

COMMENTARY

ASPECTS OF A YEAR IN JAPAN: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH

'Cherries, cuckoo,
Moon, snow - soon
The year vanishes.'

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I. Preliminaries

I should not normally consider writing such a piece as the present essay.¹ I was invited to do so, though, by one of the editors of *JASO*, and it would have been churlish to refuse. Furthermore, I

* Sugiyama (1647-1738) was born and lived in Edo, later renamed Tokyo, where he managed the family fish business which was patronised by the shogunal household. In the present essay, the Japanese practice of putting the family name first is followed. Japanese authors listed in the References, however, are given a comma after the family name, following Western practice. On the Japanese appreciation of the transient as noteworthy, beautiful, and also as a cause for sorrow, see, e.g., Valentine (1986: 118-19).

¹ I owe much to Ms Ursula Lytton (Rheinisch-Westfälisch-Technische Hochschule, Aachen, FRG, and a Visiting Scholar at Keio University), who has discussed the matters alluded to below with me at length. I also wish to acknowledge the instruction I have had, especially methodically, from *Exemplars* (Needham 1985), even though it is not

have now been living and working in Japan for a little more than a year,² and it is a pleasure to be able to acknowledge in print my gratitude and my debt to the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) for its beneficence in establishing the research fellowship to which it elected me for two years; to the British Academy for recommending me to the Society for appointment; to my referees in England for supporting my application for election to the post; and to Keio University and my co-host scientists there [Professors (Sensei) Minobe and Yamamoto] for providing me with, among much else, such congenial working conditions.

It was a relief, early in 1985, to be given the prospect and, later that year, the opportunity of getting out of the enervating political and intellectual climate of Mrs Thatcher's second administration; I owe this opportunity almost wholly to the people and the bodies I have mentioned, and I should not want it thought by them, nor by others, that any of what follows indicates anything other than a grateful recognition of that debt. In any case, to save possible embarrassment, names have generally been omitted; where they are used, except, of course, in references and in note 1, they are fictitious.

It could be argued that this past year constitutes a period of field research. The data which a social anthropologist (or comparativist [Needham 1981: 94]) collects during such a period he or she expects, and is generally expected, to publish. I should like the present essay, the second which I have written about Japan, to be considered such a report.³

Smith writes (1983: 48; cf. Bachnik 1986: 53 & n.2, 71) that 'most scholars who deal with Japanese society place at the center of their scheme of Japanese values something usually called a sense of hierarchy. Less thoroughly analysed is this sense of hierarchy in action.' The present essay does not get bogged down in the disputable concept 'hierarchy' (but see sect. VI, below); but it considers the ways in which a number of themes which appear to be characteristic of the Japanese form of life, though not exclusively so, are evinced in experiences I have had over the past year. These themes are of two kinds: conceptual and formal. Sections II to VIII consider the former; sections IX to XI address

cited in the present study. This study was read in draft by Frank Hoff (Associate Professor of Asian Studies, University of Toronto) and by Joy Hendry (Lecturer in Anthropology and Contemporary Japanese Society, Oxford Polytechnic, and a Visiting Lecturer at Keio), to whom I am gratefully obliged for their comments and advice. Any errors remain my responsibility.

² I arrived in Japan at the end of August 1985; the present essay was written at the beginning of October 1986.

³ The first (Duff-Cooper forthcoming, a) is a comparative study of the Balinese and the Japanese forms of life.

the latter; and section XII concludes the piece.⁴

The consideration of such themes is the normal task of the social anthropologist and as such requires no justification. The reader may care to bear in mind, though, that the situations in which these themes are discernible arose in spite of my deciding, from the start, to follow Confucius who, according to Tzu-Kung, when he was in a fresh country was 'cordial, frank, courteous, deferential' (cf. *Analects*, I.10) in his dealings with people there. I should have known that English, or Balinese, patterns of behaviour would not generally be appropriate in Japan;⁵ but, after all, we advance our understanding of a form of life, when we are in the field, as much by the mistakes we make as in other ways, so that perhaps my failure to keep always in mind an elementary lesson of comparativism - that forms of life are relative - was not all to the bad.

II. *Gaikokujin*

This word, colloquially *gaijin*, means literally 'foreign (*gai*) country (*okoku*) person (*jin*)', hence 'foreigner'. Miller writes (1982: 159) that 'the word *gaijin*...is never a compliment, but for that matter, it is not actually a put-down either; it is just the way you say foreigner in Japanese.' Contrasted with insiders (*nakama*), a foreigner is an outsider (*yosomono*). By Richie's account (1983: 104), *yosomono* implies 'distance, coolness, and a degree of scorn'; and while a Japanese person may have many co-insiders, so to say - the other members of his or her family, school, university, factory, office, city, county, prefecture, and ultimately all other Japanese people (see sect. X, below) - 'there is only one kind of *yosomono* and...he [or she] has only one quality: he is unwelcome.' On this account, and by association, in Japanese ideology foreigners are, at least, distant, scorned, and unwelcome.

⁴ The literature about these concepts and about the Japanese form of life generally is, of course, very large. So as not to clutter the text distractingly, references have been kept to the minimum. Smith's 'Bibliography' (1983: 153-68) is a most useful introduction to the literature about Japan in English.

⁵ I carried out field research for about twenty-one months between 1979 and 1981 with Balinese people on Lombok, NTB, Indonesia. This work was funded by awards from the Emslie Horniman Anthropological Scholarship Fund of the RAI and by the Social Science Research Council of Great Britain, to which bodies I am most grateful for their support. On the Balinese of Lombok, see Duff-Cooper 1983 and the studies listed in the 'References' to Duff-Cooper 1986a. For the important role of the SSRC in furthering research on Southeast Asia in the 1960s and 1970s, see Carey 1986: 7.

A question which arises is, distant in what sense? It has been argued (Duff-Cooper forthcoming, a) that, rather as in the ideology of the Balinese on Lombok (Duff-Cooper 1986b, 1986c), 'distant' means distant ideologically and generally physically from a centre of reference, relative to some other class. Thus of two entities *a* and *b*, say, the entity which is located closer to the centre of reference is in that context pre-eminent. The greater the disparity in the standing of *a* and *b* relative to the centre, the greater the asymmetry of the relations that obtain between *a* and *b* (cf., e.g., Duff-Cooper 1985). The form that a centre of reference takes depends upon the context in question (see also sect. VI, below).

In Japan, one such centre is, of course, Tokyo; and another is probably constituted by the ultimate exercisers of the mystical and jural powers to which the Japanese are subject (at least in theory), viz. by the Emperor (Tennō) in his palace at the heart of Tokyo and the government, concentrated in the Diet.

It would require a long argument to make the point, but perhaps we can turn to an analogous line of thought: the leading Japanese political scientist and theorist, Maruyama Masao, suggests (1969: 12), most plausibly, that in the 'common-place' ill-treatment of their prisoners and others by the Japanese during the Pacific War, 'the problem of relative position was always involved: in fine, the perpetrator [of the ill-treatment] was conscious of the comparative proximity of himself and his victim to the ultimate value, that is, to the Emperor'; and in present-day Japan, the notion of closeness to or distance from a centre has a similar heuristic value. A foreigner, that is, to bring the argument up to date, can never overcome, except temporarily and sporadically, the distance which separates him or her from the centres which in various forms constitute the ideals of Japanese social life.⁶ As Miller expresses it (1982: 215), the foreigner cannot, 'by definition as well as by universal social agreement, be an active participating member of any recognized shop-talk sector of society', i.e. can never become an insider.

Yasamono is cognate with *kemono* 'animal', but literally a thing (*mono*) covered with hair. An association is made by many Japanese of *kemono* with Caucasians: the image of a Caucasian with 'a tall, stout, hairy body and large hands and feet seems to evoke ...an association with... "strong sexuality" or "animality"...' (Wagatsuma 1967: 422; cf. p. 426).⁷

⁶ A foreigner may be invited to take the place of the most important person present, i.e. in front of the central post (*daikokubashira*) of the *tokonoma* (cf., e.g., Moeran 1986: 235, Fig.1), at dinner, but the honour is, of course, only temporary and depends for its impact upon the fact that he or she should not be so seated. Generally, this position is occupied by the head of the household (*ie*), or by the oldest such head present at the gathering.

⁷ 'Mono even when used in reference to other humans retains its original meaning of "thing"' (Richie 1983: 104).

Not only may such foreigners have beastly associations: 'Japanese ambivalence toward a large body and large limbs is reflected in some proverbs: "Wisdom cannot fill up too large a body" (Big body, little wit); "A fool has big feet" or "Seeds of prickly ash are tiny but peppery" (A small man is shrewd and wise)' (ibid.: 442 n.50; cf. sect. X, below).

As well as having associations with animality and with little wit, the Caucasian may also be held to have a skin which is "'ugly" in texture and quality, thus maintaining a Japanese skin supremacy...' (ibid.: 434). Furthermore, of course, many foreigners cannot speak Japanese and hence cannot communicate with the many Japanese people who, for one reason or another, find themselves unable to speak a foreign language; but then foreigners are not supposed to be able to speak Japanese: Miller indeed, goes so far as to suggest that 'a foreigner speaking Japanese amounts to the public performance of an unnatural act.... And such flaunting of the natural order can only result in natural retribution. Hence any sensible person shuns direct identification with such episodes, not to mention the foreigners who carry on in this outrageous fashion' (1982: 159). Generally, further, foreigners do not know the ways in which it is proper to behave in the complex world of Japanese social intercourse. In all these regards, and in others too, foreigners are 'not like others [sc. the Japanese]' (*jūminami*), but are peculiar and odd (*okashi*). Few Japanese want to be - or to be associated with what is considered - peculiar and odd, any more than they want to be outsiders: for outsiders are 'nothing at all' (Hendry 1984a: 117; cf. Nakane 1974: 128).⁸

None of this means that the Japanese are xenophobes, though, according to Suzuki Takao (1986); rather, they suffer from 'xenophygia' and wish only to flee from foreigners, or conversely to keep foreigners at a distance. Thus, at Keio, there are two blocks of rooms, somewhat isolated from the rooms of regular Keio academics, which are assigned to foreigners; foreigners are generally not allowed to teach, except under the supervision of a Japanese academic, unless they are teaching their native language, perhaps because it is feared that they will pollute the system, rather as Goodman's forthcoming work shows that returnee children are thought to do (cf. Wargo 1986);⁹ and only very rarely are foreigners apprised of events and invited to functions which take place periodically, which Japanese academics are apprised of and

⁸ At the place cited, Nakane writes: 'According to the Japanese sociological conception, ego and his family are situated at the center which is surrounded by the first category: people who meet each other every day. And then there is the second category: ['those whose background is fairly well-known' (ibid.: 124)]. One's sociological world terminates with this category. The rest [of the Japanese] don't matter. They may be for us an American or an Englishman.'

⁹ Alluded to in Hendry (forthcoming). Roger Goodman is a Junior Research Fellow at the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies, University of Oxford.

to which they are invited as a matter of course. But then, they are insiders, with whom other insiders cooperate and have fun, because they belong; foreigners, who are on the outside, are left out and in certain circumstances ostracised (cf. Hendry 1984a: 116).

But it is not always like this. My Japanese friend introduced me to his parents and other close relatives with whom we stayed over a period of nearly a month; he has taken pains to include me in his social life; while his friends go out of their way (as it seems to me) to impress upon me that they are my friends too. Some of my Japanese colleagues at Keio have invited me to teach (under their watchful eye), have read and commented upon my work, have encouraged me to take up the study of Japanese and of other aspects of Japanese life, have suggested that I try to stay on after my fellowship ends in August 1987, and in all manner of other ways have given the lie to the picture sketched above.

Yet this ambivalence is also consonant with the ambivalence of strangers and visitors in Japanese 'folk religion': 'While people belonging to the inside are classified into various categories, outsiders and strangers are undifferentiated. Therefore when they enter uchi (inside) space they are considered potentially dangerous, both in a physical and a mystical sense.... Nevertheless, strangers, visitors, and drift materials coming from far away or from the other world can bring good luck to people' (Yoshida 1981: 95). Whether strangers and visitors are associated with fear and danger (cf. Hendry 1984a: 116) or whether they bring good luck depends, like so much else in Japan, upon the context.¹⁰

III. On

The original newspaper advertisement for the fellowship to which I was subsequently elected stipulated that applicants should have close relations with a Japanese academic and, in the nature of the case, that academic should preferably be a senior one. This stipulation is a reference to the *oyabun/kobun* relation, the kind of relation which should obtain between a teacher and his pupil, a master and his apprentice, a criminal and his accomplice, a section chief in an office or factory and his subordinates, and a landlord and a tenant.

Now, Yoshida reports (1981: 88) that 'in many northeastern [Japanese] villages strangers and outsiders are not permitted to settle without establishing fictive kinship relations with one of

¹⁰ Yoshida also suggests, clearly rightly in this case, that 'strangers, visitors, and flotsam...are also the marginal, "liminal" figures or things which mediate between the world of uchi (inside) and the world of yoso (outside),...or between "this world" and the "other world".' However, 'the ambiguity of the Japanese attitude towards foreigners stems from a very basic set of cultural concepts similar in its essential structure to notions of "stranger" found in other cultures' (1981: 96, 97, *post*).

the prominent families of the village. The newcomers' status is then defined in terms of the pre-existing village social structure.' This is what Hendry calls (1984b: 132) "the fix", 'the way in which people and groups are fixed into various positions in [Japanese] society by means of language and ritual ... using ritual in the widest sense of the word'.

In Japan, the visiting card (*meishi*) gives, in the order in which it is read, the name of one's organisation, one's position in it, one's name and degree, and the address of the organisation, as well as (in many cases) one's office and home telephone numbers. Part of the ritual of meeting people is an exchange of cards, and such cards are an essential aspect of any business or professional person's position in Japanese life. One of the first things my host scientist, Yamamoto Sensei, took me to do was to order a box of *meishi*; another thing we did, consonant with my position in Japanese life, to which the cards attested, was to open a bank account with a smartish bank.

The *oyabun/kobun* relationship, which appears to have developed in the late feudal period (*circa* 1700), is an analogue of, among others, the emperor/subject and the parent/child, especially father/child, relationships.¹¹ An essential element of these relationships is *on*, what Doi calls (1974: 151) 'one's spiritual debt to an emperor and one's parents...'; more generally, '*on*' refers at once to 'a favor granted by A to B and to a resultant debt B owes to A' (Lebra 1974: 194).

I found myself involved in a number of these relationships: with the JSPS, as my employer; with my co-host scientists, especially Yamamoto Sensei, who is a social anthropologist; and with my landlord.

The JSPS, first, had done me the great favour of appointing me to a research fellowship - which at the initiative of my co-host scientists, especially Yamamoto Sensei and the then Dean of the Faculty of Letters, was advanced to a Visiting Lectureship at Keio - and were paying me; offered to pay a substantial sum for me to learn Japanese at a good language school; and had found me a delightful, large, furnished house to live in, for which the Society pays seven-eighths of the rent.

Naturally, I was most grateful for these gifts, and thought that by working hard at what I had proposed to work at when I applied for the post, I should in some measure be able to pay my debt. Things were not to be so simple, however.

It was agreed, within my first ten days in Japan, that I should take the next beginners' language course at the International Center of Keio University. Registration for this course had already closed. However, Yamamoto Sensei spoke to the Dean of the Faculty of Letters on my behalf, who wrote a personal letter to the Director of the International Center, asking that I be ad-

¹¹ The suggestion that these relationships follow the 'model' of the family cannot be sustained if it implies that they were extended from the family to other social situations: 'ritual or fictitious kinship customs are known to have been practised since the beginning of Japan's history...' (Ishino 1953: 698).

mitted to the course. The Director agreed, the JSPS paid for registration and for the course - half the normal fee, as I was attached to Keio - and I was enrolled.

A week before the course began, the students were assembled, allotted their classes, and given the course books. The teacher presiding over our class (most of the members of which were not beginners, but had studied Japanese before) gave us our books, and said that as the course did not begin for another week, we could have a holiday until then. I used this period to complete an essay (Duff-Cooper 1986d) that I was writing on the Balinese. When the course began, though, it transpired that the teacher had been having a small joke at the students' expense - foreigners are, of course, notorious for taking holidays (cf. sect. X, below). What we really should have been doing during that week was learning one of the Japanese syllabaries and preparing the first lesson, as became clear when we were given dictation after some two hours studying Japanese (in my case). Language classes are cumulative; clearly I could not catch up, and in any case the amount of work which, it became clear, was required for the course meant that I should not be able to continue working on the Balinese form of life.¹² Add to that the fact that to get to class on time it was necessary to travel during the morning rush hour, it may be appreciated why I resolved at lunchtime on the first day to abandon the classes.

I wrote to the JSPS, with copies to the International Center and to Yamamoto Sensei, apologizing for leaving the course, but mentioning the matter of the teacher's joke (which I still consider highly irresponsible), and suggesting that perhaps the Center could refund the money which it had been paid by the JSPS (I would pay for the books).

In doing so, and at a stroke, I caused the JSPS, the Dean and Yamamoto Sensei to lose their faces (*menboku o ushinau*) and be ashamed (*menboku ai*) in the eyes of the International Center; and to make the Center and its teacher similarly without face (*menboku ga nai*) and embarrassed as regards the Society, the Dean and Yamamoto Sensei. That money was involved exacerbated all this. To put it mildly, no one was pleased. But there was a way out: I could apologize to all concerned and take the next course, and face would be restored all round. I was not, though, prepared to give up so much time to studying Japanese when I was not supposed (as I thought, but see below) to be working on Japan. I apologized to the JSPS and the others, but, having discussed the matter with Yamamoto Sensei, refused to take the course in as polite a

¹² It should be mentioned that one of the conditions of this Fellowship is that the holder should not concern himself with Japan; also that the *Handbook for Foreign Scholars 1986/7*, published by the Keio University International Center, now reads (p.25) that 'being intensive courses intended mainly for those students who wish to enter the graduate schools of our [*sic*] university, these [Japanese language courses provided by the Center] may not be suitable for scholars'.

way as I could. The Center agreed to refund some money to the JSPS, and I thought the matter was closed.

Some months later, I decided to move from the house which the Society had found me (which according to Yamamoto Sensai was 'incredible')¹³ to a smaller, warmer flat closer to Keio. The reaction of my contact at the JSPS (let us call this person Ishikawa San) to the news and to the subsequent 'legal' arrangements was one which I understood as just bureaucratic pettiness, an aspect of the 'irrational or malicious conduct' which, Nakane suggests (1984: 128), 'is used [by some Japanese people] to spite others', i.e. one's 'enemies', people with whom one is involved in 'negative' interpersonal relationships. I had been told by Yamamoto Sensei that the Society was very bureaucratic, and I became more and more irritated by Ishikawa San's series of (what I took to be) pointless demands, designed to make life difficult; finally, I am afraid that I shouted at Ishikawa San down the phone. Now, as Ryan says (forthcoming), no matter where one does fieldwork, one can afford to stage an all-stops-out temper tantrum when one has carefully gauged its potential effects, but one never loses one's temper. How right he is. Within about a week of this outburst I had been summoned to the offices of the JSPS by a letter from Ishikawa San's section chief, which was at once reprimanding and threatening, to discuss my research and to make sure that my time in Japan proved beneficial for me and my future.

This hinged upon my relations with the Society, which Ishikawa San clearly thought needed rectifying, and with Yamamoto Sensei, whom I had known in England. I then considered, as I still do, both him and his wife and son friends of mine (but see sect. VI, below), and I like his work a lot. He had suggested that it might be a good idea if I tried to do some fieldwork in Japan, and he had obtained the informal agreement of Ishikawa San to it (see note 12). I was aware that it was thought by many senior anthropologists in Britain and elsewhere that doing fieldwork with at least two different peoples was good for an anthropologists' development, and I readily agreed; but I saw it as very much secondary to my work on the Balinese, about whom I had by then begun a monograph.

In Japan, university professors are of very high occupational status, ranking third after medical doctors and prefectural governors, who rank first and second respectively (Tsuji-mura 1972: 211, 213). In the traditional Japanese family, moreover, what a father suggested a child do, the latter generally did. So, when Yamamoto Sensei suggested I do fieldwork in Japan, this was more in the nature of a directive than a suggestion. Suzuki Takao writes (1976: 266) that 'We [Japanese], used to assimilation and dependency [*amae* (sect. XII, below)], expect to project ourselves onto the other, and expect him to empathise with us. We have great difficulty with the idea that so long as our addressee is not Japanese we can't expect to have our position understood without

¹³ It is true that in terms of what most Japanese have in the way of accommodation in Tokyo and in other urban centres in Japan, I am very fortunate indeed.

strong self-assertion'. The converse is also true: I did not understand the intent of what Yamamoto Sensei was saying.

In both these areas, therefore, I thought that I was being loyal in return for the benevolence which the JSPS and Yamamoto Sensei had shown to me. But not only had I made them lose their faces, look small and demeaned; I had also, it turned out, not shown myself grateful for their favours, by choosing to leave the house (which subsequently I did not) and by not preparing myself for, and then doing, fieldwork in Japan.

This last has now been remedied by my enrolling for a course in Japanese, and by an all-too-brief visit to Tokunoshima, in the Amami Islands of the Japanese southwestern archipelago (Nansei Shotō). But just to show how difficult these matters are, even the enrolment for the language course was not altogether unproblematical. From my point of view it was convenient, and its being free meant that the JSPS could be saved further expenditure after I had (as Ishikawa San pointed out in a very curt letter) wasted a fairly large sum by dropping out of the Keio course. From the point of view of the JSPS, however, it seems that I had chosen to enrol with a rival organisation and had turned down the Society's gift of money for a course. In Britain, refusing a gift is generally not on; in Japan it is very impolite (*shitsurei na*) indeed. As Lebra points out, 'an on must be accepted with gratitude since it is an evidence of a giver's benevolence or generosity...'; to have one's offer of a favour refused means loss of face (1974: 194, 199).

In the circumstances, though, I think that it is not entirely out of place to note here that 'an important aspect of this type of duty [*giri* (see sect. V, below) with which *on* is closely bound up]...is that the person to whom it is owed has no right to demand that it be fulfilled. A failure to fulfill such a duty would incur great loss of face ... but it would involve equal loss of face were the expected recipient to point this [failure] out' (Hendry, forthcoming).

That one has a debt to a landlord for letting one somewhere to live is not an idea with which I am in sympathy, especially when it suggests, as in Japan, that it constitutes a debt which cannot be repayed by paying the rent and looking after the property in a normal way. However, my landlord here did not ask me for the usual deposit, partly non-returnable and equivalent to about three months rent, when I signed the contract with him. In my case, this would have amounted to about a thousand pounds sterling, and not to have to pay it (which I could not have done anyway) was a considerable gift.

My landlord and his wife also used to ask me to dine often at their house with friends of theirs, asked me out to concerts and the theatre, and at Christmas (the landlord's wife and children are Catholics) sent me a box of expensive presents. But I began to find these attentions onerous, because, of course, I became deeper and deeper in their debt in spite of my efforts to repay what I was given. Kindness was being forced on me (*shinset-su no oshiuri*), but this time the slight irritation caused by these unwelcome kindnesses (*arigata-meiwaku*) was a legitimate

reaction in Japan (cf. Suzuki, T. 1984: 168). Moreover, while my landlord's wife made what I took to be slightly pejorative remarks about me wanting to be independent, the Japanese equate 'the gained on to sold freedom', and take 'pride in being unbound by any on' (Lebra 1974: 197). While relations with Ishikawa San and the JSPS, therefore, deteriorated to the point where I dealt with another employee there for many months, and while I was treated in a way which appears to be a form of ostracism (*mura hachibu*)¹⁴ by Yamamoto Sensei with whom, until very recently, I had had only very infrequent contact by letter for some months, especially following the episode alluded to in sect.V (below), relations with my landlord and his wife, who count me, as they have told me, as a friend of theirs, are now less stifling, but they have never reached the nadirs which relations with the JSPS and with Yamamoto Sensei reached.

It is noteworthy, to conclude this section, that in this latter connection outsiders are associated with, among other things, quarrels (*kenka*), and that the opposite of cooperation is ostracism (Hendry 1984a: 116).

IV. *Tatemae* and *Honne*

These words apply respectively to what might be said to be surface phenomena and to what lies beneath, to 'surface reality' and 'inner feelings', to 'ideal' and 'actual' (cf. Koschmann 1974: 99). It should be noted, though, that 'honne (as inner reality) is no more "real" than *tatemae* (as surface or appearance) for the Japanese. Both *tatemae* and *honne* are considered equally "real", as are all expressions of *omote* [form, formality, difference from everydayness] and *ura* [content, informality, everydayness]' (Bachnik 1986: 67).

It has already been said that one of the conditions of the post which I hold is that the work should have nothing to do with the systematic study of Japan. Informally, however, not only was I wanted to study Japan, but I was reprimanded by the JSPS for not doing what, apparently, I was not supposed to do; and Yamamoto Sensei was 'dissatisfied' with me in spite of me working at what I had proposed to work at.

Anyone who considers working in Japan or with Japanese people should be aware of this distinction between *tatemae* and *honne*: it appears to pervade Japanese life. The legal system, for instance, appears in practice to diverge in many regards from what formally one would expect to be the case (cf. e.g., Hendry forthcoming, Ch. 12); and in spite of Japan appearing to be a democracy, one influential commentator writes, not altogether without reason to be sure, that

¹⁴ Relations are reduced to the barest minimum (*hachibu*, i.e. one eighth) of those that normally obtain.

we mistake the open, democratic forms of government and politics in Japan for the substance of Japanese life and culture, both of which continue to impress me as being ultimately and eminently totalitarian to their core.... Perhaps the paradox of a compelling mythical fixation [of the uniqueness of the Japanese and their form of life] managing to flourish in the midst of an ostensibly democratic society is, after all, only apparent, not real, because the society is actually not essentially democratic (Miller 1982: xi).

That is, political and other kinds of power are often exercised more by unelected bureaucrats than by ministers and other elected politicians or other kinds of professional - an example, of course, of the *tatemae/honne* distinction.

Behaviour which is *tatemae* (including what one says and how one says it) is, of course, dependent upon the context in which one is involved; and a sign of social maturity in Japan is one's ability to behave in the ways demanded of one by convention in the various contexts in which one is implicated. That is, one should be able to adopt various masks (cf., e.g., Kumon 1982: 23), and it is one of these which one loses when one loses face.

What is *honne* is generally kept under wraps. However, on the various occasions when one is socialising with one's closest associates - one's fellow students, club members, colleagues, etc. - one's *honne* thoughts may be revealed. Anything said and done while one is drunk is supposed to be forgiven, but it is not necessarily forgotten (cf. Moeran 1986: 240-1).

In my case, when talking about our respective first periods of fieldwork with a young Japanese social anthropologist, who had taken his doctorate under a leading British social anthropologist at one of Britain's most prestigious universities, I remarked that one of the best ways of finding out about a form of life was to have a close relationship with a native of the society. I said (of course) that the feasibility of doing so depended, like almost everything else to do with field research, upon the society in question, and upon its collective representations; but that I had been fortunate to find such a relationship on Lombok (it had, indeed, been encouraged by various otherwise uninterested people where I lived), and that I was looking forward to doing so in Japan.

The reaction of my interlocutor made it plain that I should not be saying such things to him. They were, as it now seems to me, part of those actual as opposed to ideal aspects of our work which are not to be discussed publicly with a near-stranger. However, when I also said that not only did I not like singing in public in *karaoke* bars but also that, unlike many Japanese, I was not generally prepared to do so, even at the risk of being thought strange and peculiar (*hen na*), as against those who were having fun and contributing to the fun of others, he said that he also felt and behaved in the same ways. Yet, on another occasion, when I was with him and some of his colleagues, my reply to a question on this topic from one of the latter along those lines was not well received. I was, I think, allowing what should have been

tatemae to be overly tinged with *honne*, and was, of course, again branding myself as unlike others. It is a question, though, how far one should go in following the injunction that, as Aquinas put it, 'He who associates with others should in general conform to their way of living'. Like much else, it seems, each case must be decided as it comes. In this case, I did not much want to be a quasi-insider; had I, it would have been necessary to sing.

V. *Giri* and *Ninjo*

Yamamoto Sensei and his more advanced students were going to carry out field research in a somewhat isolated rural community for about a week, and I was asked to go along. I was sceptical, to be frank, about the value of such an outing, but it was an opportunity to get closer to the students, to see how a Japanese anthropologist conducted fieldwork, and to see another part of the country; an interpreter had been arranged to accompany me; and anyway, I could not refuse - indeed, I was looking forward to going. A couple of days after we would have got back to Tokyo, a friend of mine would arrive to stay for a week, *en route* from Australia to China. Then the dates of the trip were changed, and clashed with those of my friend's visit. He was coming to see me, he could not change his itinerary, and I could not leave Tokyo a day after he arrived. Clearly I could not make the trip. I told Yamamoto Sensei so. A few weeks before we should have gone, one of the students told me [and Ms Lytton (see n.1), who was also to go] that there were not enough hotel rooms where we were going, so that we could not go. I rang the interpreter to tell her. I then received a sharp phone call from Yamamoto Sensei, whom the interpreter had contacted, saying that he had been 'embarrassed' by my not going. I told him that apparently there were not enough hotel rooms, which appeared to pacify him.

Here, *giri* (one's duty) is pitted against *ninjo* (one's private predispositions). The former should take precedence over the latter, and, indeed, in the episode just recorded Yamamoto Sensei clearly assumed that in spite of what I had said I would not allow the visit of a friend to interfere with my 'duty' to go along with him and his students.

Japanese tend to do so: on three occasions, friends whom we had invited for dinner at our house have telephoned, often as little as half-an-hour before they were due to arrive, to say that they had to go on working and could not therefore come; and once, as I was leaving to go to dinner at a friend's place, he called me to say he had to work and that therefore he was postponing the meeting.

This prevalence of *giri* has parallels with attitudes prevalent in Japan before the War: an excerpt from the *Shimin no Michi* [*The Way of the Subject*], compiled and distributed by the Ministry of Education in 1941, for instance, has it that

it is unforgiveable to consider private life as the realm of individual freedom where we can do as we like, outside the purview of the state. A meal at the table or a suit of clothes, none is ours alone, nor are we purely in a personal capacity when at play or asleep. All is related to the concerns of the state. Even in our private lives we should be devoted to the emperor [who manifested a perfect identity between self and nation] and never lose our attitude of service to him (cf. Matsumoto 1978: 48).

One should, that is, sacrifice the self in service to the public (*messhi hōkō*); and my not putting my duty before my private interests (*jinzoku no shi*) was analogous to not fulfilling the dictates of *chū* (loyalty to the emperor) and of *kō* (filial piety). By not going on the trip I was, of course, like an employee refusing to work late because he had a (private) dinner engagement, defending the value of my personal rights and interests.

This pitting of the value of the private sphere against commitment to public value is an aspect of 'my-homism', which is 'a symbol of one way to protect their [young Japanese people's] individuality and personal integrity' (Tada 1978: 211). But such concepts, especially that of the individual as an independent entity equal to other individuals, run counter to 'traditional' Japanese values (Kawashima 1967: 274). Not only that, they run counter to the corporate interest 'to raise productivity by means of a hardworking labor force committed to larger profits for the company' (Tada 1978: 211). No wonder, then, that 'around 1963 or 1964 a fierce campaign was launched to brand my-homism a disgrace. The issue was discussed at a cabinet meeting, at which certain ministers [of the same party as that of the present administration] indignantly asserted that my-homism is harmful to the development of concern for public good and public interest, national defense, and love of country' (ibid.).

Similarly, in a 'traditional' Japanese family (*ie*) the main concern was to ensure the continuation and the prosperity of the *ie*. This meant, essentially, that there be an inheritor, which was contingent on marriage and a child or on adoption. One's personal feelings had to be subordinated to this end, and marriages (or adoptions) contracted for the good of the *ie*. A modern equivalent of this attitude is the view that a private relationship is only worth entering and sustaining if it enhances one's career (as I was advised by a very senior Professor at Keio when once I sought his advice); and the view that foreigners who live with a Japanese person - especially Caucasians who study Japan - do so because it enhances their *work*. Of course, it may do so, but it is to impute to foreigners what appear to be the instrumental rather than the expressive motives of most Japanese marriages to suggest that this is *the* reason for such relationships. The fact, further, that 'if anyone appears to act out of self-interest, rather than with human feeling [*ninjo*, affection] they would be subject to informal sanctions of disapproval' (Hendry, forthcoming) appears to be just another way of saying that duty should be pre-eminent. Suzuki Takao remarks (1984: 168) that 'the Japanese

themselves call their culture...*omoiyari no bunka*, lit., "consideration". This consideration appears to mean that one should put one's duty before one's private interests, that one should, therefore, fall in with what one's superiors require of one. For clearly, in the episodes recorded, the interests of those superiors' inferiors are not taken into consideration. To the contrary, they are ignored.¹⁵ Further, given that the Japanese also call theirs a 'guessing culture' (*sasshi no bunka*) (ibid.) - i.e. one should anticipate the needs and feelings of others, and especially of one's superiors on the above account - it is no surprise that foreigners, at the beginning of their close contact with Japanese people, fail adequately to anticipate (guess) and to take into account those interests, and thus find themselves in more or less serious conflict with those people.

To conclude this section, Koschmann suggests (1974: 103) that 'in modern [Japanese] society...*giri/ninjo* thinking is considered anachronistic', i.e. to smack of pre-War feudalism. I suggest, on the basis of my experience, that this is another example of the *tatemae/honne* distinction addressed above (sect. IV): publicly, 'duty' is dismissed as old fashioned; privately, the pre-eminence of 'duty' over everything else is still accorded its traditional place in Japanese ideology.

VI. *Kankei, Tsukiai*

Irokawa has it (1978: 250) that 'to persist in the fatalistic notion that Japan is a country of vertical relationships is to admit blindness'. Yet Yamamoto Sensei told me without qualification that Japan is a hierarchical society while Hendry (forthcoming, Conclusion) suggests that both 'hierarchy' and 'equality' [what Irokawa clearly thinks is the opposite of 'vertical' (cf. 1978: 255)] are among the principles which order Japanese society.

These apparently conflicting statements do not appear to mean much more than that any Japanese person is implicated in relationships (*kankei* or *tsukiai*) in which he or she is, to use the cant terms, superior to some people, equal to others, and inferior to yet others.

This social fact is hardly startling though it makes the point that Japanese society, like the Balinese form of life (e.g. Duff-Cooper 1985, 1986e) or Manggarai society (e.g. Needham 1980a, especially pp. 75-8), for instance, reveals different aspects depending upon the point of view adopted. Yet the words 'superior', 'equal' and 'inferior' are hardly informative, and as in other cases where these terms are employed, they require 'filling-in' by

¹⁵ It should not be overlooked that the inferior here implicated is an outsider. The question of whose interests are to be taken into account is different, i.e. more reciprocal, when the inferior(s) is (are) aspects of the same insider group as the superior(s) in question.

the very social facts which they are supposed to explicate before they acquire significant meaning; and when they are filled in, so to say, they probably become redundant. Not only that: such a return to social facts, although in consonance with the Japanese emphasis upon 'doing' and 'practice' in their relationships (Bachnik 1986: 50, 51), is precisely what analysis attempts to escape, so that comparison with other forms of life becomes more feasible.

The notion of a 'centre of reference' avoids these difficulties - as an artificial monothetically defined class it permits cross-cultural comparison - yet 'centres' are extensively polythetic and as such are amenable to the kind of analysis to which 'myth' and 'witchcraft' have been put, i.e. in terms of constituent elements and the patterns into which, kaleidoscope-like, they fall.

In the case of the Japanese form of social life, the centre appears to be an appropriate heuristic - and ideological and physical - distance from or closeness to a centre, relative to other entities, a way of creating more order among the multifarious social facts which constitute Japanese life.

Closeness to a centre is generally concomitant, in Japan, with relative age and with sex. Of two males or two females, *a* and *b*, of whom *a* is the older, *a* is closer ideologically and physically to the centre in question. Of two people, one male (*a*) who is younger than a female (*b*), *a* may be closer to the centre than *b*, but generally not vice versa. Where *b* is older than *a*, then *b* is likely to be closer to the centre.

These relations may be described in terms of degrees of asymmetry (see sect. XII, below), though the details have yet to be worked out. In my case, however, it may explain why my answer to the question of a student - 'Have you any friends in Japan?' 'Yes, Yamamoto Sensei is a friend of mine' - was met with disbelief: our standing relative to one another was so asymmetrical that it could not be. After all, the student was an insider and hence closer to the centre (in this case, Yamamoto Sensei himself) of the group, and not a friend of his, so how could an outsider be?

It might also explain why sometimes students displayed a forwardness and what might be, rather pompously, I know, called impertinence in their relations with me, while also attending my lectures and appearing to be interested in and instructed by them: my standing relative to Yamamoto Sensei was far closer than theirs by the criterion of academic qualifications and position; yet I had only just arrived and was meant to stay only two years. Permanency, i.e. gradually approximating the centre, is an aspect of relationships such as the teacher/pupil relation. Without that permanency, standing is a sham. A person whose standing is such can expect the treatment just alluded to, not the respectful attention, albeit laced with the fun appropriate to a group of insiders, which is given to someone who can reasonably expect to constitute a centre himself one day.

VII. *Omote* and *Ura*

More than once, Yamamoto Sensei made the point that I had entered Japan by way of its backside (*ura*), so to say, while a very senior British social anthropologist who had visited Japan earlier that year had entered it at the front (*omote*). This was a reference to him being expensively lodged and entertained, to him visiting Kyoto and the shrine at Ise - like the *kamidana* given over to Amerterasu, the Sun Goddess, and . . . ancestor of the Emperor - lecturing, and spending his one free day at the National Museum in Ueno (Tokyo). For my part, although I spent nearly every day working at Keio, I found my relaxation, and then only from time to time, in bars in Shinjuku's *sakariba* district, where one finds 'akachōchin (red lantern pubs), cabarets, bars, discos, no pantsu kissa (literally, "no-pants [on the waitresses] coffee-shops"), pachinko parlours, cinemas, strip shows, and many other kinds of places' (Linhart 1986: 198).

Yamamoto Sensei, who said that he felt responsible for my welfare in Japan, advised me to stay away from these places, though they are not dangerous so long as one does not behave foolishly. These facts are in consonance with front being to back as the formal is to the informal, as the sacred (*hare*) is to the profane (*ke*), and as the public (*oyake-goto*) is to the private (*watakushi-goto*). However, they do not appear to be consonant with 'outside' being associated with danger (*abunai*), the inside, with security (*anshin*). Yet such oppositions are, of course, context-dependent, and it is likely that, in this case, the formality of the British professor's visit to Japan is more plausibly associated with security, especially as he was generally accompanied, as I understand, by a group of Japanese professors who for the occasion of his visit constituted a group of insiders, and my visits to Shinjuku *ni-chamē* with danger, especially as I generally went unaccompanied.

My real mistake, here, was to make public what I should have kept to myself: Yamamoto Sensei later warned me that to keep something secret, one should confide in nobody. For a group of insiders, that is, there is no such thing as speaking in confidence with just one or two.

VIII. *Uchi* and *Soto*

We have come across the inside (*uchi*)/outside (*soto*) dyad frequently, so that little need be said about it here. One aspect of the distinction is that one should not, in Japan, bring disputes which properly belong inside to public (outside) notice (cf., e.g., Kawashima 1963: 45). People who do so are likely to be cast as outsiders themselves, and to be subjected to ostracism by their co-insiders. It is therefore very much to be hoped that, by writing this piece, I am not committing one more blunder in relations with Yamamoto Sensei, the JSPS, and others to whom I am indebted in Japan and elsewhere.

If I am, though, doubtless a mediator will come to the rescue, as in the past a very senior professor at Keio has mediated between Yamamoto Sensei and me; and as Yamamoto Sensei has mediated between the JSPS and Ishikawa San and me.

In the former case, the mediator first listened to my version of the problem, as I had approached him to act as a go-between; he explained this to Yamamoto Sensei, who then put his own views of the matter, which our mediator then put to me. He then made sure that Yamamoto Sensei and I were invited to a Keio end-of-year party, held in an old part of the University used only for ceremonial occasions, where we could re-establish cordial relations. This place might be thought an example of *en*, where intermediation and transition in general take place. It is fitting too that our mediator should have been senior even to Yamamoto Sensei (at Keio, at least) (and Yamamoto Sensei to Ishikawa San and me): 'just as mediation is valued, so are the mediators - persons, things or places - which embody the liminality: they relate to a level which is felt [by the Japanese] to be superior to the level of the particular terms which are connected through them' (Berque 1986: 106).

IX. *Opposition*

This relation within dyads - the constituent terms of which may of course be composed of either a single entity or of several entities, or of one of each kind - may be rendered in Japanese by *hanko*. The constituent terms may be called *hantai*, opposites. Kumon suggests (1982: 9) that 'Japanese tend to see these dualistic components of the world [such as good and bad, form and content, whole and parts, and so on] as being complementary, not conflicting'.

The relation of opposition, however, obtaining within a dyad does not entail that the two constituent terms of the dyad conflict with one another. The four Balinese estates (*varna*), for instance, are variously related one to another dyadically (e.g. Duff-Cooper 1984), and they may be said to be opposed one to another in various contexts. But they do not conflict: to the contrary, although members of the different estates naturally come into conflict from time to time. Kumon, that is, confuses the formal relation 'opposition' and the more substantive, sociological notion 'conflict'.¹⁶ In Japan, until the end of the Pacific War in 1945, at least, the Emperor and his subjects were opposed. This does not mean that they were in conflict, although there was, of course, conflict between individuals and groups of individuals and the state. It means, rather, that the Emperor and his subjects constituted a dichotomous unity, Japan. Under one aspect, as subjects of the Emperor, all the Japanese were 'equal' (cf., e.g., Kuno 1978: 63).

These days, other criteria render all Japanese people 'equal', that is to say, opposed (as a class) to all other peoples: they

¹⁶ Kumon is in good company when he confuses the substantive and the formal: Louis Dumont does so (Needham 1986: 166-8), and so does R.H. Barnes (Duff-Cooper 1986a: 221-2, n.20).

speak the same language (especially), are diligent and perseverant (as opposed to foreigners, who are idolent and give up easily), are concerned with detail (as opposed to foreigners, whose work, in this regard at least, is shoddy); and the unique homogeneity which is claimed for Japanese society (*tan-itsu minzoku*) renders the Japanese as a people unique (and, according to Mr Nakasone, the Prime Minister, more intelligent than more heterogeneous societies such as the United States - e.g. Wargo 1986; cf. sect. II, above). In these and many other ways, 'We Japanese' (as the phrase usually goes in English) are not only different from but superior to all other peoples. Of course, this self-asserted superiority is not new: Kitabake Chikafusa (1293-1354), a Shintoist, wrote long ago that 'Our Great Nippon is a Divine Nation. Our Divine Ancestors founded it; the Sun Goddess [Amerterasu, still honoured at Ise and in the *kamidana* (altar) to which many households give a prime place in the 'first' room of the house] let her descendants rule over it for a long time. This is unique to Our Nation; no other nation has the like of it. This is the reason why Our Nation is called "Divine Nation!"' (1925: 585); and the Japanese ultranationalism of the 1930s and 1940s was based on such a view.

In my case, this opposition of an entity against all others, and the attributed pre-eminence of the one over the many, has been evinced in three main ways. First, only graduates of Keio University may become tenured teachers there. All others must be Visiting. Every effort is made, that is, not to disturb the cultural homogeneity which is taken by members of Keio, especially those who teach there, to be better in every regard than that of other institutions, even the most distinguished. Of course, there is internal debate at Keio about the University and its future, but that debate is premised on the pre-eminence of Keio.

The second way in which this opposition has been evinced is in Yamamoto Sensei's derogation of the work of any social anthropologist or sociologist who does not belong to the group of anthropologists, consisting of his past and present students, of which he is the centre. Of course, there are a few prominent scholars in Britain, France, The Netherlands and the United States with whom Yamamoto Sensei is allied. But their very exclusivity makes the point clearer. Only 'we', of whom I am under this aspect a grateful honorary member, are doing work which is up to date, scholarly and imaginative, and which advances the subject. I draw no conclusions about the merits of this position, but simply point it out.

The third way is the distinction between males and females. Hendry alludes (1981: 21) to the 'basic inferiority' of women in Japan, and Yamamoto Sensei concurs with this view. In Honshū, at least, this inferiority is in accord with women's impurity relative to men.

Yet, there is expectably a problem here with 'inferiority' for example, at a party which Yamamoto Sensei's students and colleagues had at my house in December last year, the women mostly arrived first, with food and flowers, to arrange the tables and so on. The men arrived later with gifts of alcohol and other things

such as a calligraphic scroll and a small wooden chest of drawers. The men were seated at the top of the room, closest to the *daiko-kubashira* (above), the women at the lower end of the room, near the doors. As the party drew to a close, the women left first, in groups, while the men stayed on, leaving later or staying overnight.

Again, I was told that teaching women made one effete, but teaching men, strong-minded - a view which accords with Nakasone's publicly expressed opinion that Japanese women do not listen to his speeches when they are aired on television, but only pay attention to the colour of his tie (Suzuki, K. 1986); and, of course, with the general association of masculinity with what is hard and femininity with what is soft, among other things (e.g. Needham 1980b: 89-91).

A similar attitude is evinced by Japanese (male) academics' attitudes to Ms Lytton (see n.1). They find her pleasing company, but as she says with evident reason, they do not address to her the kinds of questions about her work which they address to me, nor in general do conversations with her have the same tone as they do with me.

There is clearly a distinction made between men and women in Japan, who are opposed as classes one to another. Women are generally inferior to men by virtue of the pre-eminence of the various aspects of Japanese life with which men are associated, i.e. residually. In any case, in the important areas of child-rearing and house-keeping, women are pre-eminent (Hendry 1986).

X. *Reversal*

This operation may be called *modoki* in Japanese, and it is evinced in various aspects of Japanese life (e.g. Yoshida 1986; Matsunaga 1986). In my case, when I was arranging to move to the new apartment alluded to above (sect. II), I had to get various documents from the owner of the apartment, so that the JSPS could pay the rent. I was asked, finally, to get evidence that the rent being asked for the apartment was 'fair', i.e. comparable with rents being asked for similar apartments in similar areas of Tokyo. When I protested that such evidence could not be got, on the ground that generally apartments in Japan are let unfurnished whereas mine was to be furnished, Ishikawa San at the JSPS was intransigent. I remonstrated that getting such evidence would be time-wasting, and that as I knew that the apartment was cheap after only a few months in Tokyo and as Yamamoto Sensei also thought so, Ishikawa San, a native of Tokyo, must also do so - all to no avail. When I mentioned all this to the (Japanese) owner of the flat, she offered to telephone the JSPS; her words, to the same effect as mine, were immediately accepted by Ishikawa San, even though she and the owner of the flat had had no contact prior to this telephone conversation, on the ground that I had misunderstood what Ishikawa San was asking for - only expectably, it might be thought, as a foreigner of little wit (I had not, in fact, misunderstood at all). I take

this to be a reversal, and one which is symbolic of many of the matters alluded to above.

Another form of reversal is that evinced by the behaviour of my friend whenever we go out: inside the house, he is bright, talkative, and attentive (one might say affectionate) generally. When we leave the house, he becomes comparatively sullen, quiet and distant; and in other ways his behaviour outside appears to be the reverse of his behaviour inside.

This reversal, which at first I found hard to understand and a little distressing, is, though, entirely in accord with the distinctions inside/outside and *tatemaie/honne* which have been adverted to. It is also in consonance with what Hendry calls 'the ritual associated with stepping across the threshold of the house', and with the 'behaviour change' of a mother which indicates to a child when a member of the outside world has 'provoked a public face inside the house...' (1984a: 109). These two reversals may be assimilable to Needham's fifth type of reversal (1983: 116).

XI. *Analogy and Homology*

Neither of these modes of relation can be experienced in the ways in which the concepts addressed in sections II-VIII can be experienced. These concepts are dyadic, and the constituent terms of the dyads are opposed. Although this characterisation of the relation that obtains between the constituent terms of each dyad is hardly precise enough, at this degree of precision, three things are apparent: first, that the dyads are analogues of other dyads which have not been discussed in the present essay, but which are evinced in aspects of Japanese life, such as right and left and east and west (cf. Duff-Cooper forthcoming, a); secondly, that formally speaking, therefore, the relation of analogy makes these dyads unitary; and thirdly, that the terms on each 'side' of each dyad - i.e. the pre-eminent terms and the other terms - are therefore homologues. These sets of homologues *may* be related one to another by sporadic resemblance, that is, polythetically.

XII. *Concluding Remarks*

The present essay has not considered a number of matters to which it could have been directed. These omissions do not result solely from limitations of space: *amae*, dependence (e.g. Doi 1974), for instance, is a notion which is important in the analysis of Japanese thought and behaviour, but to have written about in relation to the life of my friend and I would have meant discussing matters which are too private to be given a public airing.

Exchanges, also, have not been considered. This topic, as concerns Japan, has been alluded to elsewhere (Duff-Cooper, op. cit.) and requires a study of its own.

Again, alternation and other modes of periodicity are not ad-

dressed: they do not appear to have been evinced so far in my experience of Japan, although alternation, at least, is discernible, for example, in aspects of archery (*kyudō*).

More elaborate modes of partition than dichotomy are also ignored; the comments made about alternation and other periodic modes, however, go *mutatis mutandis* for these modes too.

Symmetry and degrees of asymmetry, although indispensable analytically to the social anthropologist, have not generally been drawn upon either. There is no doubt that, as was only expectable, these modes of relation are evinced by aspects of Japanese life (cf., e.g., Valentine 1986: *passim*), but it would be to blunt the analytical precision of these notions to invoke them simply to describe, for instance, such relationships as father/son, teacher/pupil and emperor/subject.

Relative ideological distance from a centre can be gauged more precisely than what 'symmetrical' or 'asymmetrical' convey (e.g. Duff-Cooper 1985). In Japan, it may be that exchanges made on marriage are the key to establishing a basis for this operation. That such exchanges may play this role is not because alliance by intermarriage is the paradigm of the exchange system, as in systems of prescriptive alliance under one aspect at least (e.g. Needham 1986: 168), but because 'the degree of closeness of each household in the village [in Kyushu where Hendry worked] is... illustrated by the amount of money given in gifts at such a time [as marriage], and by who receives what gifts in return' (Hendry 1981: 187-8), and because 'marriage... plays a structural role in this society which [we] shall, for want of a better word, call pivotal' (*ibid.*: 229).

'Pivotal' is perhaps a little too mechanical for use in sociological analysis, but it appears to mean 'of central importance to the working of the society' or something along these lines. Given that this is so, then the close study of the exchanges which occur at such times as marriage and death are likely to be valuable in the analysis of other aspects of Japanese society.

As for matters which have been addressed, the themes elicited fall into two kinds - conceptual and formal. The former are particular to the form of Japanese social life when the full range of their meanings is taken into account. But, even so, many of the dyads evinced - outside/inside, front/back, male/female, them/us - are familiar. The latter, too, are evinced by forms of life which are distributed globally. On both these counts, therefore, and under these aspects, it is clear that the Japanese form of life is not (expectably enough) unique.

It is perhaps clear, though, especially from what has been said earlier in the present section, that in my view much remains to be done in the analysis of Japanese social life. To say as much is not to disparage what has been achieved; to the contrary, what remains to be done could not have been located without that earlier work. I look forward to working on these matters with the criticisms and advice of Yamamoto Sensei and others, who are not only members of Japanese society but are also very distinguished students of it. I have profited greatly from my association with them this past year and will doubtless do so over this coming year.

I have also, for the past year, been handsomely paid to continue working at anthropology, have had work (1986c, 1986e; 1986f; forthcoming, a) accepted for publication in Japanese journals, and have been led by various people to feel that, after all, I am not quite the pariah that I had come to think. If it is true that this relationship with Japan has not, like those of nearly all other foreigners with whom I have discussed the matter, always been entirely happy, it is also the case that no relationship anywhere is likely to be entirely so. Far, far better that than to have had no relationship at all.

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