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Concluding Commentary

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Concluding Commentary

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1. RESULTS

First of all, I noticed that our discussion and reports today lacked something when we treated them just in terms of general civilization study. In the discussion we should have placed more emphasis on Japan, the subject of this symposium, as pointed out by Dr. Umesao, in order to shed a new light on social science. At this symposium, for example, we discussed economic systems, but I wonder whether we obtained new results regarding traditional social science or economics, and what kind of results, if any, we actually obtained. Some explanations are necessary in this respect.

One area in which a result is most easily located is that of the discussion on *zaibatsu* (financial combination). As Prof. Sakudo pointed out, Japanese traditional *zaibatsu* can be characterized by its homogeneity, closed door, diversified management, and close relation with banks and other financial institutions. These characteristics are, however, exclusively to be found in the traditional Japanese *zaibatsu*, which still exist in modern Japan, while a new strain of *zaibatsu* arose before the last war. My question here is whether the definition of traditional *zaibatsu* can be applied to the new *zaibatsu*. The comment by Prof. Oh on recent Korean *zaibatsu* and recent Korean society made me wonder whether the traditional definition is sufficient. Chinese *zaibatsu* is possibly pertinent here and, furthermore, we also have to take overseas Indians into consideration.

Although the Medici are frequently cited as an example of the medieval European "*zaibatsu*," I am unsure as to whether it fits in this category. If it can be included, a concept defined by Japanese economic history is applicable to European economic history, and a new aspect of the general social science can be developed. Several items still remain to be discussed: i.e., the relationship between the *zaibatsu* and general trading companies and the comparison between present general trading companies and trading companies in modern Europe such as East and West India Companies. It is this kind of discussion that contributes to the general social science as mentioned by Dr. Umesao.

2. VARIOUS VIEWPOINTS FOR THE COMPARISON

The second subject is a new field of study focusing on a new general social science which is referred to by Dr. Umesao as encompassing many fields or countries other than Japan that remain to be discussed.

Of course, Japanese culture, like Chinese and Korean culture, looks oriental to Westerners' eyes, however there are many non-oriental characteristics in Japanese culture. Based on the opinion of Dr. Umesao who claimes comparison with European culture is meaningful, Korea and China should be included as fields of study. Comparison with China and Korea started in the second symposium, and it was extended to comparison with Turkey and Africa in the third symposium. The general science flourished mainly in Western countries, but we are now approaching the stage where we have to consider many other countries for the further development of general science.

In contrast to our exclusive comparison between the Western societies and Japan, Prof. Fodella's report dealt with the comparison between the Mediterranean area and Japan. It indicated that Europe consists of several areas rather than being a single entity.

Europe can be divided into three parts: the Mediterranean area including monotheistic Islam, Judaism, and Catholicism; the West European area comprising Protestantism, Calvinism, and capitalism; and Slavic societies. However, excessively fine classification may lead us to discussion on cultural levels. We first have to recognize similarities in the comparison of cultures. The three European areas mentioned above may have some similarities, enabling us to compare all of Europe with Japan.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATIONS AND ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS

Thirdly I should like to relate the discussion in the previous symposium to the recent discussion on economic systems.

The last symposium concentrated on ruling and government systems under the theme of "Administrative organizations", whose focus of interest was on nations.

Studies on cultural anthropology have traditionally been poor when making comparisons at the national level. Dr. Umesao suggests in the discussion that the ruling of a nation can be defined as taxation. If so, a nation is an economic unit as well as a ruling unit, which is closely related to the theme of this symposium.

In the discussion, like in the last symposium, the existence of a concept of a nation of Japan was the main subject. Again in this symposium a concept of a nation was suggested to have been based on *han* (feudal domain) . In this respect we have to examine *han* as a unit more closely.

Ruling systems exist not only as nations, but also in many other forms. Dr. Westney suggested a company as a ruling system in the last symposium, which may

have been appropriate for this symposium. Prof. Clark and Prof. Fruin presented a concept of organization and organization revolution. Prof. Fruin said that an organization revolution took place in the 1870s while Dr. Westney claimed it had been continuing since the Edo Era. This subject should be discussed.

4. HISTORY AND CIVILIZATION

In my opinion Japan's economic and political organizational growth has been continuing since the Edo Era without any interruption in the Meiji Era.

Finally I would like to turn to nations and power of laws before the Edo Era. Previously we mainly discussed the concept of nation in the Edo Era. Though we adopted *han* as a prototype of general trading companies, the question of what was a basic unit before *han* appeared is still unanswered. Has the manor system mentioned by Prof. Clark disappeared? The manor system in Europe and Japan did not develope in the same way in their complexity; this phenomenon is left for future discussion.

When we regard *han* as an economic system, *samurai* warriors or constituents of *han*, and their ideologies should be studied. Prof. Fruin's consideration of Confucianism is extremely significant.

Dr. Umesao pointed out that *samurai* warriors were not very faithful Confucianists, and Japan cannot be regarded as a Confucian country. Comparison between Korea and Japan in this respect cannot be valid since no real Confucianism is to be found in Japan when compared with Korea. Otherwise, Confucianism in Japan may have been a supported by merchants, not by *samurai*, and may have been a merchant ideology. I leave this for further discussion.

In this symposium people living abroad were considered to form an supra-national economic system as seen in Prof. Yano's report on Southeast Asia. Some people claimed, that overseas Chinese should be regarded as contributors to China. Since Asian countries paid tributes to China, overseas Chinese were included as countries paying tributes to China and still considered to be homeland residents in that sense. Overseas Indians showed slightly different characteristics since they did not have to make such contribution to the homeland and were lacking a national sense.

According to Prof. Shigematsu, overseas Indians spread to different places through British colonies. When England acquired India, it did not become a British colony but rather an Indian Empire from the European viewpoint.

Especially remarkable is England's colonial policy in Southeast and South Asia; this policy protected India. I think it is interesting to observe the degree to which they recognized their Indian Empire in Southeast Asia.

I have many things to touch upon, but in the limited time available, I have only been able to mention the major items of interest.