

Sociological Theory in Kizaemon Aruga and Lévi-Strauss' Structuralism¹

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Introduction

The aim of this paper is to reinterpret the sociological theory of Kizaemon Aruga from a structural point of view, in other words, to understand the sociological theory of Aruga in relation to Lévi-Strauss' structuralism. Lévi-Strauss' structuralism, above all his epistemology, has been criticized by such people as J. Piaget, P. Ricœur, and M. Godelier. Their criticism was valid on the epistemological level. But, as Lévi-Strauss insists, structuralism should be considered a method of analysis applied to concrete and empirical studies. I propose two ways of developing structuralism further to examine its possibilities as a method. One is to discover structurally relevant factors in the thoughts of sociologists or ethnologists who investigated their own societies by focusing on both theoretical research and empirical research. The other is to reexamine the structural method itself through applying it to empirical research. In this paper I intend to discover structurally relevant factors in the sociological theory of Aruga through comparison with Lévi-Strauss' structuralism. For this purpose I first examine

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Aruga's exchange theory with that of Lévi-Strauss; then I shed light on the structural character of Aruga's view in contrast with the non-structural character of Lévi-Strauss' concept of *la maison*.

Aruga's Use of Mauss' Exchange Theory

Aruga, who was born in 1897 in Japan, majored in art at Tokyo University. He was interested in the place of creation in the life of the common people. He began to study how common people create their social organizations. His study was first influenced by the folklore theory of Kunio Yanagita. Aruga succeeded in the methodology of Yanagita's folklore theory. At the same time Aruga used the exchange theory of Marcel Mauss. As Aruga could not consider the functions of a farmer's life-style systematically in Yanagita's folklore, he tried to overcome Yanagita's theory by introducing the exchange theory of Mauss. Aruga thought these functions could be systematically considered in the exchange theory of Mauss. Aruga also used Yanagita's folklore to overcome Mauss' theory because Mauss' exchange theory ignores history, whereas Yanagita's folklore theory tries to grasp history despite the method of analysis and assumption of folk terms.

As noted above, Aruga started his study with the view of overcoming Yanagita's folklore theory. "Yuinō to Rōdōsoshiki" ("Wedding Gifts and Labor Organizations," 1938) is one of Aruga's early works in this process. It was in this article that Aruga critically adopted Mauss' exchange theory. In the preface to "Yuinō to Rōdōsoshiki," Aruga criticized Westermarck and Taro Nakayama for considering only the external forms of marriage and then arranging marriage types in a linear global evolutionary scheme. According to Aruga, marriage can-

not be understood only by its exterior forms. It cannot be understood until its "interior relations to socio-historical development" are considered. Aruga goes on to criticize Nakayama's interpretation of *yuinō* (wedding gifts) as a hereditary custom of a bride-price.

Through carefully reading the historical data, Aruga showed that before the rise of modern society people married within the same class. *Bushi* (warriors), *oyakata hyakushō* (landowners), and *kokata hyakushō* (tenant farmers) married only in their own class. *Bushi* and *oyakata hyakushō* married class partners outside their own village (*mura*), but *kokata hyakushō* married within their own village.

According to Aruga's expositions, marriage created an opportunity for tying or stabilizing *yui* (common labor organizations, for example, rice planters) among tenant farmers. In this class the gifts exchanged at weddings between both sides were few in number. Furthermore, the labor of both bride and bridegroom had to be considered in the total give-and-take relations of both sides. Aruga indicated that in this case *yuinomono* (foods at weddings) are considered symbols of the labor exchange of both parties. On the other hand, in landowner marriage, the wife was taken from another village. In this case, as in a *bushi's* wedding, gifts were given to the bride's servants as well as to her brothers, and both sides gave and took totally equal gifts. Therefore, the gift exchange at weddings cannot be considered as a bride-price. Aruga indicated that give-and-take gifts were themselves symbols of uniting both sides (Aruga, 1938b).

After Aruga analyzed *yuinō* in the context of the total give-and-take relationship, he revealed that the *yuinō* was not a price of a wife. The method he adopted may be said to have been influenced by Mauss'

exchange theory. Aruga adopted it to overcome the anti-sociological aspects of Yanagita's folklore theory, but at the same time Aruga adopted Yanagita's method to overcome the static aspects of Mauss' exchange theory (Sato, 1984a). That is to say, Aruga tried to grasp the primary significance of *yui* by looking for its historical origins in folk terms.

The Development of Aruga's Exchange Theory

(1) Aruga's Perspective on *Dōzokudan*

Yanagita indicated in "Nōson Kazoku to Kanshu" ("Rural family and Conventions," 1939) that while a *kokata* (tenant farmer) offered labor to his *oyakata* (landowner), the *oyakata* had a duty to take care of his *kokata*. Aruga also indicated that point in "Nago no Fueki" ("Labor of Tenant Farmers," 1933-4). Tenant farmers consist of two kinds. One is the farmer who possess his own house but rents arable land. The other is the farmer who rents a house as well as arable land. The *Nago* is the latter. But in this article the labor of tenant farmers was not yet seen in the context of the total give-and-take relationship. It was in Aruga's *Nōson Shakai no Kenkyū* (*Sociological Study of the Japanese Rural Community*, 1938) that the problem was understood in this way for the first time.

In his book Aruga distinguished two kinds of give-and-take relationships between landowners and tenant farmers. One is seen in the case of agricultural and domestic works; the other is seen in the mutual help at wedding or funeral ceremonies. In the former the exchange is quite different; for example, the tenant farmers offer their labor while the landowner presents medicine or salt and lends arable land

or instruments. In the latter, both sides give and take equal labor from each other over a long period. Aruga gained this insight through empirical research at Ishigami Village in Iwate Prefecture. In Ishigami Village the tenant farmers offer labor to the landowner, such in working on the landowner's rice plants. The rationale is for the tenant farmers to be aware of their obligations (*giri*) for the landowner's care and for renting land from the landowner (Aruga, 1939). The tenant farmers greet their landowner at rituals for the same reason. The *Nago* case is mainly for renting a house. This gratitude makes the tenant farmers obey the landowner and participate in his festivals. Aruga found the tenant farmers' consciousness of gratitude to their landowner by doing labor or offering greetings at times of ritual. It may well be said that Aruga understood agricultural and domestic work or participation in the landowner's festivals within the framework of a total give-and-take relationship. Aruga understood that the *oyakata-kokata* (landowner-tenant farmers) relationship is cultural, and he later named this relation *dōzokudan*.

(2) Two Forms of *Yui*

In "Nago no Fueki" ("The Labor of Tenant Farmers," 1933-4), Aruga thought that the exchange of labor among tenants appeared after the collapse of the landowner's farming organizations. Before long Aruga revised this idea by accepting the views of Kichiji Nakamura et al. in *Sonrakukōzō no Shitekibunseki* (*Historical Study of the Japanese Village Structure*, 1956). Aruga learned two major points from this book. One was the distinction between labor concentrated in the landowner's farming organizations, later named by Aruga *honke-makke teki yui*, and the give-and-take of labor among tenants, labeled

shōnō teki yui, both characterized by different forms and logic. The other major point was the fact that these two forms of *yui* had co-existed from early times.

First, *shōnō teki yui*. In general, the *shōnō* (small farmers) perform *yui* for all *shōnō* in their group. All the members plant rice in the farms of one household for one day; then they work on the farm of another the next day, and so on. For example, *taue* (rice-planting) is done in this way. Thus the exchange of labor within *shōnō teki yui* is well-balanced. In this case each *shōnō* offers completely equal labor to other *shōnō* (small farmers). Thus the *shōnō teki yui* has reciprocity. As for the form and the logic of *honke-makke teki yui*, according to Nakamura et al., the entire working group consists of *nago* and servants of landowner Takahashi-*ke* (house) as well as its *makke* (branch houses). *Honke* is the landowner, and *makke* are mainly the tenant farmers. All the labor is pooled at Takahashi's house and then distributed in turn to each house of the *yui*. In this case the *makke* are likely to help each other. But they have the consciousness of *tsukawasareteiru* (having been sent out) by Takahashi's house rather than the consciousness of *yui o kasu* or *yui o kaesu* (give-and-take labor among branch houses themselves).

Thus the exchange form of *honke-makke teki yui* is different from that of *shōnō teki yui*. The former is not an exchange of labor among small farmers. Only Takahashi's house belongs to the upper class. Then what is the nature of the exchange form of this type? It is the "redistribution" of Karl Polanyi (1957). The *shōnō teki yui* can be considered "reciprocity" since small farmers have equal status and mutually exchange the same amount of labor. But the *honke-makke teki*

yui may not be considered “reciprocity” because only the *honke* belongs to the upper class and exchanges different things with the *makke*. In Polanyi's terminology, the *honke-makke teki yui* arranges the *kokata*'s labor centered on the *honke*, and the pooled labor is redistributed among the *makke*.

To sum up the exchange theory of Aruga in comparison with that of Lévi-Strauss, I find Aruga proposed two types as exchange forms. One is the *honke-makke teki yui* type; the other is the *shōnō teki yui*. Lévi-Strauss only proposed two forms as reciprocity. One was the generalized exchange form in which A gives B, B gives C, and C gives D. The other was the restricted exchange form in which A gives B and B gives A. Lévi-Strauss developed a type of reciprocity, but not a type of redistribution. He did not refer to redistribution as one type of exchange. In this sense the form *shōnō teki yui* which Aruga developed is different from generalized exchange or restricted exchange. Moreover, the *honke-makke teki yui* is not a type of reciprocity but a type of redistribution, so it has value as a new form of exchange (Sato, 1984a).

Aruga's Classification of the Japanese *Ie*

Ie is a word with variable meanings. The *ie* is not the Japanese family or household. It is fundamentally considered an agent which manages a household, possesses social rights and duties, and succeeds to a heritage.² Aruga's well-known research on the Japanese *ie* is

2 Today Hasegawa has proposed the new idea that the *ie* is a *kabu*. The *kabu* is a unit having the social rights and obligations in a village (Hasegawa, 1981, 1983). His understanding of the *ie* was based on a historical process of *ie*, he tried to explain the various forms of *ie* in a historical axis. His idea seems to transcend Aruga's idea of *ie*.

characterized by cultural or ethnic viewpoint. He grasped the variety of the Japanese *ie* from the viewpoint of its ethnic peculiarity. He understood these ethnic peculiarities diachronically and synchronically. Aruga's sociology is founded on his two theories: "the theory of ethnic peculiarity" and "the theory of mutually exchanging types." These theories were most typically developed in interpreting the *ie*. They were established in *Nihon Kazokuseido to Kosakuseido (The Japanese Family System and the Tenant Farmers, 1943)*. In this book the Japanese *ie* was approached diachronically and synchronically. Aruga established a common peculiarity in each axis. He classified the Japanese *ie* in modern times as follows:

- 1 the simple family (the form that only the head of a family and his lineal ascendants and descendants can have partners)
 - (1) *ie* composed of a direct line
 - (2) *ie* composed of a stem and collateral line
 - (3) *ie*, including nonconsanguinity, composed of a stem line
 - (4) *ie*, including nonconsanguinity, composed of a stem and collateral line
- 2 the composite family (the form that the collateral line or nonconsanguinity has partners as well as the stem line)
 - (1) *ie* composed of a direct and collateral line
 - (2) *ie*, including nonconsanguinity, composed of a direct line
 - (3) *ie*, including nonconsanguinity, composed of a direct and collateral line

Aruga made a typical classification. Explicitly or implicitly, he recognized a common ethnic peculiarity in each type. Thus "the ethnic peculiarity" was obtained through his research on the social relations

of *ie*, *dōzoku* (the federation of *honke* and *makke*), and *oyakata-kokata* (landowner-tenant farmers) relationship. The stem family could be transformed as time went by into a composite family containing a collateral line. For example, type 1 (1) could be transformed into type 2 (1). While type 1 (1) was considered an implicit form of *dōzoku*, type 2 (1) was an explicit form of *dōzoku*. In other words, the *ie* connects the *dōzoku* relationship if the conditions are provided. Members of the *ie* can also form the *dōzoku* relation if the conditions are provided. The *dōzoku* was considered “the ethnic peculiarity” of Japan. In this way, these types can be transformed into one another if the conditions are met. That is to say, each form of the *ie* can conclude the *dōzoku*. Aruga, it should be noted, later corrected a part of these types. He clearly had the idea that the *ie* was not the Japanese family. Therefore, the simple family or composite family should not be used as the Japanese *ie* today. As I noted earlier, the *ie* is not a household. It is most important that Aruga inferred common consciousness, the *oyakata-kokata* consciousness, as an ethnic peculiarity. His idea went beyond Yanagita's folklore theory in that Aruga interpreted the *kosaku* (tenant farmers) in consciousness as well as in relationship. The *oyakata-kokata* relationship may be said to be a “boss-follower” relationship. This point is crucial.

An extract of the background of Aruga's idea follows:

- 1 All social relations have a common “ethnic peculiarity” or “ethnic character” in “the cultural area having the same ethnicity.”
- 2 The general character and the particular character are mediated by each other in the same ethnic culture.
- 3 The types can be supposed to be in the same social relations.

4 The types can be transformed into one another on the historical axis.

Aruga's way of thinking on these issues may be, in general, interpreted as follows: Aruga thought the types have positions in the same social relations in "the cultural area having the same ethnicity." Moreover, the types may be considered *les transformations*, in Piaget's terminology (Piaget, 1968: 10), in the same period since these types have the common ethnic peculiarity. As for the social relations of the *ie*, since Aruga insisted that the *ie* in the *kumi* (a federation of economically equal *ie*) relation can be federated in the *dōzoku* relation if the conditions are met, the transformation of types may be said to be *l'autoreglage* in Piaget's terminology (Piaget, 1968: 13). While the *ie* can federate on the horizontal axis, the *ie* can also federate with one another on the vertical axis in a case in which one is economically upper. We can abridge, therefore, Aruga's sociological theory on the types of *ie*. This is indicated in Figure 1 from the structural standpoint. Accordingly, the structural perspective can be found in Aruga's

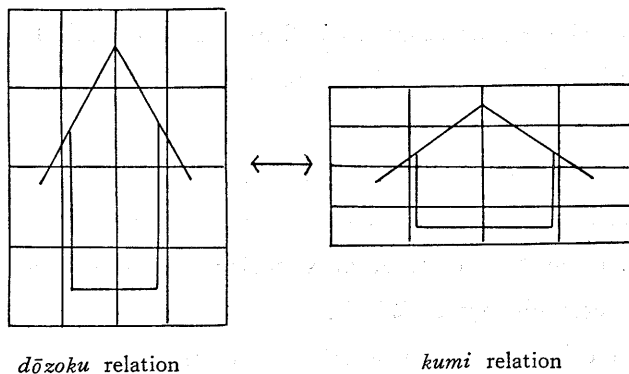


Figure 1

sociological theory (Sato, 1984b).

However, since one cannot definitely affirm the concept of “the ethnic cultural area” which Aruga proposed, it has to be corrected more or less. To define this concept one has to compare historically negotiated societies with each other. Moreover, Aruga's idea of *ie* has to be corrected, but I cannot here have a space to develop some new ideas of *ie* in detail.

Lévi-Strauss' structuralism approaches various myths from the standpoint of infrastructure of the human mind. That is to say, he treated the various myths as a variation of a “key myth,” namely, a key motif. Aruga did the various forms of *ie* from the standpoint of infrastructure of society as Lévi-Strauss did. However, the difference between Aruga and Lévi-Strauss is that Aruga thought of an ethnic culture as infrastructure. Because I believe that Lévi-Strauss would compare the types of *ie* beyond an ethnic culture.

Lévi-Strauss' Concept of *Maison*

It seems to me that Lévi-Strauss rarely used the term *la maison* before *La Voie des masques* (1975). According to Lévi-Strauss, Boas had considered the succession of the Kwakiwtl as follows: the head of the family was patrilineal whereas the name and the title were matrilineal. Ethnologists had considered the way of succession in terms of non-unilateral or bilateral, etc. Boas had used the terms “gens” or “clans” in expressing the succession in the Kwakiwtl, but later he abandoned these terms to adopt the native term *numaym* (Lévi-Strauss, 1975: 164-192). After considering Boas' way of thinking, Lévi-Strauss precisely

understood the true agent of Kwakiutl's succession was *la maison*, namely the agent of the social rights and obligations for the natives. Lévi-Strauss considered *la maison* a moral person that possesses such materials as house, land, wealth, as well as immaterial aspects, such as position, name, honor, and so on (Lévi-Strauss, 1983b: 1224). Accordingly, lineage was not a basic factor. From the same standpoint Lévi-Strauss considered the Yurok tribe that Crover had analyzed. Lévi-Strauss adopted the same idea in Indonesia, Melanesia, Polynesia, Micronesia, and Africa. For example, he took the *dadia* C. Geertz had analyzed in Bali for *la maison*³ (Lévi-Strauss, 1984: 198). I believe that *la maison* has some variations, so the point is how to treat the different variations. Above all, Lévi-Strauss conceived the significance of the term *la maison* in place of the concept of family or descent. Ethnologists had been considering personal status and hereditary rights and obligations under the terms patrilineal or matrilineal, non-unilateral or bilateral. But Lévi-Strauss conceived these issues were determined by the power relations of both lineages, wife-takers and wife-givers. Most of the cases researched under the name of patrilineal are actually complex lineages (Lévi-Strauss, 1983a: 232-3). For example, the Japanese *ie* is not personally patrilineal or non-unilateral, but the so-called *ie*'s lineage (Nakano, 1956, 1981). Lévi-Strauss insisted that dual lineal or ambilineal was only one of the undifferentiated systems, and he correctly insisted that the descent could be distinguished from a particular viewpoint of each researcher, and that the rule of same descent had been named after different names of the descent, so the exchange

3 It seems to me that the *dadia* is not *la maison*, but a variation of *la maison*.

of women was closed, determined by rank and power in a hierarchical society (Lévi-Strauss, 1983a: 133-4). Lévi-Strauss referred to Japanese society, but unfortunately he treated only the Fujiwara-*ke*'s marriage, namely cross-cousin marriage in the Heian period and did not take the Japanese *ie* for a variation of *la maison*. After Lévi-Strauss came to Japan in 1977 for the first time, he rarely talked about the Japanese *ie* during being in Japan. It may be said that he tried to introduce *la maison* into an ethnographic typology. In Lévi-Strauss' discussion of *la maison*, he clearly asserted his opinion that those primitive societies have embryonic forms of *maison* and that it was relevant to the land (Lévi-Strauss, 1984). That Lévi-Strauss had an interest in history as well as in primitive societies was the reason he gained his idea of *la maison*. One has often had the idea that history and structure are opposites since Lévi-Strauss used the concept of structure as an ahistorical concept. But Lévi-Strauss had a common interest with historians, for example those of the Annales school. His interest in the royal families in the *Genji Monogatari* in Japan and the royal families in France is thought to be an expression of this historical interest. But he began by saying that the dualistic theory of structure and event had to be overcome, that it was necessary to have a dialogue between anthropology and history, and that anthropology has a common interest and issue with history (Lévi-Strauss, 1983b). But Lévi-Strauss apparently changed his way of thinking about marriage and succession. He had first analyzed the successions of many ethnic groups on the basis of the binary operation of the human mind, for example, as in *Les Structures élémentaires de la parenté*. But nowadays he has not considered *la maison* in the universal operation of the human mind. That

is to say, he has not analyzed these problems structurally. He did so in a social and cultural perspective. Above all, he conceived *la maison* for integrating the paradox of filiation and alliance, exogamy and endogamy, patrilineal and matrilineal rights, heredity and selection. He felt that “a new type of institution transcending the traditional categories of ethnographic theory had emerged” (Lévi-Strauss, 1984: 239). He treated *la maison* as this new type transcending the paradox of anthropological categories, but he has not developed it as a structural theory. As the descent concept had been used in several meanings by researchers, it brought confusion. Lévi-Strauss began to use the concept of *maison* instead of that of descent. Thus from a world perspective the Japanese *ie* is one of the variations of *la maison*. When one develops and analyzes the theory of *la maison* in a structural perspective, the sociological research of Aruga on the Japanese *ie* will have value. In the case of Lévi-Strauss' structuralism, the structure has a position on the ideational level, while in Aruga it has a position on the behavioral level. We can make some revisions of Lévi-Strauss' structuralism on the ideational level in order to develop structuralism, but we can apply these revisions to the behavioral level. The sociological method of Aruga, for example his typology on the Japanese *ie* is, I believe, one of the possibilities that structuralism can develop.

Conclusions

Many Japanese sociologists and ethnologists insisted that the *ie* was a particular form of family in Japan. Above all, some ethnologists had mistaken the lineage of *ie* as patrilineal. Nowadays this misunder-

standing has been revised (Nakano, 1981). The *ie* cannot be grasped by the concept of descent. Lévi-Strauss has also put *la maison* in place of the concept of descent. *La maison* has been found in parts of east Asia, for example, China, Korea, and Japan, but *la maison* cannot be found in the southeast Asia, for example, Thailand and Philippines. However, Lévi-Strauss has affirmed that the *dadia* is *la maison* (Lévi-Strauss, 1984:198). In east Indonesia, Endo newly found *ie* and grasped *itin kan* as *ie* (Endo, 1986). It is clear that *ie* can, in this way, be valid in understanding family or kinship in a world perspective.

Lévi-Strauss had insisted: "I therefore claim to show, not how men think in myths, but how myths operate in men's minds without their being aware of the fact" (Lévi-Strauss, 1964: 20). Lévi-Strauss' structuralism says that man is not an agent creating myths, but myths utter their structures through man. Likewise the *ie*'s members do not form the *ie*; the *ie* makes the *ie*'s members perform their roles. Householders or family members do not possess material and immaterial wealth of the *ie* in each generation, but the *ie* or *la maison* itself really possesses these ones. That is to say, in Lévi-Strauss' case an agent is the myth and in Aruga's case the *ie*. However, Lévi-Strauss has not researched the variations of *la maison* in a structural analysis as he did in the variations of myths. Aruga had arranged the variations of *ie* without knowing about structuralism and had researched the cultural peculiarity, namely structure, through it. Aruga is not a structuralist, but the method which Aruga constructed is the same as Lévi-Strauss' structuralism. In this sense the sociology of Aruga can be said to be a structural method from a structuralist perspective. If we try to analyze *la maison* in a structural perspective, it is worth-

while to refer to the sociology of Aruga. The *ie* is not same with *la maison*, but both are variations each other. As Aruga's method was based on reality, it is also important to revise structuralism from the standpoint of empirical science.

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