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Society and Individual in the Early Nishida Philosophy

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Abstract

This study aims on clarifying a relational structure of society and individual in the philosophy of Kitaro Nishida, especially focusing on his early work titled "Society and Individual" (first published in 1922). In Taisho era, when Japan was under crisis of human survivability challenged by political and economic disturbances after the World War, natural disasters and prevailing poverty in transitional democratization and capitalisation, 'society' became one of the focal topic among scholars. On the other hand, the past criticisms stirred against Nishida before and after the World War II have found a main problem of Nishida philosophy in a scarcity of "process" description between individuality and absolute nothingness in his absolute dialectical logic. This exploration investigates the notion of 'society' in the early Nishida's philosophy, which depicts society and individual as a fractal structure, accepting plurality of subjects and constant confliction among meanings and wills. Through demarcating the sense of 'society,' the author attempts to spot a light on the misunderstandings in the past criticisms against Nishida and on his unique perspective of society and individual in the modernizing period of Japan.

Keywords: Nishida Kitaro, Japanese Philosophy, Kyoto-School, Nishida Philosophy

Introduction

This thesis elucidates a relation between "society" and "individual" in the early Nishida philosophy with his works written in Meiji and early Taisho period, especially drawing on "Society and Iindividual"（*Syakai to Kojin*, released in "*Philosophy Study vol. 73*" (April, 1922) and later in one of his compilation works, "*Art and Morality*" (*Geijutsu to Doutoku,* 1923).

During lifetime in establishing his own philosophy, Nishida had received many criticisms which had common inclination. For instance, Miki Kiyoshi indicated Nishida's philosophy "did not sufficiently discuss from the standpoint of practical time and the meaning of process of dialectic, therefore is weakened" in his "Property of Nishida Philosophy" (*Nishida Tetsugaku no Seikaku ni tsuite*, 1936, Miki: 10-410-413[i]), and on this issue, Yoshitomo Takeuchi also pointed out that Nishida's key concepts, Absolute Nothingness, and reflection, cannot directly produce any action and practice even with Nishida's unique concept of "Action-Intuition" (Takeuchi, 1978: 33). Therefore, both "Absolute Nothingness" and "Action-Intuition" is nothing more than meditational concepts (Miyakawa, 1962:310), and the punctuated perspective of "Eternal Presence" has no reality in the actual world (Makino, 1953: 147).

These critical comments assert that Nishida's logic of "Self-Identity of Absolute Contradiction" (*Zettai Mujyun teki Jiko-Douitsu*) between individual and absolute nothingness lacks the description for its "process" (Suzuki, 1973: 28). He did not sufficiently establish how self-reflection in transcendental place can have its relation with external world (Suzuki, 1967: 76, 83, 124), after all, ending up abstractive discourses (Kume, 1999: 129, 134, 148, 183), having "no concrete content with a simplest logic" (1967: 233). Among these severe criticisms, we recall the biggest opponent for Nishida was his one of his closest pupils, Hajime Tanabe.[ii]   Tanabe also tried to establish his original logic through an examination of 'social existence,' as seen in the title symbolically named "*Logics of Social Existence*" (released during 1934-1935). The reason Tanabe focused the concept of society seems quite penetrable since the process between individual and absolute world lies on an intermediation of 'society.' It is obvious that individual (the part) is to be social existence (role) when it is grasped in relation with society (species). Tanabe stated:

> Logic which attributes the relation between totality and individuality to the one between universality and diversity considers an individual as a limit of specification from universality and attempts conversely to apprehend the totality as the expansion of the individual. According to this logic, the society as totality, as the collective of individuals, and as its factors, does not take it into account such principle that confliction and resistance made by individuals[iii].

The above quote clarifies Tanabe's perspective on society, challenging Nishida Philosophy. On the other hand, Nishida surely have the counter arguments on such criticism either. We can find it in his notebook (No date recorded), the scribble states "We always start from "place", never from obscure logic" (Nishida: 13-456)[iv] [v].

The several criticisms against Nishida, as we just have seen above, apparently lack a sufficient analysis of society and individual in Nishida philosophy. The later part of this thesis analyzes how Nishida described society and individual in his early works.

1. The background of 'society' conception in Meiji-Taisho era

Yanabu (1982: 32-39), an eminent researcher of translation culture, expounds that there were no words equal to English "society" in Japanese until Meiji era, instead such as "communication" (*kousai*), "fellow" (*nakama*), "bunch"(*renchu*), "association"(*kumi*), "public" (*zokkan*), "company" or "circle"(*syachu*) were used.[vi] "Society" made its appearance for the first time in general Japanese public in 1875, merely five years after Nishida's birth (1870), when Genichiro Fukuchi used it with ruby in a newspaper called *Tokyo Nichinichi Shinbun*, whereas, in the same year, Yukichi Fukuzawa translated it into "*Ningen Kousai*" which directly means "human interaction" in English.

Therefore, during Meiji era, the concept of society was still on a transitional phase where Japanese intellectuals were attempting to import western notion of society by harnessing it to the Japanese notion of "relations" and "communication." Taisho era was the period when society delineates its term after the so-called "discovery of society" (Fukuda, 1922), as being well-known due to consecutive disasters, epitome by the World War, rice riots in 1918, Great Kanto earthquake of 1923, crisis brought by poverty. Human survivability had been demarcating the term "society" with severe experiences in daily life of the people. And it had been gradually recognized as a stage of class-confliction. In 1922, Nishida wrote the thesis named "Society and Individual," endorsing a fact that he also pay his concern on discerning 'society' in his own philosophy. For the sense of which today's Japanese "Society" (*Shakai)* is defined in dictionary as it follows.

> A collective of people which appears in that individuals gather together to live communally and the human relations as a whole forms a particular outline. It is also an inclusive term of the collection of communities, forming a complex whole. Some are generated naturally, and others are artificially formed based on a common interest or purpose. (Shinmura, 2009:1294)

According to the above definition, the term "society" flexibly indicates social phenomena of "human relations" with a particular outline from certain perspective[vii]. From the sense of "human relations and interaction," the

concept society connotes a relation between "others and self." Nishida actually used, for instance, "society" paralleled with "others," as seen in "do Just for others or society" (Nishida: 3-408), or in "Others and society are both as existence…" (Nishida: 3-409)[viii].

Besides, Nishida emphasized that both "others" and "society" are concepts, which perceived by an individual subject. In other words, society itself is not a real object, nor subjective consciousness itself. Therefore, "my consciousness is not consciousness of the others, and both consciousness is not directly linked together (Nishida: 3-404). Both "I" and "others" share society as the objective world but are separated. Hence, "society" is the objective concept of "Human relations," "just like monads of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716)". Nishida frequently quoted from Leibniz, as "others and I have only one reality without windows." From this point, we can realize that Nishida concerns that how individuals with closed system of consciousness are able to establish social relation.

The thesis "Society and Individual," beside, depicts a linkage between art and moral world and it's interrelation, which is mainly based on a metaphysical understanding of "*the Problem of Consciousness*" (1920) (*Sheki no Monday*). The book was published just before "*Art and Morality*," but strangely, these books were not examined very well before up until this day. It is worth to note, however, that Masaaki Koussaka found some seeds of philosophical inspiration in Nishida's later development in these early works[ix]. Most notably, Koussaka indicated, "Individual's personality itself is seen as a small society, and this perspective is fundamental to "I and Thou" (*Watashi to Nanji*). The fact, of this concept, can be found in the thesis is quite compelling[x]. In next section, we examine the implications proposed by Nishida in the works.

2. Self and Consciousness in "Society and Individual"

Nishida commences "Society and Individual" by proposing an ethical issue which arises between society and individual: "So-called society and individual are same psychological existence as an imagination from the world of intellectual objectiveness." From a view of "eternal presence of self which transcend time," "we can describe the difference between society and individual as the difference in size between a big circle and small circle on same field" (Nishida: 3-392-393). This statement is extremely important since it serves as a summary of the discussion. We will look into the detail of this remark.

First, Nishida describes the relation between self and consciousness in "*the Problem of Consciousness*" (*Ishiki ni tsuite*): "Transcendental self… transcends our consciousness and constructs the deep foundation of our consciousness" (Nishida: 3-148-149).   In the thesis, we can also find the discourse below.

> The specificity of "self" is in that it includes generality. Our-self is transcendental in that it engulfs any objective world within itself and enters into itself deeply and infinitely. Thus, the actual self includes general consciousness. This may appear to be a logical contradiction, but it actually is the condition for the establishment of our consciousness and also the essence of self. There is no life in generality detached from specificity, nor is there life in specificity detached from generality. (Nishida: 3-396)

Here, he means that "self" transcendentally "engulfs any objective world" in individual consciousness, so it is a concrete "self" and also "the condition for the establishment of our consciousness." "Self" does not close itself completely in specificity, but has a window to the external worlds through objectification of things and phenomenon in past, therefore is able to recognize them in its self-consciousness. "Eternal presence of self which transcends time" is self that contains "general consciousness" of which the individual gains through experiencing reality in continuity of time. In addition, the present consciousness is formed from infinite past[xi]. The consciousness always is the unified present consciousness as "an active effect itself." In the thesis, "Society and Individual," Nishida denotes "from the perspective of actual self, the objective world is to be a subjective effect directly, and the subjective effect becomes also the objective world" (Nishida: 3-395). In other words, our individual "I" consists of general consciousness is constituted through a historical interaction with the objective world. And at the deepest bottom, we find "transcendental self" in this objectivity. Along with this way, "self is a

nexus of relations of many phenomena in our consciousness, and when we see someone has consciousness, the phenomena in the world are unified at that particular point" (Nishida: 3-9). Nishida describes this process of unification with "effect on effect" made by "self," engulfing generality in the world as "internal connection."

"Self" that Nishida mentions here is not merely transcendental in the way that achieves a historical "internal connection." In the background of our daily life, there are compositions of the "contents of one's thought." And "the world of thought's objectives has the content of personality behind itself" (Nishida: 3-393). This concept of "content of personality" implies an existence of other's thought, emotion, and social consciousness behind things and thoughts. As it is, others who we come across in our life also connect each other and unify things and phenomena in individual consciousness. For further understandings, "A study of good" (*Zen no Kenkyu*), his first work in 1911, mentions "internal connection" as it follows:

> As if an individual consciousness, as stated above, is directly unified with yesterday's consciousness and today's consciousness, establishing the existence. Our lifelong consciousness can also be seen as one consciousness. As we discuss this way, we can discern that not only within the realm of an individual's consciousness but consciousness with others also can be unified according to the same reason and can be seen as one. ("A Study of Good," Part 2 Chapter 6 "Unique Existence," Nishida: 1-75)

This sentence emphasizes that "internal connection" in our consciousness transcends "individual consciousness" that reaches "consciousness with others" and forms one unified consciousness. Hence, individual consciousness has countless existence of other's consciousness possessing personalities behind things and phenomena we come across and negotiate with them through our experiences. Our consciousness cannot establish itself in solitude, but in social interaction[xii].

In this discussion, our "self" having two different directions towards transcendence. One way is to transcend historically toward inside ourselves. Another way is to socially toward others. Nishida finds the internal connection and unification of "self" in both directions commonly in essence. However, he demands more persuasive explanation for the word "transcendence." He admits that individual consciousness exists separately in the actual society (Nishida: 3-399) as we already confirmed. He posits "moral will" with the quotation of Kant's "*Reich der Zwecke*" (Kingdom of purpose) for this reason. We look into this point in next section.

3. Society of Moral Will

As we have seen in the previous section, our consciousness is a unified point of varieties of objective worlds. However, it does not only mean a mere "collection of elements." We need to pay attention to his usage of "unification," instead of "collection"[xiii]. Otherwise, we fail to find humanistic meaning behind the phenomenon of objective world in Nishida's discussion.

He argues the fact that our united consciousness is "one" in the sense of "*Ta-soku-Ichi*" (one is equal to many, many to one)" (Nishida: 3-400). However, it does not mean that individual consciousness is made of fragmented passive experiences. He, then, posits "will" as a factor to unify the experiences into "one." The "will" unifies a variety of meanings in consciousness and produces "personality" and "individuality." (Nishida uses "transcendental causality" (*Transzendentale Kausalitat*), apparently drawing on Kant, for this explanation (Nishida: 3-401))[xiv]. Hence, every individual hold "will"[xv] in this sense.

"Absolute free will," at the bottom side of individuals, demands "moral a priori" because individual consciousness conveys countless others' consciousness in its meanings. Our consciousness is unified into one by will, and we take an action to leave an effect in the objective world (effect on effect). In addition, we are affected by objects through experiences as they reorganize themselves in our consciousness as the parts of their indefinite dynamism. Thus, "our consciousness has a connection with other's in the direction toward generality" (Nishida: 3-406).

Within our consciousness, the relation among numerous thoughts of mind generates new relation itself: We have many "other (s)," meanings of their thought and emotion, as a result, self is "a network of transition of internal

meanings and facts itself." Therefore, self with free will is not subjective but "subjectum" (*syutai*), which contains a sense of the most objectified subjective will. From this respect, 'self' exists in the will-action itself (Nishida: 3-149)[xvi]: Nishida is apparently drawing on '*Tathandlung*,' Fichte 1762-1814.

As seen below, Nishida also notes the relation between individuality and infinite effects with an analogy for individual and society.

> Our consciousness is established in the form of self-awareness as a framework of self-inside of itself, and there is a synergy effect made by contrasting and connecting independent individuals each other with the free will. In this meaning, individual is society and society is individual. (Nishida: 3-407)

Here, "self-awareness" indicates the reflective moment of self-consciousness, which is unified by free will. While this momentum effect makes mutual contrast against infinite effect with the thought-emotion (i.e., meaning) of countless others, our consciousness connects with them by judging their meanings. This process is hinged by self-awareness. From the point of such self-awareness, our consciousness is regarded as society because it also consists of countless other individuals in itself and "society" is analogous to "individual" in this regard. This analogical relation of society and individual clarifies how Nishida considers the implication of the moral society a priori in relation to individual consciousness. Moral a priori produces free will in its foundation of consciousness, which comprises of moral relations among individuals (society). It already has the internal connection and creates unique individuality. Thus, it is deemed that we can find a society inside of us.

4. Society and Individual

Picture 1: Structure of Individual and Other
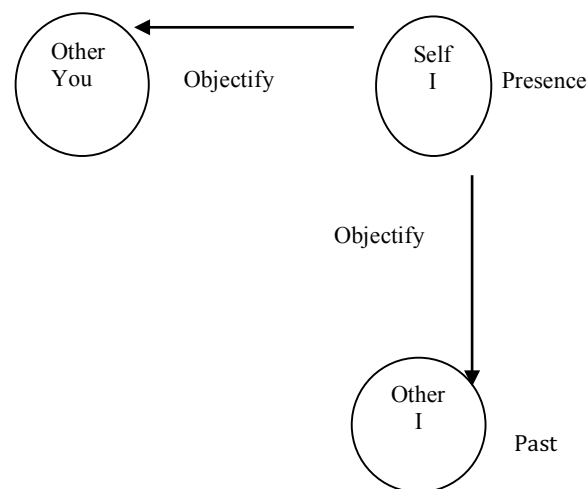
The concept of "society," as the internal moral relation inside of individual, has its basis in the foundation of consciousness. According to Nishida, since "the self, as I think about myself, is the same as other selves since they are not distinguishable in being the object of thought for me" (Nishida: 3-395). Along with this idea, it is possible to find myself and other selves in objective sphere of consciousness at the same dimension. When the self is "thought" by myself, the internal relationship of subjective and objective worlds emerges in individual consciousness. "Generally speaking, morality only exists in the relation between I and Thou (*Watashi to Nanji*), but I dare to say also in I and I." Here, Nishida implies dialogue between other and I in past and I in presence as seen below:

> I have responsibility to others and also to myself. We have responsibility to our ancestors in the past and descendants in the future and additionally selves in present must have responsibility to the selves in both past and future. (Nishida: 3-397)

This quote acculates "myself in present" and "myself as a thought about myself" is equal to "myself in the past and future" also have the same personal relationship with others and I. Nishida finds a moral relation between both dimension of 'other' (myself), vice versa. In the passage of time from the past to present, we experience facts as objects which affect our subjectivity through the unifying effect of will, and in the end, we take an action to express it, conveying a particular meaning to the external world. We become "*Hataraku Mono*" = "subjectum" and creates objective world for the others in the future. Our consciousness which has one of the two aspects of "subjectum," "seeing *(mirumono)* and working (*hatarakumono*)" and same as "Each effect we create, also has relation between you and I" (Nishida: 3-404). He spotlights here is the relation of self and society both within an individual and society at the same time, i.e., inside of us and outside of us[xvii].

As seen the above, Nishida finds "moral society"[xviii] "in the foundation of self-consciousness" (Nishida: 3-404).[xix] Self in both present and past has moral relations, also the relation is connected to other in "moral society" inside of self-awareness.

Picture 2: Structure of Individual and Society
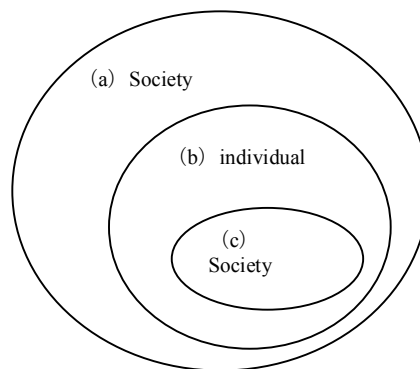
With this description for society and individual, we can tell the reason why Nishida expresses it with "the difference between society and individual is the difference in size between a big circle and small circle on same field." It can be described with the fractal structure (Picture2; left). As seen, Individual (b) has self-awareness in the internal consciousness with "(moral) society" (c) and these individuals with unification by free will also form a bigger "(moral) society"(a) the outside of individual. On this regard, Nishida remarks:

> We find an internal connection at the bottom of self-awareness, and at the same time, forming objective world composed of independent free-self and moral society outside. The latter society is just expanded from the former society (Nishida: 3-405).

As here clearly mentioned, therefore, an individual shown in the above figure (b) as "independent free-self" is formed by "society" (c) inside and also forms "society" (a) outside of it. There is no difference in the shape as historical expansion of same "effect on effect." By thinking in this way, 'on the same field' means the presence of time which combines individual and society, and internal connection between individual societies can be expressed in same shape of circle. Nishida also expresses "You may think it is difficult to assume social organization in the bottom of so-called individual consciousness," however, "here is no big difference between them" (Nishida: 3-398). For this reason, society and individual is equivalent in the "circle" with different size.

Still, we need to confirm how Nishida thinks on the outline of society and individual because each circle ought to have a distinguishable demarcation. As we already confirmed in section 1, we generally use the term, 'society' very flexibly as a group of individuals. Beside, a certain outline should give a sense of "society" as well[xx]. In the next section, we confirm how Nishida draws such outline to "society."

5. Society and Body

In a chapter named 'Contents of Emotion and Will' which was compiled in the book "*Art and Morality*", Nishida tells "It may be arduous for many to accept the idea regarding the moral society as an expression of reason (*logos*) and comparing it with arts", but "society is an imperfect body of great spirits" (Nishida: 3-326).

Why does he consider "society" as "imperfect body"? According to Nishida, art is "a creation of individuality," and "our cultural phenomenon is the same creation of individuality like art, i.e., the expression of life. Every national language, manners, customs, institutions, law, and myth, etc... are the same expression of this great spirit" (Nishida: 3-324-325). The difference between art and "cultural phenomenon" is in that the former is "static," and the latter is "dynamic." Hence, the subjectivity of society creates "cultural phenomenon" as the society of individualities that engulfs the objects in the present world and develops itself actively. This dynamism is the only point which differentiates "cultural phenomenon" from art. Actually, we know "language," for instance, has been changing in transition of time in our society and we create new one constantly. In other words, social consciousness actively creates new words. "Law" has also been created and modified in the society as same way of language. "Social phenomenon" is changing actively like an individual is.

A concept of "body," however, is not specifically featured in the book, "*Art and Morality*." We can find a few remarks on it in the thesis "Truth and Good", in which he writes: In body, subjectivity and objectivity are internally connected and "interacting the world of intellectual objectivity and objectivity of will", thus, "the body, conjoined by a priori of will" is "a nexus of many kinds of worlds". "Body is a condition for the establishment of self" (Nishida: 3-543). As seen these remarks, we can rightly postulate that with the word "body" Nishida attempted to bestow society its outline as the great individual.

The aforementioned society is an "imperfect body," changing actively and infinitely. In other words, inside of society has frictions and confrontation of each individual in its dynamism. Social phenomenon, such as language and law, is historical "effect on effect" produced by subjectivity of individuals. And it has never reached objective "perfection," because it can be effected (changed) by other individual subjectivities, staying in imperfection. If we imagine "perfect body" of society, it may be just a dead corpse of society without progress[xxi]. Nishida also mentions in 'Law and Moral', within a piece of writings in "*Art and Morality*", that "Morality anchored to a particular society" is "a life of spirit" and same as "nature in the world of purposes", and "it is formed not only inevitably by the internal system but also changed by outside of the world", therefore "there is the principle of the survival of the fittest in moral world" (Nishida: 3-507). As far as following Nishida's discourse, the particular existence of "morality" (or other social consciousness/ spirits) survives along with the outline of "imperfect body," also the society as "a nexus of many kinds of worlds" (i.e., imperfect body). Nishida denotes on this point as below:

> Like individual consciousness confronts each other at the present point and creates new individual contents through it, the society develops as many kinds of social consciousness confront and fight each other within individual consciousness. When one thought and emotion play a central role in main content of individual creating effects, same as in society, one individual plays a creative role as a cross point of social thought and emotion. (Nishida: 3-408)

Society develops in analogical way with individual consciousness through "confronting and fighting each other." Each of them plays a central role in creating effects on both individual and society. Many individuals form the outline of society produce creative effect as "effect on effect" (Nishida: 3-408), and society (re) produces the culture as its shape.

Social consciousness/spirit, is as same as individual, has a moment of self-awareness which creates facts and actions at the same time (*Ji soku Gyo*), and it has a value of expression of "great individuality" (Nishida: 3-409). These statements in the early Nishida philosophy posits that society has "great individuality" with "imperfect body" as "great individual."

Picture 3: Structure of Individual and Society
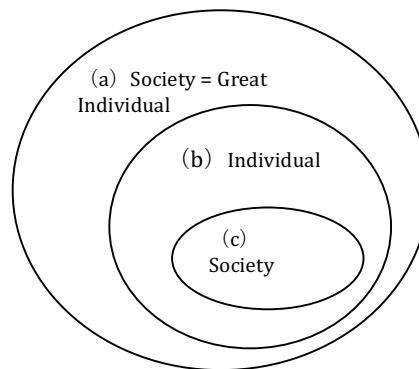
In summary, the society and individual has the fractal structure unifying and wrapping each other. (Moral) Society (c) in individual (b) creates individuality, and individuals in society gather to form a bigger circle of society (a) as a "great individual" (picture 3). This is the answer to the first question of Nishida's expression of "the difference between society and individual is the difference in size between a big circle and small circle on same field."

Conclusion

Looking back to the critics toward Nishida philosophy, the tendency indicate the disadvantages of scarcity in description regarding "process." This "process" can be seen in both space and time. Kiyoshi Miki, who inherited a view of "individual and society" as the concept of "Social Body" (*syakai teki shintai*) from Nishida[xxii], proposed "process" in time, describing "the status of human existence" by dividing it into three concepts of "environment, situation, and crisis" in his later uncompleted work "*Philosophical Anthropology*" (*Tetsugaku teki Ningengaku*) (Miki: 18-265). On this point, Nishida held on his perspective on time, "eternal presence," to explain "will," as seen in the aforementioned, which negates the perspective of "objectification." For Nishida, analyzing process of time like Miki does is equivalent to ignore such a problem of "objectification", since all of the process is snapshotted from the present self (subjective), is the past grasped with meaning and value from the view of presence, therefore failing to capture a concrete reality of our life. In other words, for Nishida, any aspects of "environment, situation and crisis" are something considered by someone's subjectivity.

As we can see in the introduction of this paper, Tanabe tried to approach toward 'process' in space, contrary to Miki, by establishing his original logic of "social existence" as "the logic of species" [xxiii]. We have carefully confirmed this until now by quoting Nishida's early works that he does not need "process" in space from the same view of Tanabe's critic does because society and individual have the fractal structure with the common logic of existence in Nishida. Through the whole philosophical life, it is able to acknowledge that Nishida concentrated on establishment of a fundamental logic in human existence by just describing individual and absolute nothingness. It concludes that the concepts like "Absolute Nothingness" (*zettai mu*) or "Self-Identity of Absolute Contradiction" (*zettai mujyun teki jikodouitsu*), can be applied for both individual and social existence according to the finding of this exploration. Most of the previous research has missed this regard[xxiv].

Nishida describes in the earliest work, *A Study of Good*[xxv] That "social consciousness" as "a living existence," regarding society and nation as a living being or an organism. "Social consciousness has the same organic system as individuals do like organs and connections." "But individual has a body as its foundation, and it is different from social consciousness, but brain is not a simple physical material but an organ composed of collective cells." Similarly, "society is composed of individuals as a collective of cells" (Nishida: 1-160). Even in his first book, we can find an implication of latter "an imperfect body" of society.

The perspective to society and individual in Nishida's philosophy reminds us of "the organismic theory of the state." The theory is "to regard a society as a living organism and explain social structure and action with analogical affinity of them" (Hayashi, 1971: 643), and it appeared in the 19 century. Herbert Spencer (1820-1902) and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831) are famous advocators of this theory, spreading over Meiji era of Japan, the theory was accepted widely by the academism. Jiro Kamishima, who was under an influence of Masao Maruyama and Kunio Yanagida, wrote "when describing a society as a human body, the ruler is a brain and others are organs of body (like hand and foot), and the structure indicates an absolute authority of the ruler. That's why it had kept being ingrained into an ideology of Japanese emperor system after Meiji era" (Kamishima, 1961: 12-13).   Thus, the theory assumes society (whole) is stronger than individuals (the part) (Hiromatsu, 1998: 698).

However, in Nishida philosophy, society does not have such superiority to individual. Since free will, which is explained by "transcendental causality," penetrates individual and society to create a unique personalities and individualities. Individual (the part) has a (the whole) society its inside, and both have an internal relation with each other, empowering creativity (*souzou*).

Nishida clearly mentions: "for something is related to a whole, we must think the part has the whole inside of it" (Nishida: 3-229), and this sentence clearly indicates the fractal structure of society and individual. This society (whole) is developed by self-realizations of individual (the part), and in this sense, society is "one which expects countless individualizations," as a great individual moment of many-one (*Ta soku Ichi)*. Individuals with uniqueness fight each other and then a society creatively makes progress through dialectic creation of individualities. "Individual is not simply part but must have relations with a whole inside of it" ("About concept of individual" (*kotai gainen*) in the book of "*the Problem of Consciousness*", Nishida: 3-229)[xxvi] And this relation of the part and the whole [xxvii] give a characteristic meaning to "society and individual" unlike the typical "organismic theory of the state." Here is the brief summary of his intention in "A study of good": "The society makes progress when individuals in the society accomplish self-realization. It is not natural society when it ignores individuals" (Nishida: 3-158).

Lastly, the concept of "body" should have a meaning of "physical existence" as a fundamental reality of "action" in general. At the early stage of Nishida philosophy, however, Nishida mentioned it exclusively from a view of consciousness, leaving the task to deepen the sense which was developed in his middle-later works, represented by his unique concept of "Action-intuition" (*koui teki chokkan*) especially discussed in "*Logic and Life*", after receiving critics from Tanabe.

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[i] All quotations of Kiyoshi Miki works in this thesis from, Miki Kiyoshi., 1966-1968. *Collection of Miki Kiyoshi*, Iwanami-syoten, first printed, and indicates volume and page number only in the main text.

[ii] His first critical remark made in *Calling for answer from Professor Nishida*（Nishida sensei no oshie wo aogu, 1930). In this paper, he implied Nishida's discourse sounds "emanation theory" led from "Absolute nothingness," which stands on meditative "resignation" after all. Tanabe also denied Hegel's dialectic in his work named "Hegel philosophy, and it's dialectic" (*Hegel Tetsugaku to Benshouho*) written in the same period as it is derived from the same critical view against simplification. On this regard, See "*Logic of Species, selection from Tanabe philosophy*," (Syu no Ronri, Tanabe Tetsugaku sen I). Edited by Masakatsu Fujita (2010: 500-501)

[iii] *Ibid*, p15

[iv] All quotations of Kitaro Nishida's works in this thesis are from *Collections of Nishida Kitaro* (Nishida Kitaro Zensyu) old printed, 1950, and indicates its volume and page number only in main text.

[v] He also commented on the preface of *Logic and Life*（Ronri to Seimei）in *Compilation of Philosophy thesis Second* (Tetsugaku ronbunsyu 2, Iwanami-syoten. 1937). Written after receiving criticisms from Tanabe as seen below. "I do not think we know we live because we think it, but because we live, so we contemplate it. Life is not such that is just irrational, direct, no-mediator, or else. We surely confirm that our life has the rational mediator, as well as contemplation, moreover, we find an actual truth in our actual life. I believe philosophy stands there" (Nishida: 8-269).

[vi] These words are related to the Japanese feudal culture.

[vii] "Society" is used to implying some concepts that connote not only "organization" but also "village (*sonraku*)", "municipality (*han* or *ken*)", "ethnic" and "nation".

[viii] For references to understand the concepts, "society" and "individual," Hideo Odagiri, '*Self and Environment*' (Jiga to Kankyo), 1960, compiled in "*History of Modern Japanese Thought*" edited by Sei Ito. In addition, Jiro Kamishima, 1961, "*Spiritual structure of modern Japan*," Toru Miyakawa, 1962, "*Philosophy of Modern Japan*," both tell us that the concepts of society and individual were imported from the process of western modernization and democratic development. Meiji-Taisho era is the period for Japanese to accept and regenerate its own original concept of "society and individual."

[ix] Kousaki (1996: 112) Kousaka remarked "there are many expressions strongly correlate to his later concept more than most of us think" and these expressions are "just like scattered musical note, keep showing up and disappearing. But these were coming together to become a main lead melodty in his later work".

[x] Kousaka, *ibid*, 'Nishida and Modern Issue' (Sensei to Gendai no Mondai), p.129

[xi]. We know Nishida's description of this type of consciousness plays an important role in his philosophy even in his first work *A Study of Good*. 1911. In "Existence," the second chapter, in order to clarify "Truth of life in heaven and earth" and "Actual existence," Nishida defines the "fact of intuitive experience as phenomenon of consciousness"(1-48) as his "starting point of study" (Chapter1). He also mentions, "conscious phenomenon is only existence" in the second chapter. Moreover, in "*the Problem of Consciousness*," things in the world do not exist alone independently from our consciousness. Individual consciousness keeps unifying objective world incessantly.

[xii], Nishida says, "Individual consciousness with no relations with social consciousness is anything but mad man's consciousness" (Nishida: 1-159).

[xiii] Nishida clearly states that "society has ethical value not simply because it is a collective of individual"(Nishida: 3-392). The same thing can be said on individual consciousness. Individual consciousness is not just a collection of accidental elements of experience.

[xiv] According to Nishida, "Transcendental causality" "demands a logical basis of the uniqueness of self," and this is also regarded as the logic of "will." The causality used in natural science finds "common meaning of each phenomenon in the world" through scientific recognition as the collection of experimental facts, but it merely explain "affinity" of data. But an individual has "independent personality" and "unique individuality which we can never find anything same in the world." Individuality comes from our free will and unification made by the effect of will, which is a plurality=one "*Ta-soku-Ichi*." Contrary to the causality of natural science, "Transcendental causality" is the logic of will commonly possessed by individuals and others respectively. He rejects "affinity" to explain "individuality" because it is unique, exists spatiotemporally as only one, and the causality of natural science cannot endorse it logically (Nishida: 3-400).　Torataro Shimomura plainly depicted the will in Nishida's works very well, and we can tell why the causality of natural science is not suitable to explain free will in his sentences' "will is something that determines, and nothing determines the will. If something determines the will, the will is not living. Thus the will is never governed by the causality because it produces causality itself. That's why the will must be absolute free will." The free will here is "effect itself," which creates "uniqueness" and bestows it on our personality and individuality. It operates on its own and, therefore, creates the objective world. Thus, "Transcendental causality" is a special logic of causality that explains the free will which transcends individuals in space and time. 'Nishida Philosophy and Japanese Thought' in "*The Collection of Torataro Shimomura*," vol.12, 1990, p.170

[xv] Nishida disputes Neo-Kantianism (Cohen, Windelband, Rickert) in his work, "*Intuition and Reflection in Consciousness*"(Jikaku ni okeru Chokkan to Hansei) with punctuating "absolute free will" in consciousness. Kenjyuro Yanagida (1972: 123) remarked "will" can be named "absolute will of the universe" with which "From inorganic to organic matter, the world evolves into conscious-will (with self-awareness and action)," and "it means return to concrete foundation of existence through the diversification and development." (*Nishida philosophy and Materialism* (Nishida Tetsugaku to Yuibuturon)

[xvi] Here we can see a strong influence from "Tathandlung" (*jikou*) which was proposed by Johann Gottlieb Fichte in his remarkable work "*Wissenschaftslehre*" (1794)

[xvii] In this sense, free will obtains a meaning of "moral will" in the process of unification between subjectivity and objectivity; organizing individuality. "Our each action and effect" is a point of relations between facts of experiences and some are unified, and others are discarded by our will in the process of unification. It calls for our positive moral action as "*Ta soku Ichi*," then the action becomes an objective reality for others and society. He also stated: The world organized by moral wills, needless to say, is the world of relation between individuals with free will. Individual can be free only by admitting individual who has freedom of will. This is the moral relation, and we can find it in the foundation inside of self-consciousness (Nishida: 3-397).

[xviii] We can confirm in *the Problem of Consciousness* that Nishida already noted, "an independent individual has infinite and countless relations within itself" (Nishida: 3-116). And it is "independent" because it has uniqueness and individuality. We can find same point in *A Study of Good* that individual consciousness is brought up in the relation with social consciousness. "Self-awareness" is to be aware of the point of attachment with the individual and others, and it then brings the individuality (Nishida calls it "Individual unification"). The moral society is formed by such individualities (Nishida: 3-395).

[xix] In another part, he says "When individual finds within deep inside of him/herself and break through the place," then we can find the "moral world" (Nishida: 3-410)

[31] Social phenomena such as "language, manners, customs, institutions, law, religion, literature, etc."(1-159) is "national culture" and he uses "social form" to describe "family" and "nation"(Nishida: 3-188).　These are common wealth of a particular society, and their general consciousness should have its outline.

[xxi], So Nishida also describes "authority" arising in a situation in which "great conscious/spirit" with "great body" of society confronts with individual. Sometimes the authority of society appears in front of us and kills individuals. We can see such situation in an actual society and then we are clearly aware of "body" as outline of society. Nishida also mentioned that, in the situation where social body and individual body are confronting, "A particular individual gets a value of great individuality, sometimes they could be exempted from sacrificing many" (3-409). Inferring from his comment, in actual society, also we face with the realities sometimes in which the diversification of individualities permits certain "sacrifice."

[xxii] Kiyoshi Miki stands on the same viewpoint of Nishida for the concept of society and individual:

As long as the groups and societies which contains many individuals show unification as a whole, it should be regarded as an individual. It is possible to regard a society as an individual. The more perfect unification which essence of individuality becomes, the more diversified the contents it has and society is more exactly appropriate to individual (Miki: 18-363).

[xxiii] Tanabe said "Species have merely relative meaning in the view of the description of conservative classification. So it is limitation for theories and their logics which view species as the model of organism (*ibid*-14).

[xxiv] For instance, Yasuo Yuasa takes up the concept of "body" in Nishida philosophy, recognizing it as "Historical Body" (*rekishi teki shintai*), however, missing the meaning of "society" from the sense of which this essay elucidated; Yuasa (1990: 29-100). Also, Kobayashi (2010: 128) refers to the transition from "individual "to "nation" in the modern Japanese philosophy, but Kobayashi misunderstands that the concept of "body" as "society" was derived originally from Kiyoshi Miki, not Nishida.

[xxv] More accurately saying, Nishida already regards 'society' as 'body' (but in another Japanese, *nikutai*, which has stronger physical nuance than *shintai*) in "*Draft for Ethics*" (Rinrigaku Souan) wrote before the publication of "*A Study of Good*" (Nishida: 13-244-246).

[xxvi] The differences between "Individuality" and "Uniqueness" is explained by Nishida as the former is "only one in the world" and the latter is "a living with free will" (Nishida: 3-121-122、" The Various Chains of Experience Content")

[xxvii]   In *A Study of Good* we can find the discourse about the whole and the part in the remark: "The relation between God and individual consciousness is the relations between the whole and part. In all spiritual phenomena, each part exists under the control of wholeness while each part is also independent consciousness. (In spiritual phenomenon, each part ends in itself). Everything in the world is expression of one-and-only God does not deny an independence of individual self-awareness" (Nishida: 1-193).