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# IDENTIFICATION AND IDENTITY: A PROBLEM OF "ORGANIZATION AND MAN"

By Hiroshi WATASE\*

## I PROBLEM

We insisted before that we should pay attention to the relation between industrial organization and family, as one of the relations between industrial organization and its external group.<sup>1)</sup> In the organization theory of social science, the viewpoint of "organization and man" is very important. If so, we should not limit our consideration to "organization man" from the beginning, but should take the wide area of his life into account. In this sense, industrial organization must be looked upon as an open system. Moreover, the family is the first group to be studied among "wide life area". The above is what I explained in "Industrial Organization Analysis and Group Typology".

In this treatise, I expressed that my next theme is to study a problem of family group, asking "What will become of external collectivity as the place of emotional stability?". It is our standpoint that we should not make light of family as non-organizational human group (informal, irrational organization), just because we are in the "organization age". Although "temporary society theory" is nowadays looked upon as a typical view of rational man and dynamic society (Gesellschaft in classical term), we could not agree on this kind of theory, because it is one sort of "evolution theory" which insists linear and equal evolution of macro society.

I also suggested that our theory would become one of a "life base theory", if we intend to develop our idea actively. In that case, from a viewpoint of pluralistic theory of society, we tried to insist that we should pay attention to the fact that we belong to several groups at the same time, therefore, life in industrial organization is not all of our life; rather, family life might be a more basic place of our life.

"Life base" is an ordinary and convenient term, although it does not seem to be academic. If we analyze a little more deeply when this term is used, it has generally two implications, that is, (1) plurality of area, (2) difference of importance among various areas. In a sense, "base" itself is the most important area among all. Base theory begins with a question of how those areas are related to each other, because there are relatively unimportant parts among various areas.<sup>2)</sup>

When family (or regional group) was the only integrated area of life in human history,

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\* Professor. This paper is that modified author's report at the Organizational Science Society, October 25, 1981.

1) Hiroshi Watase, Industrial Organization Analysis and Group Typology, *Keizai Ronso*, Vol. 126, No. 1-2, July-August 1980.

2) Yukio Otani, The Structure of Life Base, *Jurist*, No. 18, 1980.

there could be no life base theory. Aside from details of history, in modern industrial society where enterprise and household are definitely separated, working place or industrial organization might be a (more) important area of life. However, even in an industrial society, we neither commit personally to organization, nor find our life worth living (all of it, to be exact) only in organization. Eventually, it is for ourselves that we work hard. Thus, industrial organization which is said to be a place of severe struggle for existence, is not necessarily most important to us.

The working place (office) is like "battle front", where we are compelled to sacrifice our personal interests. Therefore, people working there need another area of life. That is the so called "base". "Base" is a ground of our life in this sense. Family as a base is where we take a rest and bring up our children. But, it is only base, even if it is a place where we can control various things by ourselves. It is where we "entrench" ourselves, therefore, it can be said to be a passive place.

In industrial society, we are required to live an active life in the working place, separated from family, and in fact spending most of our life-time as an organization man. Hence, life in organization is also important. Since life base is defined as "the place where we express ourselves and our own dignity", industrial organization is also a kind of life base.<sup>3)</sup> "Participation of workers in management" has been proposed. It is because participation has not been realized yet as a matter of fact. In a word, we need such a re-organization or structure reformation—in our model, from HO (Hard Organization, authoritarian organization) to SO (Soft Organization, democratic organization)—looking for self-actualization in organization.

When we have a bird's-eye view of the above-mentioned, where is the place which we can realize our independence and self-actualization? We are trying to analyze this problem, as a problem of the relation between industrial organization (generally speaking, functional group) and its external group, especially, family (generally speaking, basic group).

## II IDENTIFICATION

Both individual and society are the problems which are investigated in parallel in sociology. R. Robertson said, that "independence (autonomy)" of an individual has become an important problem in modern organization society, because power is used by the organized group (partial society), and belonging to organization, consequently, problem of authority, has become a great interest to us.<sup>4)</sup> To speak in other terms, "identification" is belonging to organization, or commitment, and "identity" is independence from organization or self-actualization.

In the organization theory, control by organization is regarded as authority. This is not a naked power, but an "acceptance" of command as in Barnard's theory. In this

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3) Y. Ōtani, *op. cit.*

4) R. Robertson, *Aspects of Identity and Authority in Sociological Theory*, in R. Robertson and B. Holzner (ed.) *Identity and Authority*, 1980, chap. 7.

case, there is a certain judgement or decision-making on the follower's side. In H. Simon's organization theory, "influence" which the organization gives as the premise of individual decision-making, is an important theme. Also, internal influence which works in the member's mental state in order to internalize authority as an external influence (power in our word), is called "identification".<sup>5)</sup> We, who are interested in "independence of the members", cannot but take notice of H. Simon who treats directly "identification" as parallel theme of "identity".

In authority theory, M. Weber is well-known, and in the above context the interpretation of Weber's theory by R. Robertson seems to be important. According to him, Weber, who insisted on an authority (rational, legal authority) in bureaucracy as a rational structure, had only identification in mind and neglected identity. Robertson pointed out the characteristics of Weber's inquiry into the problem of individual and society, compared with E. Durkheim and G. Simmel. According to Robertson's indication, Weber put focus on individual (action) in the face of social evolution or historical reality. That is, Weber had modern rationalism as a view of human being.<sup>6)</sup>

It is said that Simon, who puts more emphasis on identification than identity, has a rationalistic view of humanity, just as Weber. From this viewpoint, let's take look at Simon's identification theory.

In Simon's theory, focus is put on the individual in both methodology and substantive theory. What is confronted with organization is not whole man or personality, but an individual who has his own goals. This is called individual goals by Simon. Organization and individual, both of which have their own goals respectively, confront each other. To restate, in Simon's theory, every member in relation to organization is an individual who has his own goals. Also, identification is "that each member does not make his own goals a criterion, but uses organizational goals as a value criterion when he makes a decision in the organization".<sup>7)</sup>

Thus, an individual who has his own goal and confronts himself with the organization, becomes literally identified with the organization. Although Simon calls identification "loyalty", we think it can be regarded as "commitment".<sup>8)</sup> According to T. Parsons, it is "diffuse attachment to the superior social system". We understand it is "reservation of compliance to organization". After all, identification is commitment.

Concept of man in Simon's theory is a specified and confined one. Namely, his concept is not only different from such a wide one as entire personality, which has no relation to the organization or rather is opposed to the organization, but also different from such a relatively limited concept as an individual who has his own goals and confronts himself with the organization. Simon's concept is much more confined than the above two concepts, that is, Simon's man is a member who is unified and integrated into the organization.

The above mentioned identification is a model of man in terms of psychoanalysis

5) H. Simon, *Administrative Behavior*, 2nd. ed., 1947, Chap. VII and X.

6) R. Robertson, *op. cit.*

7) H. Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

8) Hiroshi Watase, *Fundamental Theory of Business Organization*, Maruzen Shoten, 1971, pp. 63f.

or psychology. Simon is explaining this simplified model of man, as an attribute of an "administrative man" (his own model of man).

As is well known, the administrative man is a man who behaves with "satisfaction criterion". It is noteworthy in our context that he neglects most of the real world as an empty box. In another word, he confines his focus of attention to the relevant things as an organization man and immerses himself in the organization. "Relevant things" are, representatively, organization goals (or maintenance of organization), as is apparent from the previous explanation. It can be thought of as "efficiency criterion".<sup>9)</sup>

When administrative man makes a decision, he does not hesitate to adopt organization goals as a criterion and observes them. Thus, "instrumental rationality" (Zweckrationalität) of organization is ensured. Simon suggests that integration or identification of members to the organization should be promoted in order to secure instrumental rationality of organization.

In this way, Simon seems to have a view of unlimited and whole man in his thought, and mentions independence or self characterization of the members, when he discusses participation problem or organization equilibrium theory.<sup>10)</sup> As is well-known, he also disapproves the view of man in the machine model.

However, "identity" is not taken into account at all, so far as Simon gives much weight to "identification" in his logical model of man. A. Etzioni indicates that Simon's theory does not treat the problem of man. In this sense, Simon belongs to the "neo-classical school".<sup>11)</sup>

Upon this, the above ignorance of man, or identification theory should be regarded as an inevitable element in order to build up an elaborate organization theory on logical positivism. Hence, we think we can not criticize the fact that Simon does not take identity into consideration. To be sure, there can be organization theory which puts much stress on identity, and it is certainly one school of organization theory. And, it stands to reason that Simon's theory as an analytical science has a different character from Barnard's theory (philosophy of cooperation) which "believes in the power of the cooperation of men of free will to make men free to cooperate".<sup>12)</sup> In our opinion, Simon's theory specializes in a different area from Barnard's theory and other related theories. That is a "division of labor" in the academic world. (We do not agree to a unified theory of management as proposed by H. Koontz.<sup>13)</sup>)

### III IDENTITY

It is said symbolic interactionism has pinpointed the problem of identity most distinctly. We can list G. H. Mead, W. James, J. Dewey and C. Cooley, etc., as symbolic interactionism

9) H. Simon, *op. cit.*, pp. xxivf. and p. 210.

10) J. March and H. Simon, *Organizations*, 1958, p. 94.

11) A. Etzioni, *Modern Organizations*, 1964, p. 25, p. 31.

12) C. Barnard, *The Functions of the Executive*, 1938. p. 296.

13) H. Koontz, Making sense of Management Theory, in H. Koontz (ed.) *Toward a Unified Theory of Management*, 1964.

theorists. When this school makes a research of mutual interrelation between individual and society, it probes into human mind and therefore attaches importance to identity. According to Robertson, Simmel affected this school very much and he "highlights in his notion of the antagonistic relationship between individual and society, and the internalization of that antagonism, the very area in which the concept of identity is sociologically most appropriately placed".<sup>14)</sup>

Simmel paid attention to the same point as S. Freud did, so he is sometimes called "Sociology's Freud". Robertson arranged terminology with respect to the relation between Simmel and Freud. Identification, which I explained in the previous section, is such in the conventional Freudian sense and "identification with" in strict sense. It is a case where ego is unified to the superior and subject to it. Another sense of identification is "identification of", which indicates a link between ego and society. In this case, "with" may be used, but the object is an equal partner. Robertson says that relating to others on condition of "identification of", is a presumption of confirming identity. This notion is consistent to E. Erikson's theory as neo-Freudian in a wide sense—this school brings (ego) identity into focus.<sup>15)</sup>

Simmel theory can be taken for sociology of identity, because it emphasizes individual freedom, especially individualization, and is based on them.<sup>16)</sup> But, it is basically macro society which Simmel contrasted with an individual. He inquired identity problem, thinking "identification with" between equal individuals on the background. That is to say, he was not so much interested in the partial society in the intermediate level between macro society and an individual, above all he did not take notice of the organized group. Thus, we can assert he stayed in identity theory in general scheme of "individual and society".

Simmel took part with what is called conflict model with respect to the relation between society and individual. His standpoint is especially clear in his notion of the organized group. He said, "It follows that the group as a whole needs a leader—that there are bound to be many subordinates and only few superordinates. It further follows that each individual group member is more highly qualified or more often capable of occupying a leading position than he is able to make use of in his capacity as a group member." Also he said, "We have seen that the conflict between man's individual wholeness and his nature as a group member, makes the harmonious proportion between personal qualification and social position impossible; and thus makes impossible the synthesis, on the basis of justice, between freedom and equality. And this conflict cannot be eliminated even by a socialist order, because it may be called a logical presupposition of a society itself".<sup>17)</sup>

Simmel theory seems to contain an ideology of "anti-organization" (directly speaking, organization evil), because he gave a high regard to individualism or individual wholeness. Hence, he would not have admitted identification to organization. Rather, he insisted identity in the wide macro society. This is quite contrary to Simon as an organization

14) R. Robertson, *op. cit.*

15) R. Robertson, *op. cit.*

16) Kazuyuki Iesaka (ed.), *Problem of Person in Contemporary Sociology*, 1979, chap. VI.

17) K. H. Wolff, *The Sociology of George Simmel*, 1950, pp. 77-78f.

theorist who emphasizes identification in conventional Freudian sense.

Simon's theme is the organized group as a partial society. Moreover, he basically puts emphasis on the formal organization with respect to the structure. In this way, his theory is evolved with no respect to the problem of whole man. Although there are many approaches to the organized groups, not all of them are required to become a model taking man's wholeness into consideration. It is necessary to have a model of a limited man, when we build a refined model as an analytical science. We have to acknowledge characteristics of Simon theory which pays more interest to identification than to identity.

Except for Simmel who put much weight on identity as was explained before, Robertson pointed out that, generally speaking, it was only in recent years that sociology began to recognize man's individual wholeness. Especially, he expresses a complaint to three schools with respect to authority. The first standpoint advocates that as if all authority is legitimate authority. The second standpoint thinks authority only in terms of authoritarianism or control. The third standpoint is between the above two standpoints and presupposes "modern man".

In the third standpoint, an individual as he should be, or concept of man in modern society, is "an adaptive product of modern organizational forms" or "social-structural contingency". In short, it is supposed that man is an instrumental-rationalist.<sup>18)</sup>

We understand Simon's theory belongs to this third standpoint. Still more, the first standpoint is Barnard's theory, and the second one is the classical organization theory.

Simon's organization theory is almost completed one as a precise science, because of its model of man as a rationalist (viewpoint of identification). I already explained this point. On the other hand, there can be a room for criticism by the side of the standpoint which pays much respect to independence of man (viewpoint of identity). Essentially, the weakpoint of the third standpoint is based on limited understanding of man. In this standpoint, it is presupposed that man pays his attention and interest mainly to superior social system and unifies himself to it.

Robertson enumerated Frankfurt school or J. Habermas, and symbolic interactionism school, as the school which is opposed to the above three schools. Also, he emphasizes the fact that Simmel gave much influence to symbolic interactionism school.<sup>19)</sup> In our context, Simon and Simmel, namely organization man and whole man, are contrasted to each other.

#### IV CONCLUSION

Let me sum up my above discussion, although I don't think I made an thorough enough investigation about "identity" and "identification".

First of all, "identity" or "independence" is liable to be thought of as a non-social category (when we think of it intuitively or practically). Especially, it is so when identity is contrasted to identification or commitment. When we contrast independence of an

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18) R. Robertson, *op. cit.*

19) R. Robertson, *op. cit.*

individual to identification which is a kind of social relation, we occasionally regard identity as a way of life detached from the real world. However, I argue this is a sheer misunderstanding. In Simmel's theory, identity is a mediator between individual and society.

Now, our problem is how we should understand identification and identity respectively, both of which are a sort of social relational concept. It is also important to examine how they are related to each other.

First, let me state my idea frankly. In modern organizational society, it is true that many people belong to the organization, especially industrial organization. Most of us, good or bad, spend much time in the organization and are immersed there psychologically. We should not avert our eyes from the fact of identification.

Hence, we don't agree to so-called moratorium thinking that identification is temporary and life as an organization man is a "temporary life".<sup>20)</sup>

In spite of this fact, what we ought to recognize is that our life as a whole man is not entirely covered by the industrial organization. Especially, in our psychology or consciousness, there are much things out of the organization. D. Katz and R. Kahn, who advocated "partial inclusion" theory, said, "Unlike the inclusion of a given organ of the body in the biological system, not all of the individual is included in his organization membership." "Even where the person can not withdraw physically from a social system, as in the case of military service, his psychological life space covers much more than his military duties." "The organizational role stipulates behaviors which imply only a psychological slice of the person."<sup>21)</sup>

The above is our way of thinking. Then, how do we understand identification and identity? First, in respect to identification, the case of adults in the industrial organization is our problem. It is said that the concept in Freud's theory is not necessarily clear, so we could interpret as adult's loyalty to the organizations (groups in wide sense). Namely, we don't adopt the standpoint of preformation theory which puts focus on period of infancy. Simon seems to attach more importance to H. R. Lasswell's theory.<sup>22)</sup> In short, since identification is the consciousness as a member of the industrial organization, it comes eventually to be the concept of self like the above, that is, self identity.

Secondly, in respect to identity, it is ego identity, in contrast to self identity. This seems to be doubtless.<sup>23)</sup> Prof. Okonogi who explained Erikson's theory, says, "By nature, psychoanalysis since Freud has been making clear the mental progress of the infant period when the core of function and structure of the mind is formed. Then, it took a form of libido evolvment theory first, then ego evolvment theory. However, it is a relevant and important theme to study the whole process from birth to death historically and socially, because our mental life never stops to develop at the time of the infant. Erikson names this process of our life stages life cycle."<sup>24)</sup> Ego identity or identity is the central concept

20) Keigo Okonogi, *Time of Moratorium Man*, 1978.

21) D. Katz and R. Kahn, *The Social Psychology of Organizations*, 1966, p. 50.

22) H. Simon. *op. cit.*, p. 205.

23) K. Okonogi, *op. cit.*, pp. 86-87, Osamu Kusatsu, *Sociology of Identity*, in: *Shisō*, Nov., 1978, p. 108.

24) Keigo Okonogi, *Freud-Intellectual Inheritance of Mankind*, 1978, p. 370.



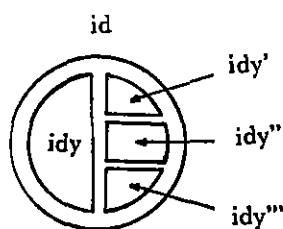


Figure 1

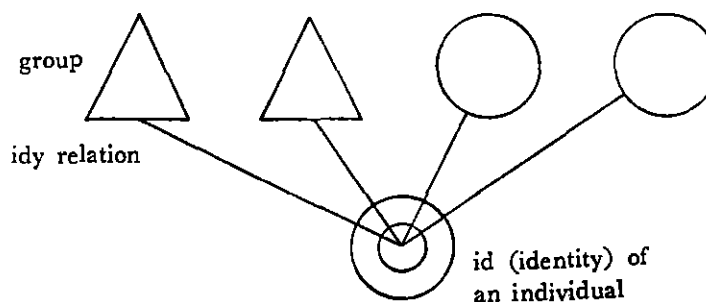


Figure 2

of ego evolvment theory based on such an epigenesis theory.

Thus, the relation between identification and identity is the relation between self identity and ego identity. Also, ego is the integrater of several selves. This reminds us of the relation between I and Me in Mead's theory. This can be shown in a graphic form-Figure 1. (Identification is abbreviated to idy and identity is to id respectively.) Man in the organization or an organization man is idy. This status or way of existence is clearly a part of the "whole man" which is id shown by the whole circle. It is a doubtless reality that most of us are the organization men, and it is clear that organization man (idy) is a part of the whole man (id).

Also, the above figure is not consistent to the moratorium thinking that idy is a temporary aspect and we can find more complete and wonderful life ("the Blue Bird") somewhere. Moreover, the right semicircle in the above figure is also real world and it is real aspect of relation to other groups and organizations. They are idy', idy'', idy''', etc. In this way, id is an integrater, since we take plural idy into consideration.

The foregoing narrative is, so to speak, a progress process of man and mostly treats a problem of the individual. Our theme stated in the first section is where we can find our independence and self-realization. In this case, the above discussion is very important from a standpoint of methodological individualism. But, it is better to depict Figure 2 in stead of Figure 1, since our research object is such social systems as groups and organized groups.

What we showed in Figure 1 is that our "mind" is composed of plural self-identities or it is a structure (system) of identifications. In Figure 2, we focus on the "object" of identification and show the relations between individual and these plural groups (including organized groups). It is shown by the lines connecting an individual to groups or organized groups.

A triangle shows an organized group and a circle shows an unorganized group. The typical example of the former is industrial organization and that of the latter is family respectively. The relation between them is our theme. We proposed the fundamental scheme about it in this thesis. In short, whether we are independent or not depends upon how we operate four strings in Figure 2 and unify ourselves. Therefore, independence is never realized in only one area of our life (only one relation).

That is the conclusion of my main discussion. The following is what I would like to say in addition. In Figure 2, the notion of social pluralism is shown. This theory includes

two ways of thinking. While the first way treats plural groups indifferently, the second differentiates them (especially, we have to take notice of the difference between H. Laski and R. MacIver, with regard to political state).

We adopt the latter standpoint (MacIver's standpoint). By the way, Simon also makes a similar comment, saying "Individuals approach various groups with attitudes about them that bias the relative frequency of interaction with them."<sup>25)</sup> Any way, our next theme is to locate family and industrial organization properly, based on weighted plural society theory (weighted allocation theory).

Also Figure 2 reminds us of the famous "Kreuzung der sozialen Kreise" by G. Simmel. According to him, group norms appear in plurality and the more groups the individual takes part in, the more freedom and chance to display his individuality increases, because he can weaken the influence by each particular group.<sup>26)</sup> That is, Simmel was entirely interested in the problem of the individual. In spite that he regarded an identity as the mediator between the individual and society (especially, groups and organized groups are important in our discussion.), he fundamentally put more weight on the individual. This seems to be one of the characteristics that general and basic sociology has, and this "general" sociology differs from sociological theory of "organization" in this point.

However, Simmel also did not stick to his "qualitative individualism" or respect of individuality which is the core of his theoretical framework.<sup>27)</sup> He concluded the last paragraph of "Fundamental Problem of Sociology" (his writing in his later years) with the following desire. "I should prefer to believe, however, that the ideas of free personality as such and of unique personality as such, are not the last words of individualism. I should like to think that the efforts of mankind will produce ever more numerous and varied forms for the human personality to affirm itself and to demonstrate the value of its existence. In fortunate periods, these varied forms may order themselves into harmonious wholes. In doing so, their contradictions and conflicts will cease to be more obstacles to mankind's efforts: they will also stimulate new demonstrations of the strength of these efforts and lead them to new creations."<sup>28)</sup>

Simmel also expected cooperation between individual and society, as a new social form in the future. This is, so to speak, a harmony model. By the way, as I explained before, Barnard made a manifestation of his belief in "philosophy of co-operation" and this was his conclusion. However, his intention in "The Functions of the Executive" (1938) did neither stem from an individualism, nor from a social determinism. His intention was merely to emphasize the importance of the function of the executives to co-ordinate these two factors in the real organization.<sup>29)</sup> Compared with Barnard, it seems to me that form of co-operation imaged by Simmel does not go beyond our "Soft Organization" model. It was not philosophy of co-operation, but Lebensphilosophie that Simmel had in his mind.

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25) J. March and H. Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

26) G. Simmel, *Soziale Differenzierung*, 1890.

27) K. Iesaka, *op. cit.*, chap. VI.

28) K. H. Wolff, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

29) C. Barnard, *op. cit.*, p. 21.