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COMPANY MAN MAKES FAMILY HAPPY:
GENDER ANALYSIS OF THE JAPANESE FAMILY

KIMIKO KIMOTO *

Locating the Problem

It is extremely important to inquire into how the characteristics of Japanese Kigyo Shakai (company-centered society) affect the family. Japanese Kigyo Shakai realizes the unification of workers into a hierarchy modelled after the organizational structure of company management, and it is not difficult to imagine that family life has been deeply affected as the workers themselves, putting the company before everything else, internalized certain values and modes of action desired by the companies. Recent arguments on Kigyo Shakai which had concentrated on the mere study of industrial relations of individual companies have paid increasing attention to this aspect. They have attempted to look into the process of how the conception of value of Kigyo Shakai “has become extremely wide-spread and has seized society as a whole” [Watanabe 1991: 90]. That is to say, they are trying to look at the fact that Kigyo Shakai erodes the “society” that is the basis of its own existence. As a result, “the force that keeps the individuals bound to the company is extraordinarily strong, and the development of society as a whole is at the mercy of the rhythm of the companies” [Kiso Keizai Kagaku Kenkyusho 1992: 17], and many problems arise in the social sphere. We can say that it is an important task to analyze the problems from the viewpoint of Kigyo Shakai.

Nevertheless, until now it cannot be said that studies of Kigyo Shakai have succeeded in establishing a connection with the family. This seems to obstruct the analysis of contemporary reality. Later on, I shall attempt to show the logic of the understanding of the family in the arguments of Kigyo Shakai. Its methodical characteristic consists in regarding the family as “exhausted” by the “penetration” and maybe the “erosion” of the logic of Kigyo Shakai. That is to say, because the family depends on and was made to conform to the standards of value of Kigyo Shakai, certain sacrifices seem to be inevitable. Because the company is “the only means of support” for the working class family, they try to discover the logic of “control over the family” by the company bearing in mind that the family as a whole cannot but swear allegiance to the company [Watanabe 1991: 91~92]. The thought has been added that the family in contemporary Japan so easily became dependent on the logic of Kigyo Shakai because “autonomous principles as a oppositional force” could, historically, not arise [Hirowatari 1992: 4]. That is to say, the exceedingly severe supervision and control by the state and the subjective conditions on the part of the family that easily responded to this, mutually influence each other and, consequently, as the family bears an excessive burden, the “collapse of the family” has become imminent [Watanabe 1991: 92,

* This paper is the essential outline of my book Kazoku, Jenda & Kigyo Shakai (Family, Gender and Company-centered Society), Mineruva Shobo. I am grateful to Dr. Gabi Pauer for her assistance in translation.
Hirowatari 1992: 11]. At the bottom of this viewpoint there is the recognition of the fact that the family is caught up in and swallowed by Kigyo Shakai. As the family is becoming the victim that makes all the sacrifices, it is standing on the brink of collapse.

It seems, however, that such a superficial understanding of the family does not comply with the interpretation of the existing situation. As I shall explain later, we can by no means say that the "collapse of the family" is any closer in contemporary Japan as compared with other developed countries, we might even claim that the situation is comparatively stable. Even though we can agree on the fact that Kigyo Shakai plays an important part in family life, it seems that we must see that this way of involvement in the family is much more complex than the above-mentioned interpretation of the arguments of Kigyo Shakai. If we cannot fathom this complexity, it will not be possible to explain the ingrained structure of the problems that have their origin in the characteristics of Kigyo Shakai. Though the arguments of Kigyo Shakai have been developed out of studies of labour-management relations and political science, it seems absolutely necessary to enlarge our points of view to the sphere of reproduction and study in detail the mechanism of relations between the outside and the inside of Kigyo Shakai.

This paper is just one attempt to interpret the mechanism of relations between the family and Kigyo Shakai on the basis of the above-mentioned problem.

**The Contemporary Family: the Japanese Situation**

To begin with, we shall now try to explore the changes in the family that are common to the developed countries, and then look at the Japanese situation. To start with our conclusion, the developed countries, especially the European countries and the United States, are being swept by the waves of the "crisis of the family" and find themselves in the maelstrom of experiencing drastic changes of family; at the same time, we must see that the Japanese situation is quite different.

Because of the diversification of the family that has arisen in Europe and the United States we can say that the typical family, that one could, up to now, describe using the established word "family" has lost its central position. To be more precise, what used to be the typical family was the so-called modern family that, on the basis of heterosexuality, included division of labour by gender: men became the breadwinners of the family, while housework and child care became the monopoly of women. This type of family came to be considered the standard unit to guarantee the stability of the society. It does, however, no longer represent the majority, but merely a tiny fraction of the population. Around 1980, only about 10% of all the families in Britain as well as the United States corresponded to this pattern. What eventually emerged is a diversity of forms that seem to break away from the former "typical family". Representative phenomena of this situation are a) couples who live together without going through the legal marriage procedures, b) couples without children, c) homosexual couples, d) single mothers living with their children, and e) singles. In the context of this emergence of various types of "family", one cannot overlook the increase of the divorce rates. All of these may be termed "non-family" phenomena. Either not complying with the "old" family, that had been supported strongly by the social system as well as religious and ethical convictions, or sometimes breaking away and rebelling against
it, these phenomena are gradually increasing and beginning to assert their existence. This, as I shall subsequently explain more fully, is the "crisis of the family". By this crisis, the image of the "modern family", that had come to be accepted as being in accordance with the true nature of man and conforming to the biological basis of human life, is being undermined before we know it.

In consideration of these drastic changes in the family, the family researchers naturally claim that it is absolutely necessary to re-define the family. Thus, for instance, the British sociologist Jon Bernardes maintains that one ought to reconsider the fact that the concept of the family within traditional sociology, that is, the nuclear family that contains old-fashioned labour division by gender, has been accepted as a matter of course without further inquiry. He thinks that, in view of the diversification of the family, it is necessary to re-define the family as such [Bernardes 1984]. Furthermore, Janet Finch and David Morgan assume that it has already become universally accepted to call the nuclear family that is based on the sexual division of labour the "patriarchal family" or the "traditional family" [Finch & Morgan 1991]. Considering, moreover, the drastic changes currently happening in the family, they maintain that a methodical reform of family theory is absolutely necessary.

In spite of all these changes, the heterosexual couple engaged in bringing up children is, as ever, at the center of family ideology, and the type of family where men are the "bread-winners" supporting their families is still considered the standard model. Especially as a pre-requisite of social policy, this type of "family" appears frequently. Particularly under the policy of welfare cutbacks of Thatcherism, while the value of this family model has been emphasized, the "family" as an independent self-help unit has been a frequently repeated item. The feminists severely criticized this kind of social policy from the viewpoint of gender [Barrett & McIntosh 1982, Glendinning & Millar 1991]. Because of the spreading of the various previously mentioned "non-family" phenomena the old fashioned "family" itself is standing at the turning point. It is uncertain if it will survive or become extinct. This indicates circumstances that may be called a "crisis" in the true sense of the word. This "crisis of the family" directs our attention to the process of change of the family and shows us that it is unreasonable to want to keep up forever the family that had only at a certain historical point become the dominant model. Scholars have become to be conscious of the issues that people are seeking new ways of communal life and therefore tend to abandon this model.

If we turn our eyes to Japan, however, we must see that the situation with regard to the "non-family" phenomena is quite different from Europe and the United States. Although the divorce rate, to give just one example, in Japan has gone up little by little, it can by no means be compared to that of other countries. It was a mere 1.45 (per 1000 population) in Japan (1992), while we find 4.70 in the United States (1990) and 2.95 in Great Britain (1989), as indicated in Fig. 1. Apart from this, the birthrate of illegitimate children in the developed countries apart from Japan increased dramatically after the 1960s, whereas in Japan there was clearly a decline as shown in Fig. 2. That is to say, while in other countries we find an increase in the number of illegitimate children, the tendency in Japan is quite the reverse. A mere glimpse of such data shows that the situation in Japan is different from the conditions in other developed countries and that the "crisis of the family" is not quite so obvious, so that one cannot say that the threat to the traditional form of the family is rapidly growing. In this sense, it is possible to see that Japan is one of those countries in which the former
family model remains comparatively stable. How does Japanese Kigyo Shakai affect the existence of such a family?

The Present Situation of Family Studies in Japan

The problems of a family theory according to the dual systems approach

To what extent does the accumulation of family studies take into account the arguments of Kigyo Shakai? To tell the truth, considering the current level of research on the Japanese family, it is highly unsatisfactory. For instance, as the majority of sociological studies on the Japanese family have completely isolated internal family relations from the outside world, there is a strong tendency to concentrate on the discussion of the details of the internal structure of the family. Consequently, we could say that there is almost no awareness of the
connection between *Kigyo Shakai* and the family. Only very few scholars have attempted to actively establish the relevance of society to the family and to argue for a family theory based on the consideration of historical change. These attempts contain extremely important points, but, as they cannot transcend the dual systems theory of family and society, they are confined to methods that are not sufficient for an adequate analysis of the present situation. It is characteristic of their methodical position that they a priori consider the family as "a community united by love" or "a fortress of love". Identifying this as a part of life that is indispensable for humans, they put forward the rather simplistic argument that such a family is trapped and violated by social and economic conditions. The actual meaning of "love" and its historical limitations have so far been overlooked, so that the economical and social circumstances surrounding the family are being blamed.

One of the scholars that have developed such a family theory is Akiko Fuse. Fuse's understanding of the family is shared by many people who are not experts in family studies and who believe in this idea as if it were some kind of "faith". Regarding the family as a monolithic "community united by love" and the opinion that socio-economic conditions are the cause of its destruction are strikingly similar to the understanding of the family according to the arguments of *Kigyo Shakai* that we have mentioned above. They identify the family as a "community united by love" and locate the main causes that exert a negative effect on the family in the world outside the family, i.e., they blame the socio-economic system. By changing it, they insist that one could enable the "community united by love" to regain its true aspect. Their theory makes sense as far as it raises people's consciousness of the social and economic roots of the various problems that actually appeared in the family. Nevertheless the process of mutual penetration of the internal relations in the family and relations with the outside world has been neglected and is left unexplained. In the 1970s, Fuse raised three important questions as indispensable tasks of family research: a) the study of the historical changes of the family, b) the study of the class system, and c) the abandonment of labour division by gender [1982]. After the 1980s, however, the inclination toward the theory of "a life community united by love" became stronger, while its place in the historical process and the relations of its members with regard to class and social strata were not taken into consideration [1992, 1993]. If we want to fully include the aspect of labour division by gender into family studies, it seems that we must delve into the internal aspects of the "community", and analyze the common interests as well as the antagonism of men and women. This, in its turn, has led us to the questioning of the historical basis of the "community united by love". We must develop a way of understanding the family that can transcend the dual systems theory of the community of the family vs. the socio-economic structure. If we fail to do this, we cannot analyze the mechanism of the relationship between family and *Kigyo Shakai* [Kimoto 1995: 163-173].

**The two sides of the “modern family”**

As I have mentioned previously, this viewpoint of the dual systems theory is not limited to specialists, but is shared by the general view of the family. At this point, I would like to consider in particular the problem of historical understanding, that such views of the family have in common. Many people are anxious about the contemporary situation of the family, and one frequently comes across statements like "family ties have become weaker" and "the
sense of community in the family is disappearing”. There is even the opinion that love is becoming “wrecked” or “diluted”. But at which historical stage did the family exist at all, whose family ties were not yet weakened, and whose sense of community had not yet disappeared? When and where did such a family exist whose internal unity was reliable and whose ties were strong?

If we look at the shape it has actually assumed, what we find is the model of the middle class family. With regard to Japan, we are talking of the family model represented by the urban salaried man of the Taisho era (1912-1926). We might also call this the formation of the “modern family” model that is characterized by the emergence of the sphere of housework and child care with the “birth of the housewife” [Oakelly 1974=1986] in Japan.

This new model of the family provided family life, which had done hardly more than sustain a minimum of human existence, with a life culture of housework and child care. In Japan, for instance, organized by Motoko Hani, an organization (established in 1930) of the readers of the magazine “Fujin no Tomo (the Friend of Housewives)” (published since 1908) exerted a strong influence on the urban middle class [Saito 1988]. They advocated a new urban family morality, demanded that family life be taken seriously and gave meaning to the domain of housework. It is possible to determine certain progressive elements in this, and it is also certain that this model is the origin of the standards of value that were decisive for the “birth of the housewife” that became widespread in postwar Japan. If we bear in mind that this “modern family” model is widely popular and has influenced all other classes, we can also assume that a certain universality is immanent in this model. The family theoreticians subscribing to the dual systems theory may suppose “love” to be at the basis of the family in this historical stage and try to explain the problems of the actual family by standardizing it, even though they do not explicitly say so. Nevertheless, it is, in fact, unreasonable to suppose that, within a society full of discrimination and oppression and rivalry, only the “love” within a family should be without any flaws. And what scientific significance is there in such an assumption? As the meaning of “love” in the family has changed with history, recent studies of the family have emphasized the viewpoint that we ought not to consider as absolute the ideology of “love” that is almost obligatory for the “modern family” [Yamada 1994]. An understanding of the historical changes of the family is indispensable. Those following a line of argument that does not take the historical limitations of the “modern family” into consideration and, using it as the norm, accuse the present stage of being the result of the violation by the socio-economic system, do not escape the criticism of being inclined towards nostalgia or conservatism. Moreover, in so far as in the course of the formation and stabilization of the “modern family” the modern shape of sexual division of labour, “men work outside, women guard the home”, took root, we must not overlook the fact that this family model has serious limitations.
The Understanding of the Family According to Gender Approach

Gender approach

It was the feminists that turned their attention to these aspects inherent in the "modern family" and, in order to make clear the mechanism of gender division, were trying out a new approach. As is widely known, their aim is to reveal the structure of sex discrimination that is characteristic of modern society, distinguishing it from traditional patriarchy. While searching for an alternative to the existing theories and methods, they made the discovery of the difference of biological sex and socially as well as culturally defined gender their starting point. The challenge of this gender approach for existing family theory consists, first of all, in showing that "love" is a myth, and in demonstrating what sacrifices for individuals (especially for women) are concealed under the name of "love". Furthermore, it brings the differences and conflicts between family members out into the open. By this, it is attempted to analyze the various relations of "love and control" or "intimacy and dependence" within the family that have become badly tangled up. Secondly, asking how this sexual division of labour within the family can be structurally reconciled with society as a whole, and in order to make clear that relations within the family are prescribed by society, it is attempted to analyze the mechanism of historical change of the family from the viewpoint of "labour and family" as well as "state and family". Especially including the viewpoints of gender and class, the point that it comprises, above all, a theory of historical change is considered particularly important.

In order to define the characteristics of gender approach, I shall attempt to show in how far it is different from the family theory developed in Friedrich Engels' work "Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State". As is well known, Engels differentiated between bourgeois monogamy and the working class monogamy, the former being established on the system of open as well as concealed domestic slavery of the wife while the latter was something that, with sexual love becoming the only motive to marry, opens up the possibility of equality between men and women. He argued that, on account of the absence of property, there is no material basis that could guarantee male control and predominance in the working class family. Nevertheless, the history from Engels' time up to the present rather eloquently shows the difficulty of regarding the working class family as the manifestation of "progressiveness". It is a well-known fact that, even if the wife is working full-time, the "participation" of the husband in the housework is barely improving. If this is true, the family norm that included the sexual division of labour in its modern form might have been accepted and internalized by the working class family. We have to admit that it is only natural that the standards of values of the leading class become dominant and that it is rather difficult for the dominated class to retain their own standards. The question why the expression of the "progressiveness" of the working class family is detained is not realistic. The question of gender approach must be put the other way round. We have to ask how the working class family has come to internalize the family standard of the middle class even though their economic basis is totally different [Kimoto 1995: 39—49].
The concept of a "family wage"

In answering this question and making clear the relations of the internal structure of the present-day family and the outside world, it is necessary to pay attention to the historical role played by the concept of a "family wage". If we take the case of Great Britain and the United States, this concept appeared on the scene in the 19th century and was employed, at the end of that century, in the negotiations for wage increase by the trade unions. That is to say, this idea of demanding wages that make it possible for the husband to support a family on his income alone implies that at that time the working class itself had accepted the modern gender-specific division of labour ("the husband supports the family, the wife is responsible for the housework and bringing up the children") and considers such a lifestyle as the ideal model. Therefore, until the First World War, this concept had come to be accepted, in all developed capitalist countries, as a working class ideal [Secombe 1986: 54]. It has already been made clear that, eventually, the popularization of this concept of a "family wage" firmly established the mechanism of the sexual division of labour and male dominance in the working class family. It also caused job segregation by gender in the labour market [Hartmann 1976]. Thus, not letting the wife get a job became "man's duty" and assuming that "the woman's place is in the home", the social standards of what is "feminine" and what is "masculine" came to be firmly rooted even in the working class.

These modern gender roles, as a reality as well as the ideal, were already firmly established in the middle class, and the "modern family" model that was triggered off by the birth of the housewife had already been realized in this class. Why did the working class accept the standards that were rooted in a class that occupies a place above theirs and that has an entirely different economic basis? And, because of this, which contradictions does the working class family have to cope with? In considering the fundamental character of the working class family and its present situation, it is considered absolutely necessary to find answers to these questions.

An important suggestion to the solution of these problems was provided by Jane Humphries. She proposes that the reason why men, united in trade unions, supported the passing of the Mining Act (1842) that banned women from working underground was that they had already fully accepted the "ideal family image" [1981]. In a case study of the mining industry in England she attempted to argue against Heidi Hartmann's interpretation as follows. Hartmann claims that the underlying motive for working class men wanting to exclude women from well-paid jobs was that they tried to dominate them and secure the structure of male predominance. As far as this case concerned, it is certain that job segregation by gender as well as age was already established among miners so that competition by women was impossible from the start. Furthermore, for those working together as a family cooperative, in order to increase the family earnings, it was important to include their own wives and daughters in their team. When they were joined by someone who did not belong to their family, they had to pay him/her out of their own pocket. Therefore, the fact that they supported the Mining Act that excluded women from working underground means that they gave up advantages that they, actually, had had. What was it they wanted? Humphries

1 Compared to the regions of the textile industry, we can see that in the mining areas the division of labour by gender was established at a relatively early stage [Tilly & Scott 1978 = 1989].
draws the following inference: Did not the strong desire among male members of the working class for the “joys” of family life result from the harsh reality of their daily labour? Was not the ardent wish for a pleasant “individual life”, settled at their own desire, kindled by their contact with middle class?

Although Humphries concedes that she cannot furnish definite proof, she suggests that the middle class family was already fully accepted by them as the image of a better life. Surely, if we compare this explanation by Humphries with Heidi Hartmann’s point of view that men simply wanted to dominate women, this interpretation is obviously much more profound and corresponds to the results of historical research which I shall present below. Jane Lewis [1986] also assumes that the demand for a “family wage” was not put forward merely by men but was a joint demand of working class men as well as women. As for opportunities that they had for coming into contact with the higher classes, they were many and various. The middle class had, through social research investigating working class poverty, realized under what “wretched” conditions they had to live, and papers were presented in parliament. Furthermore, through philanthropy, the only social activity open to middle class women who were supposed to be “domestic angels”, working class families not only received alms, but were also instructed as to the bringing up of their children and matters of hygiene [Summers 1979; Chinn 1988, Matsura 1993]. In some spinning mills, female workers were taught to cook and sew, and nursing facilities that were established in the factories educated them in the facts as well as necessary attitudes with regard to child care [Lown 1990]. Apart from this, as working class women became domestic servants in middle class households the latter’s life style found its way into the working class. Finally, the majority of writings with which the working class, that had acquired literacy, came into contact reflected middle class standards of value, and female education, that was established in the course of the movement for adult education, was modelled on middle class ideals of “femininity” [Purvis 1989].

As working class families had many opportunities to come into contact with higher class and learn about their standards of value during the 19th century, the idea that the establishment of a “family wage” can bring about an improvement of living conditions was widespread until the turn of the century. We must see that, when the concept of women becoming housewives became rooted in the working class as the image of a better life, now that the working class had internalized these standards of value, the “modern family” model was, for the first time, historically successful. This is because the “modern family” model, that followed the example of the middle class, transcended class boundaries and was supported by the majority of the population. Entering the 20th century, this family model was legitimized by the state, preparing and establishing the welfare state. This is the reason why the concept of a “family wage” continues to exert considerable influence even in contemporary society [Kimoto 1995: 61-85].

The “modern family” model and its contradictions

As I have already mentioned above, we must not overlook the fact that, through the process of establishing the concept of a “family wage”, the “modern family” model that has its origin in the middle class was accepted and supported by the men and women of the working class. The middle class life that they had had a glimpse of appeared to them as the ideal of living comfortably, and their wish to live in the same manner must be seen against
the background of their own daily hardships. The desire to leave these hardships behind and, at last, lead a decent life was not only shared by the skilled but also the unskilled workers. Was it not by mastering the knowledge that the middle class possessed, especially their standards of hygiene, that the infant mortality rate was kept in check and they learned how to lead a pleasant life? Their idea of family life, that can be realized because of the concept of a “family wage”, was colored by the image of a comfortable life and a reasonable style of living. We may assume that the working class family had, in its own way, a good reason for desiring the “birth of the housewife”.

The living conditions of the working class were, however, as unstable as ever, and as they had accepted, induced by the concept of a “family wage”, the “modern family” model as something desirable, they naturally had to accept its contradictions as well. The differences within the working class determined how far they were from a life where the concept of a “family wage” could be realized. Therefore, in order to support the family on the income of the man alone, they could not but enter a relationship of severe competition. The reason for this is that the demand for a “family wage” was by no means aimed at the development of a fair wage system by organizing women workers and, thus, strengthening the position of all the workers in the negotiations. Therefore, “instead of reaching out to organize women workers, and fighting to equalize their pay by strengthening their bargaining power, most unions attempted to defend their own narrow corporate interest by means of legislative regulation, exclusion and often intimidation and harassment of unorganized women workers” [Secombe 1986:74]. As women were excluded from well-paid jobs and the discourse became wide-spread that “the woman’s place is in the home”, women were pinned down for low-wage occupations. The main victims of this situation were unmarried women, unmarried mothers, and widows, that is to say, women who did not have a male breadwinner. They could not but be reduced to poverty. Furthermore, as the workers’ family finances wholly tended to depend on the husband’s sole wage, they could not but become inflexible and unstable. In England, the shift towards men as sole earners is supposed to have happened in the period of real-wage raise after 1880, but this meant a shift towards a structure of family finances that was inflexible in cases of crisis [Yoshida 1985]. Therefore, the man’s ability to make a living became decisive for working class families; while they depended on this, they could not help taking part in a ruthless competitive struggle. This meant rushing into a competition that has the family as its basic unit.

Thus, once the family found itself in this competition, the interests of the family as a whole had the utmost priority, and the silent agreement within the working class family that the interests of the individual should not be put above that of the community came to be final. Nevertheless, the problem that the individual is at a disadvantage in the family will turn up sooner or later. Because of the instability of working class family finances, the women who never worked in their lives constituted rather a minority. It became obvious that, due to the discourse that “a woman’s place is in the home”, in addition to inferior working conditions women had to bear the burden of housework and child care as well. This is the reason for the conflict between men and women within the community of the working class family. It was inevitable that women’s tendency to achieve independence by such means as a better education laid open dissent within the family community. On this basis, it could not be avoided that doubts should arise about accepting as the normal model a family image that implied sexual division of labour. The oppressiveness of the normal family model was
recognized and, as people felt less and less chained to this model, various other ways of living together were tried out. These are the facts about the "crisis of the family" that we have referred to previously. What we have called the "non-family" phenomena, unmarried couples, couples without children, homosexual couples, illegitimate children, divorces etc., is not only a breaking away from the "modern family" model but a kind of rebellion against it. We can see that, in the 20th century, as soon as the "modern family" model was firmly established, the process of revealing its inherent contradictions began which resulted in the contemporary phenomenon of the "crisis of the family".

The spreading of this contemporary phenomenon in Europe and the United States is also something that clearly demonstrates the decline of the concept of a "family wage", in other words, the decline of familism. Social policy studies based on gender perspective is trying to differentiate various types of the welfare state. The type of "woman-friendly" welfare state, separated from familism is understood from the degree of "individualization" [Sainsbury 1994]. It is extremely important to make the most of the method of analyzing the family according to the previously mentioned gender approach in order to understand the situation of the family in contemporary Japan. In the following chapter, by making clear the connection between Japanese Kigyo Shakai and the concept of a "family wage", I shall try to elaborate further on this problem.

**Japanese Kigyo Shakai and the Concept of a “Family Wage”**

The concept of a “family wage” in Japan

At this point we have to direct our attention to the fact that in Japan the concept of a “family wage” (in other words, “the man alone supports his wife and children on his income”) has taken shape in the wage forms. At least in England and the United States, the concept of a “family wage” was employed in the negotiations for higher wages, but that did not mean that it was taken into consideration with regard to the wage system or that its forms and its basis of calculation were explicitly pointed out [Seccombe 1993: 114]. As is widely known, in Japan the structure of income describes a curve that corresponds to the development of the family life cycle; it is firmly established as seniority based wage. The concept of a “family wage” is realized and has its material basis in the wage structure that includes an allowance for the wife and children. There is no room here to deal with the historical development of this wage form. But if we want to shed light on the Japanese situation, we must see that the concept of a “family wage” is firmly established in contemporary Japan. Seniority based wage and lifelong employment together guarantee the stability of material life in accordance with the development of the life cycle of the family; in exchange for this, making use of the workers’ own ardour for work, the foundation was laid for the establishment of Kigyo Shakai. On the other hand, this made the treatment of women workers as a marginal working force final. On this basis, at least among the developed countries, the consciousness of gender norms that subjectively accepts the standard of sexual division of labour is extremely strong in Japan. We can see that clearly by all the various research data related to the gender specific assignment of housework and the consciousness of gender roles. The
Japanese version of the concept of a “family wage” thus creates the working conditions for men that lead to “overwork” and *Karohi* ("death from overwork"), while, on the other hand, it has lead to an absolute low of the social position of women who have become marginalized.

What we must pay special attention to is the fact that, while in other developed countries the family that has realized the concept of a “family wage” is no longer the typical model, in Japan it was strengthened. As has been mentioned earlier, the family that has realized the concept of a “family wage”, i.e. the “modern family” model that is brought into existence by the “birth of the housewife”, appeared originally in the cities among the urban salaried men. Naturally, we have to take into account the difference of the historical formation of the middle class, the structure of the relations between the Tenno system (Japanese Emperor system) and the family, and so forth. But even if we assume that the “modern family” model in Japan represents merely a tiny minority, it is important to note that in the 1910s, especially in urban areas, “an individualistic view of the family centered on the relationship of husband and wife was taken up particularly by the educated classes” [Morioka 1992: 59]. In the time between the Sino-Japanese War and the First World War (1894-1914), this started the regeneration and played the role of the family model for the working class that began to adopt the nuclear family. As has been mentioned above, from the popularity of Motoko Hani's "*Fujin no Tomo*", even though this concerns primarily the women of the middle class, we can guess the atmosphere of that time that was longing for a new rational image of the family.

In Japan, however, the wide-spread “birth of the housewife” had to wait until after the Second World War. We must not ignore the fact that during the postwar economic boom, as young people from rural areas moved into the industrial cities and gradually established their own families, the companies themselves recommended the “modern family” model. Thus we can say that through the relatively high wages, especially in the big companies, where the concept of a “family wage” had been realized, and through the in-company welfare system the companies themselves were, in a way able, to induce the workers to adopt the “modern family” model. In this context we ought to pay special attention to the role played by the *Shin Seikatsu Undo* (movement for a new life) in the 1950s. It spread primarily in rural areas, but its urban variant comprises the big companies and also the trade unions. It intended to guide and educate the working class family with the aim of achieving a “harmony of the family” and “life planning”. For example, after this movement had started in the Japanese steel company *Nihon Kokan* (NKK) in 1953, it became, in 1955, a movement that encompassed all branches of this company. Its central ideas were “making a comfortable home” and a “rational design for living” in which the regulation of birth control occupies an important position. Thus, we cannot doubt that the widely accepted method of “family planning” became decisive because of the size of company living quarters. In addition to this, there were short training courses in cooking and sewing as well as “advisory services for daily life” and the way in which workers responded to this was satisfac-

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1 If we go by a study by the Washington population problem research center on the status of women on the worldwide scale, Japan occupies place 34 of 99. If we try to find the cause for this low position in the ranking of developed countries, we can find that the equal treatment of men and women in the workplace is highly overdue (Country Rankings of the Status of Women: Powerless and Pregnant, *Population Briefing Paper*, No. 20, 1988).
The basic image of the family that was set forth here can best be described as "in family life the housewife always has the leading role, whereas the husband relaxes and gathers new energy". Through the "improvement of the housewife" the culture of a "comfortable home" was aimed at [Orii 1973: 113].

The families of the workers that were associated with the big companies were cut off from the traditional customs of their birthplace; they came to adopt the "modern family" model through the guidance of the company leadership. From an international point of view, at least after the 1960s, as we can understand directly from the fact that the contemporary feminist movement had appeared on the stage, a time had begun when the "modern family" model began to break up. But it is not an exaggeration to say that in Japan, at the same time, the concept of a "family wage" was something that contributed to the workers' ardour for work and the stability of the social order. Here, the idea that one can realize a better life only in association with a company became generally accepted, and the understanding was formed that men as hardworking and faithful and workaholic Kaisha Ningen (company man) should devote themselves as much as possible to the company. This very thing was supposed to be for the benefit of the family. On the other hand, it came to be thought that women ought to devote themselves wholly to housework and bringing up their children. Thus, the strict segregation of men and women was completed. Around the 1970s, on the basis of the introduction of ability-based personnel management and business development under the international structural recession, becoming a Company man came to be required more severely.

**Conclusion**

Considering the process of establishing the concept of a "family wage" in Japan, we may say that the mutual relations between Kigyo Shakai and the family are rather complex. As has already been mentioned above, many people were attracted by the new appeal of the "modern family" model that the companies had guided. Trapped by this fascination, they could not discover an alternative way of improving their lives to that associated with the companies. Thus, men, figuratively carrying their families on their backs, subjectively participated in a "competitive life" in the companies. Because this guaranteed material benefits that made their lives comfortable, the families themselves came to support the men's attitude towards work. The perfection of the material basis of family life was that the companies had made a "promise of happiness". This is probably the reason why, in contemporary Japan, the "modern family" model is still in good shape. That is to say, the companies made possible the realization of a rose-colored modern lifestyle, that was affluent and thus no longer hampered by the traditional bride-mother in law problem. They supported this realization through an in-company welfare system, and because many people were able to believe in this, the "modern family" model assumed an even stronger hold on society. Therefore, the family in contemporary Japan is far removed from the above-mentioned phenomena of the "crisis of the family" of Europe and the United States.

In our research on the workers of the car company Toyota in the 1980s, I am attached to found out that the workers as husbands/fathers did not think that their absence from home would cast a shadow on their families, and even if there were, for the time being,
voices of discontent among the family members, it did not reach their ears. In spite of the fact that the absence from the family became normal under these stern working conditions, their perception of their families was remarkably sanguine as shown in Table 1. Although the majority replied to our questions that there was “no discontent on their families’ side”, there were many among them who added delicately nuanced comments. They talked about “neglecting the children”, “bringing up the children on the non-interference principle” and “not being interested in the children”. Other things they said were “If I come home early once in a while I get told (by my wife) that I should work more”, ”As I get a lot of money if I work longer, the family is delighted”, ”If my salary is high, they are glad” and “I wonder if it doesn’t make her rather glad, if her troublesome husband is not there”. Even if we allow that a certain number of these statements were intended as jokes, we have to admit that many were surprisingly similar and were, basically, full of what we might also call self-scorning. As the family members had become used to the absence of the husbands/fathers, we finally came to ask ourselves whether an active participation in family life was really expected of them to begin with. So long as a comfortable life was guaranteed in exchange for the husband’s/father's absence from home, the family seems to have accepted this situation and adapted themselves to a certain degree. Rather than merely regarding them as the “victim” of these circumstances, we cannot overlook the aspect that they possessed a flexible ability to cope with this situation. And, while they are swallowed up by the logic of Kigyo Shakai, they not only depend on it and have adapted themselves, but actually support the system of Kigyo Shakai. It is obvious that the consideration of loss and gain that turns the material basis supporting the “modern family” model into an element of a business transaction is working fairly well. Thus, the family and Japanese Kigyo Shakai maintain a kind of balance. Even if this has resulted, partly, in some distortions and discrepancies, the family, while it is being “eroded” by Kigyo Shakai, has adapted itself in its own way, and both are equally permeated by a sense of values that gives priority to material thing

To conclude this paper, we must say that although the family in contemporary Japan receives excessive pressure from Kigyo Shakai, it is by no means on the verge of collapse. We must, on the contrary, emphasize the fact that the “modern family” model that was recommended, protected and strengthened by Kigyo Shakai is still sound. Needless to say, I do not want to claim that the family in contemporary Japan does not have its problems and is perfectly happy with this soundness. It is rather that I cannot ignore the complicated situation that Kigyo Shakai and the family seem to maintain some kind of balance, and I

\footnote{More detail of the relation between Toyota workers’ family and company, see [Kimoto 1995: 175-232].}

| Year | discontent on the family side | | | | hours with children | |
|------|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|      | no   | yes  | その他 | enough | not enough | other |
| 1980 | 72   | 24   | 5     | 52    | 38           | 11   |
|      | (71.3) | (23.8) | (5.0) | (51.5) | (37.6) | (10.9) |
| 1987 | 32   | 15   | 4     | 16    | 14           | 6    |
|      | (62.8) | (29.4) | (7.8) | (44.4) | (38.9) | (16.7) |

* [Kimoto. 1995: 185]
want to arouse attention to the fact that it is necessary to work out a methodology that is adequate to the analysis of the present situation.

It is not easy to break out of this situation, but if we try hard, maybe we can discover a way to do this in the following points. The lifestyle of the "modern family" model that took root in the wake of Kigyo Shakai is essentially one of big scale spending. Its very heart is the "affluent life" that consists in "my home" and "my car" and the acquisition of an enormous variety of household appliances. The workers of the big companies that can make the acceptance of this model relatively profitable were the first to enjoy this lifestyle of big scale spending. In exchange for this, they had to accept a system of long working hours. As far as accepting the benefits of the improvement of the material basis of their life was concerned, the families, too, almost welcomed the husband's absence from home. They understood that there was no reason to voice any dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, the "modern family" model, that implies sexual division of labour, was a model that took the emotional ties of "love" seriously. But as it was realized, first of all, by the workers of Japanese big companies, only the exterior of the "modern family" model was perfected. They were not concerned with the realization of "romantic love" that constitutes the interior part of the family. Naturally, the fact that the absence of the husband/father from the family has become normal, cannot have a positive effect on the formation of relations within the family. The subtle aberrations of human relations between family members among the workers of Toyota whom we have considered previously seem to be the result of this situation. In the 1970s, when Kigyo Shakai was strengthened, there were "the children's revenge" and "the rebellion of wives". These were accepted as evidence of the fact that all of a sudden various cracks had appeared within the family that looked so comfortably safe. From this, we may infer that the contradictions within the "modern family" model had piled up under the surface, as it had been established by Japanese Kigyo Shakai that could not but disregard the mechanism of family relations.

If we assume that some change or other will occur in the future, then it is time a strong desire for better human relations in the family began to grow. The logic of Kigyo Shakai supports the "modern family" model in so far as it is an inducement regarding the material basis of life, but it cannot help disregarding the qualitative side of family relations. Therefore, it seems it will be essential to develop a strong consciousness of the problem of relations between men and women as well as parents and children and truly change the conception of happiness. It is necessary to discover the opportunity and the process through which new models of life communities are formed that transcend the Japanese "modern family" model that cannot be divided from Kigyo Shakai. In this context, we have to follow the traces of the apparently expanding structural rearrangement of the system of Kigyo Shakai itself. Furthermore, in the course of the collapse of the myth of the "modern family" model in Europe and the United States movements for independence, especially of women, appeared on the scene. If we learn from this fact that had become the occasion for a profound inquiry into the mechanism of sexual division of labour in the "modern family" model, it becomes absolutely necessary to find out how this first happened in contemporary Japan. We have, therefore, to observe how the situation of women workers as well as the women's movements develop.
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