often corresponds to the third category, that is, a typical or an aggregate Japanese. When we read "The Chrysanthemum and the Sword" we should keep it in mind that this obscure "Japanese" in the book is exactly what an abstract type she created.

This very point, however, is the basic shortcoming of "The Chrysanthemum and the Sword." In other words, its methodology is too rigid and unhistorical to understand the social psychology of the Japanese in contemporary setting.

3) On the "dual personality" of the Japanese

Despite the shortcoming as indicated above, "The Chrysanthemum and the Sword" has succeeded in abstracting various tendencies of social behavior that most of the Japanese have in common. The very fact that it is a work by an American has helped to throw a light on many aspects which we, the Japanese, have overlooked in our daily life, even though some exaggeration and distortion were inevitable. Now we shall examine more closely the dual personality of the Japanese which Benedict considers as one of the most important characteristics of the Japanese psychology.

It is needless to say, that Benedict as an American social scientist has a more or less psychologistic tendency. Even though not so strong as with Mead, mentioned at the beginning of this article, it is as well noticeable in Benedict's discussion of the question of culture and personality.

Benedict holds that formation of the dual personality of the Japanese can be explained from their childhood experience. She gives "their (Japanese) experience of privilege and psychological ease in babyhood"¹⁷ as what "produce a duality in their (the Japanese) outlook on life"¹⁸ and "contra-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

¹⁸ *Loc. cit.*

dictions in Japanese character."¹⁹

Since "they (the Japanese) retain.....the memory of an easier life when they 'did not know shame',"²⁰ in their adulthood "he (they) goes back to them (the experiences of that earlier period) in his (their) permissiveness about human feelings."²¹

Is it, however, peculiar to the Japanese that the adult often become 'innocent', going back to their childhood?

According to Benedict, a man in Japan has "his exuberances, as well as his areas where great restraint is required,"²² and a good example of that is drinking in male company with geisha attendants. She also understands that a man in Japan re-experiences the easiness of his childhood in "such 'free areas' as drinking"²³ or "in his permissiveness about 'human feelings'."

It is needless to say that a 'free area' of drinking does not belong only to the Japanese. It is the same in American that drinking disinhibits what is inhibited in the daily life and releases the tension, and often turns into a wild party. We do not think that it should be called a duality in the outlook on life or dual personality characteristic of the Japanese.

Benedict also says that "the contradictions in Japanese male behavior which are so conspicuous to the Westerners are made possible by the discontinuity of their upbringing."²⁴ What she calls discontinuity here is an idea based on her proposition about social conditioning elaborated in her previous paper.²⁵

In the process of learning various rules of social behavior from the childhood to the adulthood through the social agreements should be definitely different between child or babyhood and adulthood, the social or cultural conditioning is said discontinuous.

On the other hand, it is continuous where the social norms for in childhood are the same as in adulthood or the transition of one to the other is very gradual and continuous.

Then what she calls the discontinuity in the Japanese discipline will be that between the laissez-faire cultural conditioning in the Japanese babyhood and the strict social restrictions in their adulthood.

As an example she cites that in Japan very free sexual games and masturbation of pre-school children are not condemned or children are free in hurling criticisms at each other and boasting while the adults must keep away from all of these. She understands that "it is the great gulf fixed

¹⁹ *Loc. cit.*

²⁰ *Loc. cit.*

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 285.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 290.

²⁵ Benedict, Ruth; Continuities and discontinuities in cultural conditioning, *Psychiatry*, Vol. I., 1938, pp. 161-167.

between the little child and the adult."²⁶

However, she also says in the same place that "the children know the facts of life both because of grown-ups' conversations and of the close quarters in which a Japanese family lives."²⁷

As is clearly seen from this, even though the cultural conditioning in sexual behavior in this case may appear discontinuous, in the reality, under the environments where the grown-up have a free sexual life, the children receive free sexual discipline continuously. Then, the discontinuity in the Japanese discipline she emphasizes is not necessarily universal, but, in the case of sexual behavior, it is rather continuous.

Thus Benedict's approach to the question of Japanese culture consists of setting up an abstract type called "the Japanese" and characterizing it with a duality formed by a discontinuous social conditioning. It clearly betrays an influence of a rather mechanistic social psychology on the American social anthropology.

The social psychology, on the contrary, should elaborate the study of the basic economic and political structures of a society. We should try to analyze the society as a complex of many mobile classes and to find out the common denominator among people in each of these classes on the social behavior.

The concept of "Japanese" in general, a person as an aggregate of personalities and tendencies of behavior of various people in various classes, or a *psychological giant* is not a proper method to understand the complicated behavior of the Japanese living in the Japanese society of today.

In this sense, "The Chrysanthemum and the Sword" provides us a lesson that the social anthropology is not capable of analyze culture of a modern society without the help of neighbouring branches of the social science.

II. *Human Relations in Contemporary Japan*

As seen in "The Chrysanthemum and the Sword," the study of a given culture as a more or less uniform entity is apt to distort facts unwittingly, since it is based on some sort of generalization. Although it may keep logical consistency, a forcible interpretation of facts seems almost inevitable.

In dealing with the psychology of the Japanese people, we shall try to point out the characteristic aspects of human relations in, the Japanese society in order to reach a clue to the process by which a psychology common to most of the Japanese people came into existence.

Psychological characteristic of the Japanese comes out from the human relations within the social structure of Japan which has been moulded in her age-long history.

²⁶ *op. cit.*, p. 270.

²⁷ *Loc. cit.*

Since the present Japanese society, which is basically capitalistic, still contains certain semi-feudalistic remnants, her human relations are also coloured with both the modern and pre-modern phases. The most characteristic point of the Japanese human relations, therefore, lies in this delicate balance between the new and the old. This balance is so subtle that it may hardly be understood by foreigners.

The essential element which is not modernized in the Japanese human relations is "*Giri*," a pre-modern social agreement, by which her human relations are tied up. *Gimu*, the duties backed by the modern concept of rights in the capitalistic society, complicates our human relations by getting subtly entangled with the feudalistic *Giri*.

Giri has several meanings in Japanese, and its broadest idea can be defined as a social agreement or understanding to square one's actions with a thorough understanding of "what to do" in one's society. This agreement, unlike *Gimu*, is not backed by any rights.

Giri demands a clear understanding of one's relationship with others in his social life, and it is an agreement on the attitudes and actions which he should take towards everyone of his fellowmen. As a pre-modern type of social control, *Giri* demands everyone to behave "as he should" without argument.

For example, *Gi* was said to have such a meaning as "to live and die when he should, and to decide coherently."²⁸ In *Shingaku* (the popular moral teaching in the Tokugawa era), *Gi* means "not to be unreasonable"; a subordinate, for example, serving at his best and a wife taking good care of her husband, are "acceptable," and "this acceptability is the human way of life."²⁹

In other words, *Giri* implies that one be satisfied as he is in the present society, or it is a forced agreement to rationalize the "spirit of self-sacrifice for the public cause" which has long been rooted in the mind of the Japanese.

In general, *Giri* originates in the demand of the high for the loyalty and service of the low. In return, the high are also expected to have whatever affection and gratitude to the low.

For example, in the household instruction of Ise Teijo,³⁰ it is stated that "it should be *Giri* of the master to be grateful to subordinates for their services without thinking much of the allowances and fiefs to them." In this way both the high and the low are supposed to have mutual *Giri*.

Budo Shoshin Shu states that "there are two groups of the feudal retainers," and "those below foot-soldiers, i.e., the lowest among them" are "not altogether unpardonable even if they should desert or be coward at the battlefield" since they are supplied with only "small allowances." On the

²⁸ Muro, Naokiyo; *Gojo Meigi* (Meaning of Five Virtues), 1718.

²⁹ Shibata, Kyuo; *Kyuo Dowo* (Moral Teachings of Kyuo), 1835.

³⁰ *Ise Teijo Kakun* (Household Instruction of Ise Teijo), 1763.

other hand, those "under the favor of several generations" are expected to "be willing to sacrifice their lives in the cause of *On* and the intimate favor they have been given by their master."

As is clear from the above quotation, both *Giri* and loyalty are a matter of mutuality; the more "*On*" they get from their lords, the heavier *Giri* and loyalty stay in their minds. In other words, the loyalty or service among the *Samurai* in the Tokugawa era implied much of the meaning of exchange or contract.

Since the beginning of the Meiji era, however, only the sacrificial and unselfish service for the Emperor was stressed, and the absolute obedience to the authority as well as the self-negation were forced upon the whole people, with loyalty as *Giri* becoming a one-way proposition.

Let us see its example in a book written during the last World War. It goes so far as to say:

"In the first place, duty should be taken with a sincere heart to serve the Emperor," or, "There is no private life.....besides a sacrificial one of service."³¹

In such an Emperor-centered national constitution, "however hard one may serve, there should be no end to it: here, service and its reward are not considered interdependent on each other."³²

To our surprise, even after the war, some of the ex-officers declare publicly this unselfish service for the Emperor to be the characteristics of the Japanese. One of the writers of *Kamikaze Tokubetsu Kōgekitai* (The *Kamikaze* Squad) (1951), who was a commanding officer of the Suicide Squad answers to the American investigating commission as follows, ".....it is the inherent spirit of the Japanese.....to sacrifice their whole body and soul for the Emperor....."

Next comes *Giri* among the family members. Here *Giri* appears under the form of children's filial piety for their parents' affection. In this case, the affection between parents and children is tied with *Giri*, only to make it impossible to separate *Giri* from "*Ninjo*" (which roughly corresponds to the humane feelings or human affection).

However, when it is a matter between in-laws, especially between housewife and her mother-in-law in rural areas, *Giri*, being stressed, becomes like the loyalty among *Samurai*: the mother-in-law seems to think that "it is beyond question for the daughter-in-law to do suitable service since such a family fortune is to be handed over to her as it is."³³

What is characteristic in the Japanese family relations in the most rural

³¹ *Shinmin no Michi Kaisetsu Taisei* (Complete Examination of 'The Way for Loyal Subject'), 1942.

³² Ohkura, Kunihiro; *Musubi no Sangyo* (Industry of *Musubi*), 1942.

³³ Ohmura, Ryo; *Nohson ni okeru Sekentei* ('*Sekentei*' in the Farming Areas), *Toyo Bunka* (Eastern Culture) No. 12, 1953.

communities even at present is that the father's status as a head of the family is much higher than the mother's, and the same can be said as to the eldest son's in the family as compared with his brothers' and sisters.' Such family relations are supposed to be the basis of the idea of 'superiority of men over women' which is still persistent among the Japanese. It should not be strange, then, that such expressions as "a talk between men" or "to raise man (in the public estimation)" are heard even in the diet debate.

Thus, in Japan, as there is a sort of union between a father and his eldest son, so a team opposed to men's can easily be formed between a mother and her daughter. For this strong emotional tie among female members of the family, there are many daughters who have stronger feeling of *Giri* towards their mothers. A street-walker confessed, "From now on, I will work hard and honestly, and wish to have my dead mother see my being a good girl again."³⁴

The significance of the family relations in the Japanese society can be found in the fact that all the Japanese human relations are more or less permeated with the pattern of family relations. The Japanese family, unlike that of the Western society which is "husband-and-wife centered," places the father "at the top of the whole family members with qualified power to lead the others exactly as in the Army where the commanding officer will be comparable to the father."³⁵ Thus the family system in Japan is characterized by the father-centeredness and *Giri* among family members, and this pattern is followed by other social groups.

Because most of the Japanese people are to play roles of pseudo-parents or pseudo-children in any social groups other than family, both family-like fidget and confederacy are rooted deep in the social psychology of the Japanese.

"*Oya-gokoro*" (Parental feeling) -ism or "*On-jo*" (Warm feeling) -ism, characteristic to the Japanese human relations, are some of its examples. This is "a sort of self-consciousness that the superiors should always be in the position to love and guide their inferiors."³⁶

This *Oya-gokoro*-ism takes a clearer shape, when it comes to a military life with emphasis on the family-sentiment. A former officer explains this as follows, "The warrant-officer is like a housewife who takes good care of soldiers as a mother, while the company-commander may be likened to a father who gets his orders observed strictly, but has affections of kinship towards his soldiers."³⁷

The following episode reveals what the Japanese military were aiming at: "November 30, Meiji 37th year, I, as a head of a company, participated

³⁴ Takenaka, Katsuo and Suminoya, Etsuji; *Gaisho* (Street-walkers), 1949.

³⁵ "Industry of *Musubi*."

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Nihon no Guntai* (The Japanese Army), 1950.

in the 203 height's attack.....Since it was a midnight encounter not a bit of the commander's figure could be seen. This may have made the soldiers feel somewhat uneasy, and their shouts were heard once in awhile, calling, 'Is the commander here'? I answered, 'Here I am!' to them. Then the shouts of joy broke forth."³⁸

Among the human relations as seen above, there is a Japanese psychology which may be characterized by their reliance on the family circle, this tendency preventing them from developing their ego.

Oya-gokoro-ism among the Japanese leaders brings forth an eccentric tendency to seek for the sacrifice of their inferiors who are counted as their children. For instance, a commander of the Suicide Squad said: "With such a deep attachment towards my inferiors as any parents would have to their children, I wanted to find a good chance for them at any risk to do some respectable service for the Emperor."³⁹

Giri takes other forms than the definitely vertical, i. e., from up to down, relations which we have so far discussed. For example, it is also *Giri* that, between merchant and customer, the latter is treated as a master.

"A Survey of the Public Opinion on the Social Education" published by the National Research Institute of Public Opinion in March, 1953 year, reveals that *Giri* as a social rule is still supported by the elder generation at least.

Giri becomes so-called "*Na* (name)" or "*Sekentei* (reputation)" when it is applied to the "*Seken* (society or people)," instead of particular superior or individuals. This "*Sekentei*" does not mean any fixed social value system, nor the public opinion as a social consensus. It is rather the value image of one's surroundings which vary from one person to another.

To comply with *Giri* to *Seken* in the narrowest sense, "people will not behave in a manner which is not accepted by their neighbours." Here, what is "ought to be" to one's neighbours is understood as *Giri*. In *Giri* to *Seken*, it is the agreement not to do what are against *Seken*.

"Everybody is obliged to his country, ancestors and surroundings for his life at present."⁴⁰ This vague expression, "surroundings," is after all *Seken*. Thus, people can serve it, by keeping *Giri* to the society.

In the above mentioned survey on the social education 30% of the respondents answered that it meant not to know '*On*,' and 10% 'egoism' when asked, "what is meant by 'not to know *Giri*'?." The survey, therefore, shows that many people still consider requital of a favor or service are what *Giri* demands.

While *Giri* is a social rule for old feudalistic human relations, the social attitude which denies *Giri* has been considered as acquisitiveness.

³⁸ Uchiyama, Yujiro, *Senjo Shinrigaku* (Psychology of Battlefield).

³⁹ Inokuchi, Rikihei and Nakajima, Tadashi; *Kamikaze Tokubetsu Kogekitai* (Kamikaze Suicide Squad), 1951, p. 50.

⁴⁰ "Industry of *Musubi*," op. cit, p.

For example, a book on *Samurai* training states: "Those who are *Samurais* shall be attentive to *Giri*, with little acquisitiveness....."⁴¹ Thus in the Tokugawa period the acquisitiveness of a merchant is often compared with *Giri* of a *Samurai*. To the merchants themselves, however, the acquisitiveness was not at all considered to be immoral. On the contrary, Nishikawa Joken, a famous merchant-thinker of the Tokugawa period, definitely says, "When a merchant sticks to *Na* (name, honor), neglecting acquisitiveness, it means the dissipation of his fortune."⁴² Here he turns down the name (*Na*) which in this case means *Giri* to his family name.

What is more commonplace, contrary to *Giri*, is "*Ninjo*," (human feeling).

Ninjo is often suppressed by *Giri*, giving a characteristic shade on the psychology of the Japanese. They have such an expression as "*Giri-Ninjo* a special product of Japan."

In fact the Japanese tragedies exist in a dilemma where the people have been confronted by these two conflicting motives, i.e., *Giri* and *Ninjo*. Contemporary Japanese still like these tragic stories of conflict, weeping and sympathizing with the characters in the stories.

Let us take up an example in *Rohkyoku*, a kind of story-telling, with an intermixture of recitatives in a peculiar voice. Because of *Giri* to the public, the mother of a good-for-nothing fellow suffers herself from her affection as a mother when she is about to welcome her son who has come back home:

"Inside the shutter

Being unable to meet her son face to face,

The mother, now listening to her son's voice,

Burns her emotion voicelessly like a light-worm,

Which pierces the hearts more than the songs of cicadas.

This is the shackles of convention.

Bearing her pain firmly inside herself."

In such a manner, the mother, being in a fix, even bears her sufferings in order to obey the shackles of convention, which certainly is *Giri*. Moreover, *Giri* and *Ninjo* serve for each other, in a sense that the more suppressed the outlet of *Ninjo* by *Giri*, the purer and stronger *Ninjo* becomes. In Japan, there are many themes in the popular songs which deal with this sort of conflict in their human relations.

"If it is a true love

to bear tears and give up mother's name,

I'll sing a lullaby with all my heart,

cherishing the memory of my childhood."

⁴¹ Bushi Kun (Instructions for Samurai), 1715.

⁴² Nishikawa, Joken; *Cho Nin Bukuro* (Essays on Merchants), 1719.

As to the themes of movies, many of the so-called "Mother story" and "Tear stories" deal with the tragic dilemma between *Giri* and mother's love. Even today movies of this kind appeal to female fans, getting a tremendous profit out of their performance. Thus the "Mother" and "Tear" stories are a barometer to show concretely how many of such conflict in the human relations still exists in the contemporary Japan.

Against such a fetter of *Giri* and *Ninjo*, lie both the naturalism which denies *Giri* and *Ninjo*, emancipating the humanity from the bond of duty, and the rationalism which tries to form a new human relations instead of those of *Giri* and *Ninjo*.

The naturalism which renounces *Giri*, has something to do with *Niku-tai* (body)-ism which ranks high the physical desire. Standing on this point, there are a few arguments which strongly negate the feudalistic human relation in the post-war Japan.

As to the attempt to rationalize and modernize the human relations in Japan, it is necessary, to abolish the overemphasis on *Giri* and resulting conflict between *Giri* and *Ninjo*. Although the rationalization of living, when in the proper direction, would serve this purpose, the rationalization in Japan is apt to fall into the trap of egoism which may be very offensive to other people.

An extreme form of rationalism denying *Giri* and *Ninjo* after the war is the contract-ism which was proped and practised by a young businessman, called Yamazaki who committed suicide after bankruptcy. Yamazaki tried to deal with all human relations through contract. According to Yamazaki, human relations should be controlled by the basic principle of the international law that an agreement shall be observed. Both love and marriage are but contracts. "The reason why one should obey his parents," says he, "is that he owes much of his living to them. Therefore, in compensation for the "salary given by parents obedience to parents is required."

The *contract-ism* in a more natural form can be seen in a developed capitalist society like America. For example, when parents send their children on an errand, the reward for it is decided beforehand. This way of doing is just like contract. This appears, however, to most of the Japanese somewhat destroying *Giri* and *Ninjo* between parents and children. So strongly opposed by the conventional *Giri* and *Ninjo* in the Japanese society, the *contract-ism* sometimes goes to its extreme as a violent reaction to it, resulting in the utter denial of ordinary human relations.

Yamazaki, when he could no longer cover his debts, applied the legal principle of change in circumstances that "the contract should not be applied to a substance of the dead." Transforming himself to a substance, he protected his theoretical consistency. Thus the end of the *contract-ism* was death. He not only resisted against the old-fashioned *Giri* and *Ninjo*, he also renounced human love and confidence altogether.

The principle of *contract*-ism may be repulsive to many Japanese, although its moderate form is an inevitable step towards the rationalization of living.

While *Giri* is an agreement concerning the relations among people or public, "*Hombun*" (proper duty) indicates both the situation in which one stands in his social group, and the forms of social behavior suitable to his social situation.

Hombun originates from the human relations as a status of the feudalistic society. This old element mingles with modern human relations in the contemporary Japan.

Hombun has an analogy to social status, fettering one's life night and day both in time and place. If he is a student, his duty as a student demands him to behave like a student even after classes.

"The Instruction for Service" issued by one of the biggest department-stores in Tokyo, advises the employees: "Every improper conduct of the employees even outside this store will be taken as a fault on the side of our company. In your private life also, mind your P's and Q's, and refrain from such action as will reflect on your store."

If such is the case in an private enterprise, how much more should be with public office? With the "Civil Service Act," their *Hombun* is under a lawful fetter, being restricted in the political actions when off duty.

In a word, to most of the Japanese, it is difficult to draw a line between public and private matters. In some extreme cases, the public life dissipates the whole private life.

The Japanese not only mix the public and private matters out of self-interest, but have had these two go to rack and ruin the very human relation called *Hombun*. To insist upon drawing a line between them is beyond reasonable request to them. Such degenerations as bribery, disgraceful act, favoritism, and perquisite naturally spring forth.

It is obvious that there are unlimited chances to do vile acts, where such feudalistic relations of social status are brought into the modern society based on the capitalistic economy.

In the ideal modern society, the power and the responsibility always come hand in hand. In the Japanese society, however, in the case of public officials which may be the best example, the balance between power and responsibility is completely off, with the former far outweighing the latter.

A public official frankly confesses that in the Japanese public administration "there are detailed regulations as to powers, while there hardly exist any rule as to how much responsibility should be taken when one with power fails in his work."⁴³

Moreover, for the Japanese public officials, the power is not necessarily

⁴³ Imai, Kazuo, *Kanryo* (The Bureaucrat), 1953.

limited within what is required to carry on his assigned work. These always comes along "perquisite." This perquisite comes directly out of the confusion of the public and private matters.

Suppose a policeman is treated to a good meal at a restaurant, taking advantage of his authority. This is a "forced entertainment" making use of his *Hombun* as a policemen, which no informed citizen has courage enough to protest.

After all, the ability of a public official may well be said the ability to evade his responsibility. For example, a boss will say, "It is left in the subordinate's hands," while the subordinate will evade responsibility by saying, "We are waiting for our boss's decision." Quite usually they will wait until the people get tired and give up the matter, being exhausted by such a petty manoeuvring by the bureaucrats.

This type of evasion of responsibility originates not only in cunningness or selfishness, but also in the lack of self-confidence or integrity, a characteristic psychology of many Japanese which has come out of the human relations of her old feudalistic society. Therefore, such an evasion of responsibility is found quite often not only in public officials, but also among citizens.

As seen above, the human relations of the Japanese are haunted by *Giri-Ninjo*, and the individual is bothered with *Hombun*, a sort of product of *Giri-Ninjo*. It seems that all that are vague and unreasonable in the life of the Japanese come out of such an obscure social-psychological atmosphere as *Giri-Ninjo* or *Hombun* which permeate their human relations.

If we wish to build a new Japan, it is urgently needed to reform the basis of her society, and moreover, to attempt to wipe off completely such obscure human relations and the distorted social psychology that generates from them.

The happiness of an individual can only be attained when the social reform is pushed through, parallel to the reform of the individual.