

AGING AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE FAMILY IN JAPAN

From the Individualization of the Family
to the Socialization of the Individual:

Thoughts on the appearance of individualism in Japan

Masuji MIYAMOTO

Abstract

Japan's policy for the aging population is currently facing a significant turning point. While it has become more and more difficult to hold a grip on the lives of the elderly within the framework of the family, the reconsideration of Japan's family is under way. It is anticipated that the number of the aging population who will be alienated from both its own family and local community might increase due to the absence of political decision whether the family is a subject or an object of social welfare. Change in the relationship between the family and its elderly members has compelled collectivism, one of the basic problems in Japan's social system, to transform, while bringing to light the issues that surround autonomy and isolation. It is important that gerontological studies in Japan equally focus on the individualization of the family and the socialization of the individual.

Part 1: Debates on the Aging Society in Japan

1. Discourse on aging society as an object of manipulation of information

Among today's various discussions on social change in Japan, predicting the future of the aging population and the social changes that may accompany it is perhaps the effort that may most broadly and deeply affect every aspect of the society. It includes not only arguments on how the economy, reproduction of labor, the family and local community should

be, but also those on how the social system and social assistance, such as social services, education, medical care, should be¹⁾. In other words, it is one of the arguments that cannot be ignored in theorizing the social reproduction, reorganization, and order as a whole.

Since aging is such a “visible” phenomenon that happens in most families and local communities, it easily attracts national attention from all walks of life. This means that the issue of aging could generate multiple interpretations and implications²⁾, which, without conscious effort, could very possibly be a target of manipulation of information. In general, the greater and broader the public interest in a certain issue, the more likely that the issue becomes the object of social policy as well as the political theme of the day. As various interest groups examine an issue and set it up as a subject of political dispute, the content and the level of discussion is often simplified and lowered (Sloganization). The discussion on the aging problems is a typical example. If we shift the question and examine how the general population with a rank-and-file political awareness perceive the problems of aging, we seem to find that they have increasingly accepted such groundless notions as “The aging population brings about social crisis.”³⁾

2. Sensitizing the issues of aging

In a sense, it would be rather simple-minded of us to seek the source of such misperceptions in the current political power structure or in the political strategy. But when we start thinking about why such political power structure and strategies still exist, or about the situation of the social force and social movement who stand in opposition to them, we realize that the problem is more complicated. Even if the views of Silver Democracy⁴⁾ and the attempts of elderly culture theory should become legitimized, we could not be optimistic that this would automatically lead to the rise of a social movement (for and) by the elderly to protect their own livelihoods. In Japan, it might create a grassroots movement by a certain group of people, but it is not likely to develop into a broader political and social movement.

Administrative policies of the government, with far larger amount of information in hand, are always ahead of such a grassroots movement and would prevent it from growing into a political and social movement. Even though the problem of aging concerns the whole society, it is often considered to be the problem of the elderly themselves, or of their family and community, and does not develop into a broader social movement.

This is often explained to be the result of the gap between the socialization of life on the one hand and the privatization of it on the other. However, no further explanation is given, and it is not clear what is the extent of this gap or how it is structured. In other words, we don't know the structure of the "intuition" with which each individual behaves and thinks, and which is left out amid such a gap, nor do we understand the process of its social organization including manipulation of information. We know that such a gap exists, but we cannot explain what kind of gap it is, which is a weakness in dealing with the issue of aging.

Of course this does not apply only when we are dealing with aging. Nevertheless, when we discuss the issues of aging in Japan, it is essential that we focus on how to reorganize various perceptions which are in the realm of "intuition" with which each individual behaves and feels. One of the examples of such perceptions would be family and community relations based on the traditional (Confucius) notion of "ie (family)" infused in our blood and community ties.

3. Response of the media

Currently, the media in Japan holds roughly two types of perceptions. The future prospects for the formation of Japanese society depends on which of the two becomes predominant.

One of these perceptions purposely spreads such sequential thinking as "Arrival of the aging society will lead to an increase in the number of the elderly (especially the old/old elderly), an increased burden on the younger generations, and pensions alone will not be enough to survive. What are we going to do?" As a result, it will stir and anchor anxiety for the retirement

age in people's mind and nurture such notions as "there is no other means with which to deal each individual's old age except with personal effort and /or savings."

The other type of perception questions the quality of traditional blood, community and work ties by posing such questions as, "Aging of the society progresses along with modernization; various problems beyond the limit of personal solutions will arise; how should society cope with these problems? What kind of quality and quantity of human relationships do we need?"

The notion of "filial piety" that has been considered as a Japanese or Confucius family virtue has affirmed the cohabitation of parents and their children. The development of industrialization, however, has wiped out family business (a decrease in self-employed workers) and increased the numbers of the employed workers and nuclear families, which has made it physically impossible for parents and children to live together despite their wish to do so. They have been forced to opt for the second best living arrangement (living independently and utilizing various social resources) rather than the best (living together). Thus, there has been an increased, voluntary movement for social solidarity by individuals forming small congregations, looking to network about various topics on life, including a search for how a person should live their own life, on an unprecedented scale in Japan's history.

Various mutual help organizations and "bottom-up", not "top-down", volunteer activities which are currently spreading throughout Japan are nurturing such "intuition" or conception that "network" is the strongest security for older generation.

Part 2: "The Family" as a Turning Point

When we consider the development of social welfare for the elderly from the point of view of both the recipient and the provider of the service, we realize that in both cases, as seen in developing countries and pre-modern societies, family becomes a source of the problem. Both the elderly and

their care-givers expect the family to be the solution to the problem. However, when we take into consideration the fact that the same family is treated as a “problem” (family problem as pathological phenomenon), we realize that the family is an object, rather than a subject, of problem-solving. We cannot take family for granted any more as a primary caretaker of our elderly members. When we sort out and analyze the current problems surrounding the family, including such various issues in every day life as child-rearing, education, employment and housing, one of the understandings we draw from it is that the family cannot sustain social service but is in need of social service itself.

1. The Family depicted in debates on the Japanese-style welfare society

Japan’s current family policies are basically attempting to cloud the understanding that it is the family who is in need of social service. This is what is called the discourse on the family within the framework of the debates on the Japanese-style welfare society. However, it is based on a family model far from the reality of Japan’s families and is actually a very unstable and changeable one. In his article, Sumitaka Harada summarizes the characteristics of the family policies and the direction of their development and states as follows:

It is true that they (the family policies) are trying to fully utilize the ‘distinctive quality of the Japanese family’ in order to vitalize the function of the family that sustains the “Japanese-style welfare society.” However, the family relations that would be created here cannot be the rebirth of the “traditional family system.” This is actually where the source of “concern” and contradiction of today’s family policy lies.⁵⁾

Harada further summarizes the basic characteristics of Japan’s current family policy in the following three points.

1. In the initial debates on “Japanese-style welfare society”, the family was considered “a contributor for curbs on social assistance”, but recently it has given a more central role of “the provider of social

assistance and service.” In other words, the family, along with the local community, is seen as a bearer of “the spirit of mutual assistance.” At a glance this recent tendency seems to be more modernized than the kind of arguments on “Japanese-style social welfare” that considers the family as a basic unit, and seems to reduce the burden of each family, but it could also make public support and private support relative to each other.

2. With a prospect that the number of employed women who are married will increase, they propose a multi-faceted countermeasures. They do not present, however, a clear picture of the living conditions to be secured for women in the family and society.

3. They render the special role social welfare plays, that is social assistance to each individual and family, more and more relative and tend to rely on “autonomy, self-help and mutual assistance of the individual and family” including the purchase of private welfare services⁶⁾.

Here, Harada is pointing out that today’s family policies are aiming to revive the system of mutual-assistance among families, which was the case in traditional family relations (relationships in village communities for example). They are reproducing the traditional relations in which the welfare needs of the members of a group are met within the group. He says, “Today’s family, especially the employed household, is no longer a latent property; it is rather a property already exhausted. In order to prevent its disintegration, it needs a strong support by social assistance programs.”⁷⁾ This argument leaves no room for objection.

2. Dynamics of politics embraced in the family policies

The point that should be made here is that the gap between the reality of today’s Japanese family and family policies have been purposely and politically created, and that there are concerns that this gap might continue to widen. Despite the need to increase the provision of social service for the family, it seems that the attempt to reduce it is taking precedence.

This illustrates how unrealistic the claims made in discussions about the Japanese-style welfare society are in two respects. First, if the number of families who cannot survive without the support of social assistance is expected to increase, it could lead to destruction or down-sizing of the labor reproduction system and might upset the entire labor policy at the national level⁸). Immediate crisis might be avoidable with an increase of the elderly and women in the labor market, but a future labor shortage could only be dealt with by the rationalization of labor through the reorganization and unification of a labor-intensive industry into a information-intensive industry, and by the aggressive utilization of imported labor. This is one of the serious flaws inherent in today's debates on the Japanese-style welfare state.

Secondly, we cannot predict whether the Japanese society would accept silently or without resistance the set-back of social assistance that state policies condone. Current family policies in Japan have recognized such modernization of the family as nuclear and smaller-sized, and basically shifted its focus on to the issues which involve individual members of the family such as child-rearing, caring of the elders, women's status, employment, wife-husband relationship, volunteer activities, etc. As discussed earlier, this new focus looks at the individual within the family as a person responsible for social assistance rather than looking at the family /the foundation of the family as an object of social assistance. It tacitly assumes that such individual members of the family would also take the responsibility for social assistance and service in the local community. However, we must also assume that the society envisioned in the discussions on Japanese-style welfare society could create a counter force that might derail the discussions themselves.

For example, if we see social welfare as a concrete need by each individual person rather than an abstract and general need by a family as a group, in the process of asking such questions as "Who is to respond directly to such need (who is the subject)?" or "To what extent does such need require professional response (methodology)?", a new network of relations among various individuals in the local community might be created

that does not (cannot) involve the family. It is not impossible that this new network becomes the driving force for a movement demanding a special budget and institution from local and national governments, which might promote an advancement, instead of a set-back, of social assistance. Such new network of relations could be called "new local relations" or "voluntary local community relations." In any case, we must aggressively include in today's discourse on family what we might call "dynamics of politics," the discussion of whether such a reality is going to develop or dwindle.

Thus, we are compelled to vigorously expand the discussion which includes both the prediction of what the future Japanese family will be like and the viewpoint of a movement as to what kind of family we want to create. If we do see through the unrealistic ideas on the side of the policy makers, it is urgent that we formulate a discussion that is not hampered by them and create a movement that will carry out the result of that discussion.

Part 3: Research on the Aging Society and Changes in the Discourse on Family

1. Increasing number of the elderly household and the discourse on the family

One of the unexpected effects of gerontological studies is that it attracts social attention quietly and inevitably on the sobering fact that we are born into this world alone and die alone. It is requested from both labor policy makers and feminists that women, who are often expected to take the responsibility for welfare of the family, be freed from family and home. As a result we cannot but rely on the services (social service) provided not by a family member, but by "a total stranger", which could more often than not cause less tragedies (more than half of the problems in family care in Japan are said to involve elderly abuse by family members). The rising number of elderly and single households requires that such social service be improved.

What we have to examine carefully at the same time is the fact that the rapid increase in the number of single household has subtly changed the way the family is discussed. Do we consider that fact negatively because one does not have a family to depend on, or do we take it positively as one form of successful aging or "autonomy" that was chosen by the person? When we examine "autonomy" from the latter point of view, it becomes clear that the point at issue is social assistance to an individual, and not the family as the provider of that assistance. People have started to pay attention to the fact that almost eighty percent of the elderly currently living alone in Japan are women. But we do not exactly know the difference between being psychologically by oneself and living by oneself. Also, for some elderly, "family" may occupy a large part of their mind because he or she is always looking back and missing the good old days, but "the family" may sometimes become less important for someone who is looking forward and seeking one's own autonomy. For such a person, the relationship with the family living separately, if any, might have the same importance as, or even less than, the one he or she has in their local community.

2. "Individual" and "autonomy" in the discourse of the family

"Individualizing family⁹⁾" could also mean that a family could become no longer a family depending on the quality of individuals it is composed of. Just as the ways to approach family problems are divided into two polar standpoints, one that tries to explain the issues from the point of view of the individual and the other from that of the society, the characteristic of the family as a group is becoming less and less significant. In other words, the question "What is the family?", just as the one "What is the society?", requires that we start questioning what the basic unit is that composes it.

Studies on the aging and family in Japan encourages the way of thinking from the point of view of an individual instead of that of the family. This is perhaps because the study cannot but progress with the discussions on "autonomy" as its logical conclusion or goal. "Autonomy" has been discussed in the field of empirical research of social welfare developed

separately from the studies on the family (methodology of social service, such as assistance technology, is one example). It has been discussed and shaped through the pursuit of how the concrete and technical support should be provided in response to the need of each elderly or disabled person, and generalized under what is called the thought of normalization.

However, such understanding of “autonomy” in the context of the study of social service has been made relative and down-graded in the midst of the debates on “autonomy and self-help” as described in Part Two, which surfaced through Japan’s social assistance policy. At least the following two points have been ignored and made relative. To begin with, the social assistance system came into existence as the result of the social problems brought on by the development of capitalism. Therefore, the society should be held accountable to each individual for having been unable to win “autonomy.” Nevertheless, the problems coming from the social system are regarded as the problems of the family, rather than those of the individual.

Secondly, as seen in the thoughts of normalization, the development of today’s social welfare is aimed at the achievement of each individual’s “happiness.” In order to achieve this, it has been urged that social resources be mobilized and the principles of social structure be changed. Despite this, there is a strong opposition to such a move on the ground that there are shortages of service providers in terms of both quantity and quality as well as financial resources. Here again, the perception is promoted that despite everything there is only family (or oneself) to depend on.

There are factors that hinder the image of “autonomy” from developing outside the realm of the family¹⁰. Such ideas as the reproduction of the family based on socially supported autonomy of the individual, or social support of the formation of the family composed of the “autonomous” individual are dismissed here. Until we take these ideas seriously and try to bring them into mainstream discussions, we cannot embark on the research on the aging and the family in Japan.

3. What "autonomy" and "quality of life" are questioning

With the increasing social interest in the problems of the elderly, the discussion of the social welfare for the elderly in Japan has come to the stage where we have realized the self-evident truth that autonomy of the elderly is not enough. In other words, "autonomy" has been situated in the context of the entire life course. For example, the psychological and physical characteristics of aging are now studied in relation to the self-formation (socialization) of the youth. Even discussions on "development" of the elderly are about to start¹¹⁾. Such idea of "development" is being introduced in government policies for life-long education and creation of pastime with the phrase "self-realization" of the elderly.

These attempts in the study of the aging society has resulted not so much from the quantitative study of the aging society to prepare for the increasing number of the elderly, as from the collective awareness of each individual of the plain fact that everyone ages. This awareness has highlighted the necessity for the qualitative study of the aging society, though this is a by-product of the so-called "aging society brings about social crisis" theory. For example, what is called "the bed-ridden" and "the senile" are no longer just academic interests in the field of special social welfare and medical welfare, but two of today's most universal national concerns. According to "the municipal plans for health and welfare for the elderly", which started simultaneously in every city/town/village in Japan in April, 1993, the two greatest matters of future concern for the elderly were "becoming bed-ridden" and "becoming senile." Such concern was accompanied with another concern about the care provider.

This is related to the fact that "good health" coupled with "satisfaction in life" is given as the first priority in old age. The question of how one should live today is asked because there is a desire behind it to maintain a satisfying quality of life at every stage of life. Negative apprehension of living alone associated with separation and loneliness has been questioned, and the focus has been shifted to the question of how self-realization should be, or how one should die (which could be called "a life-style of dying").

It is necessary that discussions take the whole life of a person into consideration, or that the study not ignore the “flow” of time. Policies (science) which tend to separate the care-provider and the care-receiver have shown their limitations. They are prone to be partial, selective and inflexible, as seen in such categorizations as the family with a member who needs assistance/care and the family without such a member; and the life stage with a member who need assistance/care and the life stage without such a person. In such a situation, we cannot expect to have a support system whose goal is to achieve and aid each individual’s autonomy, self-and personality formation, regardless of the composition of their family, their relationship with the family or the life stage they are in. Instead, the life of a person is perceived as non-sequential, and the term “handling”, which is a term used for things and not for people, is carelessly used when talking about people in need of care.

This situation could be explained by the low social evaluation of and insufficient provision of conditions for social service workers, though these are not all. In any family relations, the effort to maintain the totality, that is, “quality of life,” of an individual who is constantly changing in the process of aging requires three guiding rules. First, we must understand that they will have a larger radius of activity in which to make their own choice and decisions. Secondly, we must also understand that, as a result, they will have a smaller radius of activity in which their choice and decision are restricted by others. Thirdly, it is necessary that social resources that would encourage the first two understandings be mobilized.

4. Image of the twenty-first century family

As the population ages, the number of elderly households increase, which tends to call social attention to the shape and relations of families who are at the later stages of life. Could this relatively distract the same social attention away from the family at other periods and stages of life? This is probably not the case, because if we anticipate that the desire for individualization/self-realization (continuous desire to maintain “quality of

life") should be eminent in the old age, and start from there to prioritize the process of situating the life course and each life stage, we will be able to form a discussion questioning the quality of the family formation and relations. By paying continuous attention to such family function as "reproductive and emotional function of the family¹²⁾" as part of the issue of the relationship between the individual and the family, we are continuously focusing on the individual, in the sense that we are asking how an individual should live their life, and not the family as a group.

We must keep in mind here, however, the question of how the controlling power of the term, or the collective symbol, family could be socially reformed. In the discussion of the modernization of the family or the working family, the focus of the discussion should not be the family, but the modernization or the workers. Therefore, we might as well expect that it will not make much sense to confine the future discussion within the framework of the family. In Sweden, social assistance policies are strictly for social assistance to raise the capacity of the "emotional function" of the family. As the natural consequences this function brings, they have been successful in establishing "reproductive function" of the family as well as improved relationship between the elderly parents and their children. They did not implement any special family policies in order to achieve this. The only thing they did was to socially secure a living and employment in order to realize the family produced from active choice of each individual. Functional approach to the discussion about the family has established a point of view that focuses on family function for its effect on each individual who composes the family, and not on the family as a group. Even before such discussion started, not only in the Civil Code but also in both production and consumption, there was a tendency to individualize life. Examples of this are the externalization of such economic activities as employment and earnings (in a sense that these activities are carried out outside the family life) and the individualization in the field of consumption such as savings, ownership of a home or purchase of life insurance (in a sense that these activities are done "for one's own sake" rather than "for the family"). It took a while before such individualization of the unit of

economic and social system became reflected on the individualization of the sense of family.

One of the factors that has given impetus to this individualization of awareness of the family in Japan was, as discussed earlier, the rapid increase of the number of one-generation and single households among the elderly household, as well as the rise of the divorce rate. The greatest reason, which forty percent of the people referred to, for living alone (or choosing to live alone) is "because I can feel more at ease living alone¹³⁾." This could be the combination of various other reasons. Still, a noticeable portion of the population has come to live alone as the result of their own choosing.

Another force for the increase in the elderly household is the rising number of households who live on pension, in other words, financial security which has made the elderly economically independent from the younger generation, in addition to a sense of freedom coming from the fact that they do not own much property to hand down. Such changes in the life of the elderly have endorsed the argument that the family could be treated as a personal issue, in the sense that it is a product of an active choosing of individuals, rather than a collective issue.

The individualization of the family that is directly and physically symbolized among the single households is, firstly, the result of a relatively weakening sense of family, and secondly, an indication of the change in people's consciousness from the one which clings on to the family relationship with the younger generation (the return-to-the-family or the family-first mentality) to the other which ideally places the priority on the task of self-development (the return-to-the-self mentality). We must pay attention to the general and social propriety of the proposition that one should actively choose one's own family as an individual and calmly prepare for one's death as an individual. Whether one can die as an individual or one can only die alone is being questioned now.

Part 4: From the Individualization of the Family to the Socialization of the Individual

As the sense of family, bound by the ideas of the traditional “ie (family)” or the gender role division, has gradually disappeared, the ideals of the collective family is also about to be pushed into the background. Instead, the image of the family, though still obscure, has appeared as the result of the active choice of the individual. It is important to point out here that a new type of family is being born outside the usual categories of the family based on relations such as biological family and conjugal family. In talking about a family produced from the active choice of the individual, we do not have to limit it to such life stages as family-formation or reproduction, it is a product of each individual's spiritual and intellectual activities.

Generally, people have a biological family and a conjugal family, but we must go beyond the discourse of the family or the discussion on family function which focuses either of these two types of family. In discussing the family and issues of aging, it is important to examine family as one of the factors influencing the life-time development and progress of an individual who makes various choices.

This change indicates that an individual's relationships outside the family are increasing in quantity and quality regardless of the life stage one is in. One example is the family relationship that has experienced “collaboration for autonomy”. In other words, regardless of the form and quality each individual chooses, maintains and develops as their family, the issue becomes how high or low the standard of choice is and how wide the option is to choose from. Whether the family becomes the pathological focus or the foundation of one's growth and development depends, in a sense, on the quantity and quality of the social relations one has outside the family.

As discussed earlier, for example, whether the life of an elderly living alone becomes physically and psychologically a happy one or an unhappy one depends on their relationships with other people in the local community

(community ties), friends, acquaintance-relationships and intellectual relationships. Of course, material and psychological relationships with their children is not unimportant to the elderly living alone, but if they have poor relationships in quality and in quantity in the community, they will be heavily dependent on their family and relatives. Isolation could lead to dependency, but solitude, with the help of community ties, could lead to autonomy.

It is not within the scope of this paper to actually give a perspective of the family in twenty-first century Japan. But for now, it is urgent that we try to predict, to a certain extent, what principles will be predominant so that we could continue a full discussion based on that prediction. It might sound unrealistic, but as long as the dynamics of politics in family policy is working to realize the unreal, we cannot slow down our effort to develop a discourse of the family that could counter such a trend.

The image of family in the twenty-first century could fluctuate. Even if one is freed from the fetters of the family, one could be trapped in the propaganda of "top-down volunteerism" and end up becoming a cog of a wheel in the debates on the Japanese-style welfare society. Or, one could embrace others' needs as one's own potential needs and develop social solidarity to demand necessary social assistance. These are the two conflicting ways of socialization that are going on today. The problems of today's family and the life of the elderly in Japan are situated in the midst of the friction between such two kinds of socialization.

In any case, we must pay attention to the fact that one could develop these two kinds of socialization at the same time and that there are groups and organizations that try to promote either one of the two socialization. Therefore, empirical studies are needed that will carefully examine the relations among individuals, among organizations, or between the organization and individual, paying simultaneous attention to the connection between the manipulations of information and various social systems and movement. The family, which is a component of a space once called "neighborhood" has to be situated in such context.

NOTE

1). In *Koreika Shakai Shirizu* (Aging Society Series), of which the last one out of the total of ten volumes was published in 1982, aging society was discussed in relation to each of the following topics; social assistance, pension, labor, women, social services, education, medical care, community, living space, etc.

2). Discussion on the aging society in Japan has to include at least the following four points. First one is literally the structural change of the population. Not only the increase in the number of the elderly, but the relative decrease in the younger population and those at the reproductive stage is progressing at the same time. How would this affect changes in social and social service policies? What impact would it have especially on child welfare and family policies?

Secondly, how much tolerance the society would have toward the increasing number of the non-productive population deriving from the aging population as well as rising educational attainment? It is possible that public opinion which demands that social administration be accommodated to the need of the non-productive population will gain power. Who would be the core of a movement to realize such demand and how would the process of the movement be shaped?

The third point is change in the social aspect of the problem resulting from the fact that aging is in simultaneous progress with the modernization and urbanization of one's relationship in the family and in the local community. Debates on "autonomy", deriving from rising evaluation of female labor force and change in women's social status, not to mention changes in the idea of dependency (more and more elderly prefer not to be dependent on their children) may sometimes clash with debates on aging.

Therefore, the point four is, the question "On what kind of principles do we base the social assistance system that we are going to create?" Current system is encouraging what might be called "isolation disguised as autonomy" that does not try to redress the ongoing socio-economic division. This needs to be changed into a total social system that would promote "autonomy based on mutual support." In order to realize this, we must develop international comparative research, that is, regional study with international perspectives, and scientifically reconstruct current theory on Japanese and Japanese society which has a rather emotional overtones.

3). Hiroshi Kawaguchi and Norimichi Kawakami, *Koreika Shakai wa Honto ni Kiki ka* (Would aging society really bring about crisis?). Akebi Shobo, 1989.

4). See Mitsuru Uchida, *Shirubaa Demokurashii: Korei Shakai no Seijigaku* (Silver Democracy: Politics of the Aging Society). Yuhikaku Shinsho, 1986.

5). "'Nihon-gata fukushi shakai' ron no kazoku zo," (The image of family depicted in debates on "Japanese-style welfare society") in Tokyo Daigaku Shakai Kagaku Kenkyusho ed., *Tenkanki no Fukushi Kokka: Ge* (Welfare state in transition, Vol 2). The

University of Tokyo Press, 1988. p.381.

6). Ibid. Summary of pp.382-384.

7). Ibid. p.391.

8). For example, Seireki 2000 nen ni okeru Josei no Raifu Sutairu (Women's life style in the year 2000) (Zaidan-hojin Josei Shokugyo Zaidan, 1987) points out that the future perspectives on vital statistics is not very bright. Despite this, in the conclusion, the authors propose "a system of support society" instead of "a system of social support." "A system of support society" is used in the sense that it supplements the family functions. "A system of social support" that will reinforce social assistance systems which are the basis of "support society" is not discussed.

9). See Yoriko Meguro, Kojinka suru Kazoku (Individualizing Family). Keiso Shobo, 1987.

10). The idea of autonomy has been nurtured as the process of Japan's modernization and the debates on Japanese culture attracted general attention after the economic boom in the 1960's. However, the image of autonomy that was talked about at the time was rather closer to the idea of "individualism" and cannot be treated equally with the idea of "autonomy" found in the discourse on the family.

For example, as seen in the discussion in Masakazu Yamasaki's Nihon Bunka to Kojin Shugi (Japanese culture and individualism) (Chuo-koron-sha, 1990), it is worth giving a thought on "issho kenmei" (trying hard), which has been historically nurtured as a Japanese value. That is, a value which affirms the living under the restriction imposed by the feudal lord has been placed at the pedestal as a virtue and supported at the same time. Study is necessary to elucidate the relationship between the historical background of this mentality and the "self-help" discourse.

11). See Ayako Fujita et al, "Rojin daigaku jukosha no juko riyu ni tsuite: ronkenki no hattatsu kadai to no kankei" (On the reasons for taking courses at the elderly college: In relation to the issues of development of the elderly), in Rojin Mondai Kenkyu. Osaka-fu Rojin Sogo Senta. Vol.5, 1985. pp.60-68. Also, Masuji Miyamoto, "Rojin fukushi ni okeru sanko fukushi" (Participant service in social welfare for the elderly), in Rojin Fukushi-ron: Kiso, Tenkai, Enjo Gijutsu (Debates on Social Welfare for the Elderly). Shinichi Matsuda ed. Aikawa Shobo, 1991. pp.149-169.

12). Sumie Goto, "Koreika shakai no kazoku tenbo: Kazoku no seimei saiseisan kina to jocho kina no kenchi kara" (Perspectives on the family in the aging society: From the point of view of the reproductive and emotional function of the family), in Nagoya Daigaku Shakaigaku Rohshu. No.10, 1993. pp.1-23.

13). See Department of Social Welfare, The City of Nagoya, Survey of the Elderly Living Alone or Bed-ridden, 1983 and Survey of the Elderly Household. 1983.