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Political and Economic Integration in Crisis: A Theoretical Viewpoint

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Abstract

We take a broad view on the concept of “regional integration” to mean diverse forms of political and economic relations among nations, and are pushing forward an interdisciplinary research on the hierarchical and complex nature of these relations. So far, we have been making efforts to build a theory based on the hierarchical structure of regional integrations and to conduct research activities to further develop it. Focusing on the hierarchical structure (macro momentum of regional integration, inter-state regional integration of meso-level, micro-level industrial/ethnic entities) of regional integrations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the European Union (EU) and their intra-hierarchical relationships, we are developing an analytical framework highlighting why these regional integration efforts are oftentimes put in crisis. There is some empirical evidence showing that if political and economic interdependence is high, relationships based on regional integration tend to be solidified; on the contrary, if it is recognized by participating stakeholders that the claims of their rights (e.g., market access through tariff reduction and other forms of preferential treatments) are excessive due to the diversity (heterogeneity) of the integration partners, the country will also sharpen its claims of rights over integration, and as a result, the relationship of regional integration will get rapidly divided.

¹ Research assistance from Ms. Yuki Tashiro is cordially acknowledged.

Political and Economic Integration in Crisis: A Theoretical Viewpoint

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1.Introduction

At the A02 study group (Political and Economic Regional Integration) under the ongoing 5-year research project in Japan “Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research on Innovative Areas (research in a proposed research area) : Relational Studies on Global Crises” (research period: June 2016- March 2021, and headed by Prof.Keiko Sakai of Chiba University, Japan), we take a broad view on the concept of “regional integration” to mean diverse forms of political and economic relations among nations, and are pushing forward an interdisciplinary research on the hierarchical and complex nature of these relations. The next section considers the "relationship" in a general form as much as possible, in accordance with some cases of regional integration. Section 3 makes an overview of some cases and relationships in and between politico-economic regional Integration. Section 4 presents perspectives on political and economic sense of regional integration from the relational perspective and concludes the paper.

2. A Relational Perspective on Regional Integrations

From the latter half of the 1990s regional integration in the political and economic sense has progressed in line with the global trend, and at the same time, the coordination function among the countries within the region is shaken as a mechanism of resolving regional conflicts at socio-economic levels. Regional integration here refers to the phenomenon in which border barriers are reduced and some sort of political and economic

ties (institutional or informal) occur in regions beyond national borders². It is essential to grasp the actual state of economic and political integration functions of various regional integration bodies such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and analyze their economic and political functioning. It seems that the hierarchical structure of upper system (macro), state entity³ (meso), and subsystem (micro) will influence each other beyond the layer. Also, how to respond to the crime and terrorism forming a cross-regional network, how the regional consortium reacts and seek out a new regional security system, the resonance of the state entity and the subsystem are also important considerations become.

“Regional integration” based mainly on the nation state became apparent from the latter half of the 1990s in each field of economics and politics. With the rise of regional economic integration such as free trade agreement, the meaning of the “Westphalia regime” centered on the national unit is diminished, and the economic relationship with the super-national regional economic integration area as the unit is created. Formation of the regional economic integration zone precedes in Europe and the United States, and the EU is a representative example. Currently, a wide regional economic integration zone is rapidly forming in Asia and elsewhere across the globe; various regional institutions such as ASEAN in Southeast Asia, GCC in Middle East’s gulf region have been established with varying degrees of integration.

In the background of the flow of regionalism, in addition to economic globalization and deepening of interdependence relations, the adjusting function between countries

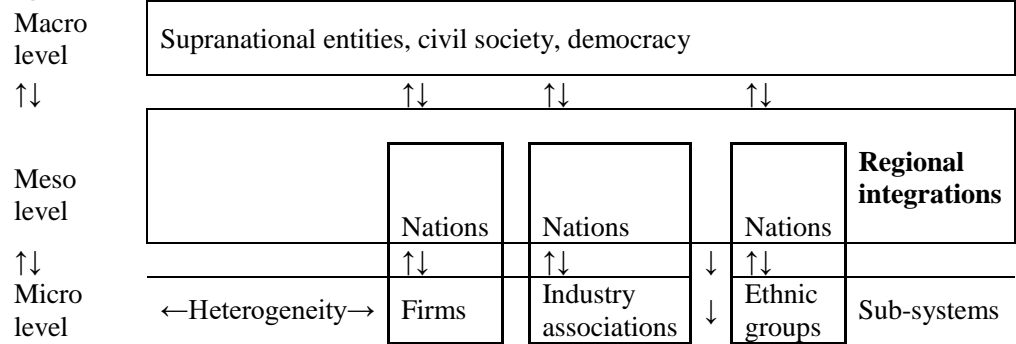
² Acemogul and Robinson (2012) discuss that the accountable and “inclusive” role of nation states is sometimes not attained, thereby leading to the failure of nations.

³ “Nations” cannot be placed at the “micro”. Replacing “nations” with the word “(national) leaders” could also be an option, since the decision of “leaders” is being executed as “pseudo-national decision” yet driven by micro motives. When we observe from the outside, it seems as if the “state” remains as one solid unit, but in reality it is just a decision of its “leader”, which is the view that the stability of the national policy cannot be premised to be fixed.

within the region was expected as a security mechanism, that is, as a mechanism for resolving regional conflicts. The EU has developed from the socio-economic community and has wide-ranging functions such as peace and welfare in the integration entity, international relations, etc., to expand the accession to the former Eastern Europe / Soviet countries after the Cold War⁴, subject to democratic governance and human rights compliance I have arrived. And in ASEAN, democratization of member countries and the global expansion of democratic norms have advanced economic development as well as movements for human rights and democracy.

As a way to capture the global society as a system, a hierarchical structure of “macro”, “meso” and “micro” as shown in Figure 1, should be emphasized. In this figure, regional integration bodies are basically located at the meso level (yet closer to the macro), while some regional integrations could be positioned as macro level as “supra-national upper system”.

Figure 1. Macro, Meso and Micro-level interaction



Source: Adapted from Keiko Sakai’s original figure.

Focusing on the economic side, regional integration constitutes an economic network, and by the interaction within the regional economic integration area and between the plural regional economic integration zones, the characteristics of the state-based entity

⁴ As for Cold War, refer to Duara (2013), Fraser (2013), Gleijeses (2017), Iriye (2013), Jackson (2013), Kirby (2013), Plummer (2013), Sayward (2013), Shibusawa (2013), Spaulding (2013) and Stone (2013).

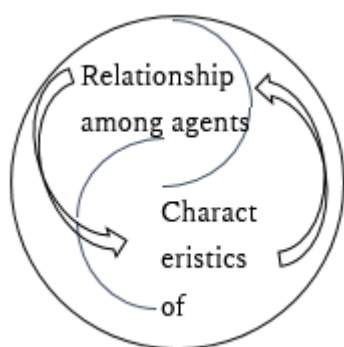
(or “comparative advantage”) Emerges. In analyzing the ASEAN economic policy⁵ that involve trade in goods and services, innovation through interaction between companies, and unity in diversity in diversity, each entity such as nation, enterprise, region integration and their various interactions must be explicitly considered. By closely observing the patterns and intensities of network connections and analyzing what kind of circumstances the “critical situation” mentioned above will take place, it is possible to analyze the success or failure of policy formation concerning regional integration and the trade pattern and to analyze the affluent economic environment for innovation is an important issue. As a methodology, statistical analysis based on large-scale collection of data is also indispensable. Specifically, the patterns of innovation and trade arising from firm heterogeneity are not derived from the assumption of “many homogeneous enterprises” assumed in the current mainstream economics, but statistics of corporate “heterogeneity” has to be collected through careful field surveys.

As for “relationship of global political economic system”, it seems that solutions to conflicts were oriented “internationally”, which seems to be the main viewpoint of academic field dealing with global issue so far. For that reason, dealing with so-called “discontinuities” in which “relationships” change drastically, seems to have left it extraordinarily in the past as an “external event” outside of the system. However, under circumstances where relationships (conflict, dependence, fluctuation, conversion, and so forth between social members and the manner of subjects (national ideals and distribution of public opinion) themselves change significantly, “relationships affect the manner of the subject, and vice versa (causal linkage from subject to relationship) is also true” is

⁵ Carpenter, Alavi and Zulkifli (2013) discuss ASEAN’s role of regional development cooperation for narrowing development gaps.

more realistic. Intra- and Inter relationships of regional integration bodies include “confrontation”, “dependence”, “disappearance (constant fluctuation of realization equilibrium)” between states, “transformation (changes in the characteristics of axes and subjects of conflict)” and the like. An analytical format that emphasizes interdependent “fields” of macroscopic, meso and micro relation between hierarchical regional integration as shown in Figures 2 and 3 become important.

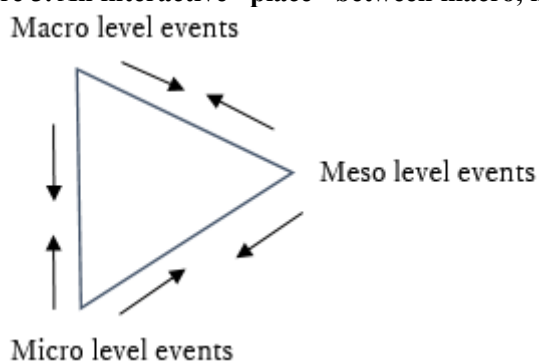
Figure 2. Interaction between relationship and subject characteristics



Note: The arrows indicate a causal direction.

Source: Based on the Author's discussion with Ms. Yuki Tashiro.

Figure 3. An interactive "place" between macro, meso and micro



Note: The arrows indicate a causal direction.

Figure 4 shows an example of a framework for concretely discussing the relationship of regional integration. Arrows in the figure indicate the presence and intensity (expressed in terms of thickness) of influence in each layer and between layers. In this figure, the meso-level items (national goals and policies) have a great influence on

the disappearance of regional integration, and at the same time, the regional variation of public opinion indicated by the microscopic viewpoint (survey result of regional opinion) Is influencing the transformation of the meso-level national goal and policy (thin arrows also indicate the location of the causal relationship, although it is relatively small influence as well). It is a big branch point over the relationship of regional integration). In analysis of regional integration that emphasizes relationships, it is thought that as much as possible, causal linkage among hierarchies that progress at the same time should be considered.

Figure 4. A framework for analyzing regional integrations

	Hierarchy	Operand		
		Macro	Meso	Micro
Operator	Macro	Proliferation of regional integrations	Changing national policies	Changing public opinions toward regional integrations
	Meso	National targets and policies on regional integration	Conflicts among nation states on the issue of regional integrations	Citizens' acceptance of national targets and policies
	Micro	Local level difference in the acceptance of regional integrations	Domestic political movement in favor of / against regional integrations	Local level conflicts on the issue of regional integrations

Source: Made by the author.

3. Overview of regional integrations

This section considers the global relationship by some cases of political and economic regional integration.

3-1.Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

As a result of the establishment of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) in

1967 in addition to opposing communism⁶, solidarity for security between ASEAN member states in Southeast Asia was pursued; it also had the purpose of deepening regional integration for co-prosperity and economic development. The current ASEAN has intensified economic implications (i.e., cultivating scale economy and efficiency in trade and investment, and securing positive externalities such as an increase in the stability of member states) as a centripetal force of regional integration. In ASEAN, creation of further economic comparative advantage under the name of AEC (ASEAN Economic Community) is pursued.

In ASEAN as a regional integration entity, there is ambiguity (fuzziness) over whether it is politically motivated or economically driven, as mentioned above. In 1976 the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) was concluded among the five ASEAN member countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand). It was important to make it comprehensive and “ambiguous” with the use of “Southeast Asia” instead of “ASEAN”. Subsequently, the number of subscribers to the Treaty increased: Brunei became a member in 1984, Vietnam and Laos, in 1992, and Cambodia and Myanmar joined in 1995. Then, the characteristics of the subject of ASEAN as an “anti-communist union” has been changing at least implicitly. It is important to understand that the core values of regional integration are in “fluctuation”.

Due to the heterogeneity among the state entities that make up the ASEAN, the centripetal force as a regional integration body is lost, and at the same time, “entropy” (degree of disturbance of the order as a nation) which hinders national integration, increases. It is also an important property for a regional integration body that can become

⁶ Concerning communism, see Brown (2014), Fitzpatrick (2014), King (2014), Madsen (2014) and Smith (2014).

a situation where it is divided. What are the implications for changes in behavior of individuals and companies as a result of regional integration and penetration of financial capitalism on the political system of the ASEAN countries (Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines) On the political and economic systems of ASEAN countries and how the domestic political trends will have an impact on the regional order in East Asia will be the focus of regional integration surrounding ASEAN.

In recent years, the situation surrounding the South China Sea and ASEAN's correspondence are important for considering the relativeness of ASEAN and national sovereignty (vulnerable property maintained only by constant support by both micro and macro subjects) It is an example. Regarding the territorial rights in the South China Sea, "heterogeneity" (temperature difference) exists in the ASEAN member countries, and the parties Philippines, as a sovereign state, an international arbitration trial with China over the South China Sea's territorial rights (July 2016), but the approach to economic assistance from China to the Philippines is to be received as preferred by "micro" entities such as industrial associations and political affiliated organizations in the Philippines, and discussions on territorial rights Is in compliance with the Philippines side or indeed shelving status (as of the end of May 2017). In other words, national sovereignty as the main body of the meso is only a relative thing that changes according to the relationship with other hierarchies surrounding it. China has limited limitations on maintaining national sovereignty in the Philippines, and beyond the "critical point" that can be handled as a nation, China, which seeks to expand national sovereignty, has developed a favorable relationship with the Philippines in absolute terms It can be made to do.

Also, emphasis is placed on the consensus principle of non-interference principle of internal affairs at the ASEAN level ("macro" main subject if it is regarded as a super

national subject and "meso" mainly when considered as an intergovernmental agency) It is linked causally to the strengthening of the characteristic ASEAN Way⁷ to do. Specifically, attempts to issue a joint statement over the South China Sea as ASEAN have led to failures many times. And this seems to make it easier for other ASEAN countries to present the political and economic liberalism colors.

Regional integration body ASEAN has succeeded to a certain extent, but it has limitations as seen in the situation over the South China Sea above, which also leads to a loosening of the international rule of law in a macroscopic sense As a result, the international code of conduct around South China is transformed as a matter of fact. Especially since the influence of China has strengthened since the 1980s, existing international maritime law is also urged to "transform" in interpretation and application. This shows that international norms can be altered by the influence of meso situation.

Also in Malaysia and the Philippines there is a disturbing state (In the Philippines which was said to be an honor of democracy, under the worsening of relations between anti-government armed forces on Mindanao Island and government forces, martial law in the island is 2017 It was laid in May). This is not a coincidence, it happens in the same structure. The problem of the sovereign ownership of sovereign states (at the meso level) also affects the micro domestic situation.

As seen in the trend of the regional union called ASEAN, the so-called Westphalian regime (international regime with the sovereign state as the immovable entity) can only be relative, and a macro-meso-micro relationships change constantly. When the relationship underpinning them shakes and works in the negative direction, the

⁷ Concerning the "ASEAN Way", refer to Aminuddin (2017), Indrawan (2016) and Thompson (2017).

sovereign nation regime (in the meso area) also comes to a crisis of dissolution.

3-2. Regional Integration in the Middle East⁸

It is said that the reason why military intervention by major powers is frequently adopted as a conflict resolution option in the Middle East is that the intra-regional solution mechanism has collapsed. It is considered that regional integration bodies can provide such functions. The elucidation of the instability factor of international relations and the stabilization policy that cuts the regional integration in the Middle East is a meaningful research agenda.

The role played by regional integrations is not limited to closer economic relations and promotion of democratization. To aim for the elimination of issues (disparities and divisions) in the regional dynamics from the level of the national entity level, the civil society of the democratizing transition country forms a cross-border network and is developing diverse activities. Such networks that go beyond the framework of nations involved in regional formation include illegal economic and social activities including criminal acts, and in response to a wide range of criminal acts such as drug trade and human trafficking. There are cases where regional integration bodies are given security-alliance roles. A typical example is the inter-state response to a wide-area terrorist network, and possibly the GCC, which was an alliance relationship limited to the Persian Gulf oil-producing countries.

However, it is pointed out that the GCC, which is a type of regional integration is not functioning as expected of a regional integration. Analyzing changes in the Middle

⁸The description in this section is the result of adding the comments from Prof. Akifumi Ikeda and Dr. Masaki Matsuo to the relevant part of planning research A02 "Political economic regional integration" application form.

East regional order mediated by oil and immigrants, is important as the “realities” of regional integration. The concept of the Middle East refers to geographically dispersed areas, and “regional integration” in the Middle East is difficult to occur in the first place. However, there are many countries where “Arabic” is a common language, so domestic struggle and international struggle are easy to be linked across modern national borders.

3-3. The EU (European Union)⁹

As is well known in Europe, the huge and pioneering regional integration effort called the EU is indeed at stake now. What lies behind it is literally the difficulty of this “integration” project, which is far from the intentions of the citizens of each country, by the global elite. It would be one-sided to see the movement of the anti-EU as a reaction to nationalism¹⁰ led by populism alone.

The phenomenon typically seen in the populism of European countries in recent years is that “anti-Islam” is the flag head, along with so-called criticism of established politics. The relation between “Europe and Islam¹¹” has not been put forward as much as is needed. Moreover, contemporary populism adopts the argument that it puts forward the progressive idea of gender equality and separation of religion and religion, and criticizes Islam because of its “anti-European” philosophy. In any case, asking the relationship between “Europe and Islam” beyond the relationship between individual countries and countries is an important issue of global relational studies. Compared with the trend of the EU, the integration method presupposing agreement of member states like ASEAN

⁹Based on Prof. Jiro Mizushima’s comments.

¹⁰For origins of nationalism, see, e.g., Benner (2013) and McDougall (2015). Also for the several cases of nationalism in different areas, refer to Aydin (2013), Chatterji (2013), Eckert (2013), Halliday (2013), Henley (2013), Jaffrelot (2013), Mitter (2013), Roshwald (2013), Scuire (2017) and Sidel (2013).

¹¹ As for Islam, see Krstic (2015) and Motadel (2017).

seems to be a rather steady integration with less repulsion though it takes time. Multi-level comparisons of regional integrations (e.g., EU and ASEAN) are a fruitful research topic.

4. Perspectives on political-economic regional integration and relational perspective

In this paper, we make the case for political economic regional integration from theoretical perspectives. The relationship between subjects is the central focus. The hierarchical structure of the global society is a structure in which several layers are nested. It is at times a good idea to give names to what seems to be the subjects of each level such as individual → household → ethnic or local government → nation → regional integration body → supranational system and international norm and discuss the interaction only within each hierarchy. However, there are limitations to capture the reality of the global society with this approach, and it is impossible for various actions and ideas to be predictable among individuals' actions, with part of the meso connecting micro and macro agents. Indeed, interactions (relationships) between hierarchies simultaneously change the relationship while prescribing the way of the subject. See Appendix for an attempt to benchmark this situation with just two agents (at micro, meso or macro levels, depending on the situation at issue).

Particularly in the “mesoscopic” field that exhibit unpredictability, a sudden collapse of the relationship (catastrophe) occurs unexpectedly, so microscopic consideration assuming perfect rationality cannot be done. We cannot speak only with macroscopic overall indicators represented by the average statistical values.

The “inertial force” of the regional integration body (the magnitude of the centripetal force trying to reach a specific direction as a society) and the “viscous force”

(such as consensus and sense of solidarity) between the micro- agents are at issue. When comparing these, if the deviation of the ratio between these two (inertial force divided by viscous force) exceeds a certain level, the “behavior that missed the normal path” of the subject that does not try to keep up with the society’s centripetal force (low adhesion with other subjects) becomes prominent. When this leads to a chain reaction, the regional integration body suddenly shifts from the “normal state” (= laminar flow) to the turbulent state (= turbulent flow).

As outlined in this paper, as an important feature of a regional integration body in recent years, the network of non-state actors together with aspects such as strengthening economic efficiency, cooperative relations and promoting democratic as a whole are important hierarchically embedded actors. The mechanism of transforming the character of the integration body is non-linear. In grasping the actual state of economic and political integration functions of various regional integration bodies and analyzing their economic and political roles, it is important not to focus only on relationships between state actors, but to develop supranational as well as microscopic perspectives. Trends in the global society including higher-level systems (e.g., international organizations, civil society, supra-national networks) and subsystems of heterogeneity of various groups within the state entity (e.g., industry groups and companies) , It is important to see how it affects regional integration among countries.

Understanding regional integrations in the form of "systems with a hierarchical structure", as regional integrations (macroscopic) as superior systems, state entities (which may include regional integration as meso, intergovernmental union), sub The hierarchical structure called system (micro) influences each other across layers. Trends in other hierarchies give instability to the region integration in an unexpected way, and on

the contrary, promote regional integration in an unexpected manner, and it is necessary to study it as much as possible through academic and fusion.

As empirical observations suggest, some “tolerance level” and “critical point” breaking the tolerance exist in the diversity (or heterogeneity) of regional integrations (or some international entity association as a similar type). This is evident from the relationships surrounding “regional integration” in Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Europe, and the multilayered regional economic integration is the source of the tension relationship to mutual relations. While economic relationships sometimes promote regional integration, such as international division of labor by trade and investment, it is important to understand the basic value (respect for democracy, human rights), civilization and religion in terms of civilization and culture make up differences which could lead to the “critical point” that forms the boundary between stabilization and destabilization of regional integrations. And at the critical point, “susceptibility (degree of influence of fluctuation)” is large, i.e., small scale “fluctuation” such as trade friction, expression of policy support / non-support from industrial organizations, regional demonstration, could lead to amplification of initial fluctuations. A certain degree of diversity in subsystems is expected to have a positive influence on regional integration among countries as “comparative advantage”, but the diversity to reach a certain “critical point” should be considered more closely. The mechanism of the formation / break down of regional integrations leading to destabilization requesting the emergence of a new system should be elucidated in both theoretical and empirical terms.

Considering that the critical point of such a relationship is related to capturing the “crisis” or “catastrophe” of the relationship over regional integration, the nature of relationships and the interdependence of subjects should be formally expressed.

Empirically oriented studies focusing on the functioning of regional integration from the aspects of income, ethnicity, religion, and feedback effects are needed. In addition to analyzing the relationships concerning the division of regional integration, there is also a need to identify “singularity” (so-called “focal point” that determines division and integration of relationships) for improving relationship in and among regional integrations. Also, the possibility of “intervention” (policy stance including non-intervention) should be brought into research subjects.

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Appendix. Politico-economic regional integration and relationships: An analysis from the perspective of complexity¹²

1. Relationships and politico-economic regional integration

This study considers politico-economic regional integration with a focus on “relationships” at the micro, meso or macro levels¹³. Tariff reductions and the freer movement of people and investments following regional economic integration are agreed upon by unequivocally matching requests (claims to rights) and offers (concessions) of liberalization between two or more sovereign states. Within the sphere of regional economic integration, companies mutually interact as agents that trade in goods and services, which influences the formation of regional integration policies and affects the global economic environment. Relationships between countries and companies are complex; this study surveys economic models of relationships from the perspective of complexity or non-linearity in Section 2. Section 3 considers relationships and the roots of moral sentiment. Finally, Section 4 looks toward a theoretical construction of societal relationships.

2. Complexity and economic models of relationships

This section considers the relationships between agents undertaking regional integration in light of the complexity (or unstraightforward non-linearity) of an actual society. Adam Smith, considered the father of economics, forms the basis for this analysis; his studies in economics and ethics were inquiries of moral philosophy to understand how humans can achieve happiness. Here, however, the “Adam Smith problem” comes to mind. This problem is the question of whether Adam Smith’s depiction of human nature should be understood as being based on a principle of mutual sympathy (as thought to be asserted mainly in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*), as being based on self-interest (as thought to be asserted in *The Wealth of Nations*), or as a balance between the two concepts. In summary, “humans, subject to desires and weaknesses, combine the two;” furthermore, community-level relationships also follow both principles simultaneously. Below, I briefly consider the nature of these relationships.

In relationship-oriented regional integration, there is a predominance of one-nation-centricity, that is, the behavioral principle of seeking greater utility (profit) for one’s own country. If attention is not paid to the various relationships that exist among the multiple

¹² Yuki Tashiro kindly provided help with references to Smith’s writings and in positive psychology in the production of this paper. Allow me to express my gratitude.

¹³ The framework presented actually applies to any level (micro, meso or macro) at which “relationships” between two actors (defined flexibly, depending on the issue area) are in force.

nation states, companies, and households that constitute regional integration, this regional integration will be neither peaceful nor mutually beneficial. This section presents an analytic framework for relationships based on Yoshida (1997). I present an overview below and conduct a study from the perspective of complexity (non-linearity). If Agent 1 (e.g., a nation, an ethnic group, or an individual, as various types of agents may be imagined) makes a request from (claims a right against) Agent 2, the profit obtainable from Agent 2 increases; conversely, if Agent 1 makes an offer to (makes a concession to) Agent 2, Agent 1's profit decreases. I introduce X_{12} as a variable indicating measures of requests and offers; if X_{12} is positive, Agent 1 is making a request from Agent 2, and, if it is negative, Agent 1 is making an offer to Agent 2. Similarly, I introduce X_{21} as a variable indicating measures of requests and offers from Agent 2 to Agent 1; a positive value here means that Agent 2 is making a request from Agent 1, and a negative value means that Agent 2 is making an offer to Agent 1.

The profit obtainable in the relationship between Agent 1 and Agent 2 may be expressed as U_{12} as follows:

$$U_{12}=a_{11}X_{12}+a_{12}X_{21} \quad (\text{here, } a_{11}>0, a_{12}<0).$$

If slight assertions of rights (requests) are made between agents, the relationship will not worsen significantly, and if these assertions are within a certain permissible range, the relationship will not deteriorate greatly. However, once these assertions fall beyond the permissible range, rapid, non-linear deterioration becomes natural. Here, Yoshida (1997) introduces the variable R to indicate the subjective measure of a relationship, whereby Agent 1's subjective evaluation of the relationship with Agent 2 is as follows:

$$R_{12}=b_{11}X_{12}^3 + b_{12}X_{21}^3 \\ (b_{11}<0, b_{12}<0).$$

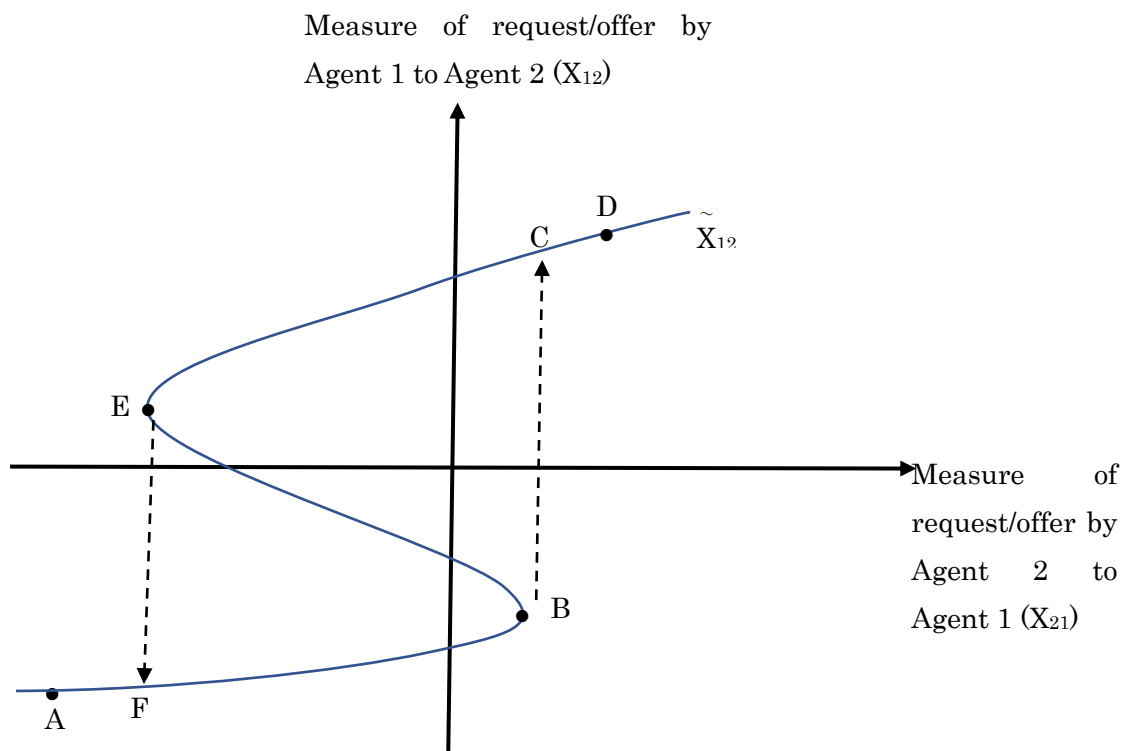
Next, the distance from the desirable target for the pursuit of profit and for maintaining the relationship (determined as an ideology according to national principles and ethnic and religious beliefs) is thought of as follows:

$$V_{12}=(U_{12}-\bar{U}_{12})^2 + (R_{12}-\bar{R}_{12})^2$$

Aiming to minimize this value is a viable and optimal action for Agent 1. Following this

behavioral principle, Yoshida (1997) derives viable optimal action curves for Agent 1 under relationship-oriented conditions, as shown in Figure 1, in response to cases in which the target values for relationships are relatively large (i.e., social stickiness is high). The curves show a combination of viable optimal actions. As the forms of these curves show, even if Agent 2 starts at Point A and changes the relationship horizontally from offers to requests, Agent 1 will not significantly change their measure of his requests until Point B is reached. When Agent 2 makes requests beyond the horizontal coordinates of Point B, however, Agent 1 rapidly switches towards Point C and makes requests from Agent 2. The same principle applies to Agent 2.

Figure 1: Viable optimal action curves for Agent 1 under relationship-oriented conditions

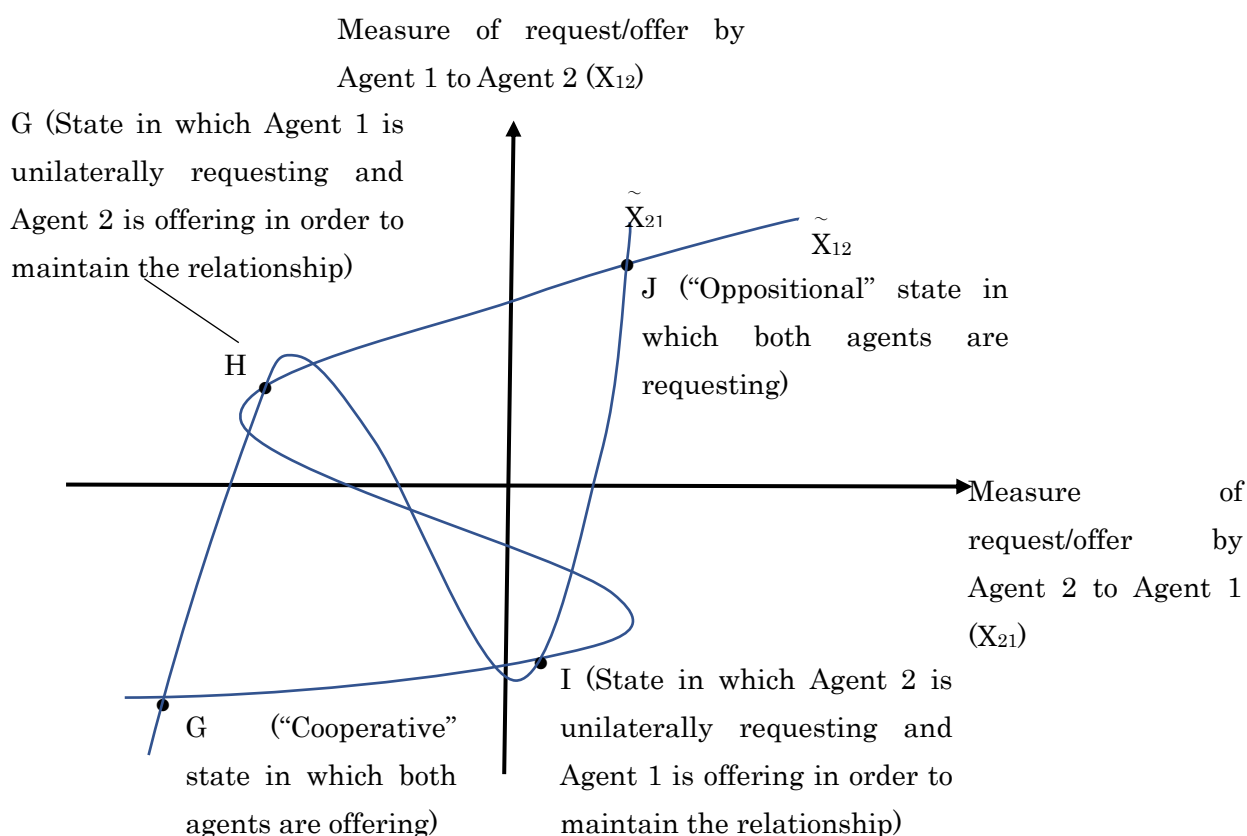


Source: Yoshida (1997), Figure 2-4

Yoshida (1997) discusses relationships between both agents in circumstances in which Agent 1 and Agent 2 are combined, such as that shown in Figure 2. Here, G, H, I, and J are the four stable points of equilibrium. Among these, G is the cooperative state of mutual

concessions (offer-making), whereas J is the oppositional state of mutual assertions of rights (request-making). H and I are vulnerable states that could easily disappear if either agent were to raise his own target profit. H or I may disappear if Agent 1 or Agent 2 (think of these agents as governments or ethnic groups) changes his target profit level in response to a political-economic policy change by either agent, resulting in the rapid destabilization of the relationship between Agent 1 and Agent 2. In other words, a (relationship) catastrophe occurs. Thus, a possible perspective is to view the relationships between agents as deciding the agents' identities.

Figure 2: Viable optimal action curves and equilibria for Agent 1 and Agent 2 under relationship-oriented conditions



Source: Created from Yoshida (1997), Figure 2-7

I consider the process of regional integration in a politico-economic sense (e.g., the EU or ASEAN) as a concrete example. Here, while also mutually maintaining relationships among themselves, the actors that become members of the integrated unit make mutual

requests of each other concerning, for instance, the degree of investment liberalization and the schedule for reducing tariff rates. Moreover, even in conflicts regarding territorial sovereignty and self-governance between differing ethnic groups within a nation, agents are usually observed behaving in such a manner so as to secure their own interests, regardless of efforts to avoid breaking off relationships as much as possible.¹⁴ As a result, there is a certain real-world applicability to models such as those above; a “relationship catastrophe” is prone to occur in states, such as Point H or Point I, in which only one of the agents asserts a right (makes requests) and the other agent only concedes (makes offers) for the sake of maintaining the relationship. In such states, the occurrence of an unforeseen incident, even on a minute scale, risks disturbing or shaking things up, resulting in the conceding (offering) side running out of patience. After a critical point is passed, therefore, Points H, I, and so forth eventually disappear. As expected, agents involved in negotiation should aim for a state of cooperation (Point G in Figure 2). Another important perspective is viewing relationships as the essence rather than as the means (Yoshida 1997) or, in other words, emphasizing the relationship rather than individualistic relations that pit opposition against opposition, following the principle of “an eye for an eye.”¹⁵ However, in practice, states of opposition (Point J) end up becoming equilibria. Why do such results occur? The following section references the concept of self-interest discussed by Smith and examines the reasons for the emergence of oppositional states.

3. Relationships and the roots of the moral feelings of individual people as the smallest compositional unit of regional integration

Adam Smith argues that the ideal moral sentiment is a state of peace of mind (a normal, calm mind). Furthermore, the study of ethics is an enquiry for people to gain wisdom, live correctly according to their consciences, and achieve peace of mind, whereas the study of economics is a means for creating the minimum wealth necessary, eliminating unemployment, and achieving peace of mind. In materially impoverished situations, emphasis is placed on the importance of the accelerator of free competition, and, as long as it does not harm the interests of others, competition based on self-interest should be permitted. However, at the stage when enough force has been acquired such that

¹⁴ It is possible that, as a consequence of disturbances in relationships, the territory between sovereign nation states may expand and contract. The state of requests and offers between two sovereign states determines the assignment of territory.

¹⁵ Furthermore, Point G is a stable, robust point that does not change greatly from the shape of two curves.

economic activity runs by itself, since an economy that gives prominence only to self-interest in the pursuit of material wealth can also be contrary to happiness, emphasis should be placed on the importance of the sympathy principle as a brake (control function). Specifically, in Adam Smith's moral philosophy, the moral principle of sympathy and the economic principle of self-interest have been considered as one principle.

Here, Smith's viewpoint of the "impartial spectator," that is, that "God is watching even when no one else is," which appears in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, amounts to sympathy towards, and the internalization of, external standards. Furthermore, in Part III of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, self-interest and self-care are included among the aspects that may be controlled by a sense of duty. Smith writes that "Nature [has not] abandoned us entirely to the delusions of self-love" (*The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Pt. III, Ch. 4). Namely: Smith believed that self-interest (i.e., the pursuit of one's own interests alone) must be controlled according to a sense of duty and, indeed, should be controllable. Moreover, in *The Wealth of Nations*, Smith accepts economic activity with free competition based on self-interest. As long as each agent has a right to existence, there are limits to how far one can continue making concessions (make offers to others); furthermore, Adam Smith's laissez-faire approach to the division of labor only approves of the pursuit of self-interest insofar as it also benefits others.¹⁶

Shared values such as the "principle of sympathy" are often considered to be deeply rooted in religious beliefs. Buddhism, for instance, is widely followed in regions researched by the present author, such as Bhutan and Myanmar; under the tenets of Buddhism, controlling desires, being tolerant in relationships with others, and actively pursuing happiness are understood to be found in mutual relations that are neither too distant nor too close (Aoki, Ishito, and Kawashima 2010). The socio-moral implication of this principle is also linked to paying adequate attention to relationships with others.

Here, Smith did not think of societal order as something willed by humans; rather, he thought that societal order was designed by nature and that humans behaved merely under the guidance of the "invisible hand" of nature. Thus, the division of groups of people into societal orders is the effect of the various feelings found among humans. Of course, humans are always able to deviate from general rules. Specifically, humans possess both wisdom (i.e., a certain rationality) and weakness (e.g., feeling fear), and, as a result of this weakness, humanity still has yet to witness the realization of a complete societal order as willed by nature (Dōme 2008:66-67), even when taking blocks of regional integration as

¹⁶ Accordingly, if the "America First" policy of the Trump administration (inaugurated on January 20, 2017) is interpreted as the prioritization of US interests regardless of any reduction in the profits of others (other nations), the policy cannot be interpreted as valuing the maintenance of relationships with other nations.

examples.

Due to the limited rationality of human agents, the normal state of relationships in human societies is that priority is granted to short-sighted impulses caused, for example, by the fear of potentially losing one's job in a free market or the weakness of being unable to withstand such a fear. Fear and uncertainty are both subjective and tend to increase as they become less rooted in specific things. The fear of death, the polar opposite of feelings of happiness (Smith, 1817:8), is an essential aspect of human agents; surely, many revisions can be made in post-Smith economic studies that presume complete human rationality and have value standards biased towards efficiency alone.

The mainstream economist Joseph Stiglitz, who received the Nobel Prize for Economics in 2001 for his contribution to information economics, published a co-authored paper "On the Impossibility of Informationally Efficient Markets" in a mainstream economics journal (Grossman and Stiglitz, 1980) and asserted that "humans are not completely rational and only behave based on limited information; accordingly, points of equilibrium in markets in practice are not necessarily able to satisfy even benchmarks of efficiency." It may be that mutually recognizing the need to harbor positive hope, regardless of its immeasurability, could also lead to better socioeconomic relations in practice.¹⁷

In actual communities, individual differences arise (Anthony and Manfred 2007:387), and, indeed, an individual may also undergo changes in religion or mentality (Anthony and Manfred 2007:385). In other words, there is complexity in society, and it has been pointed out in the study of positive psychology that disturbances may be seen in the intensity and direction of behavior in a society, with motivations behind human behavior being the cause (Anthony and Manfred, 2007:530). Preserving fundamental value increases profit at the micro level of the agent; at the same time, maintaining relationships with others also leads to increases in profit at the macro level of the community. Indeed, maintaining relationships with others truly does appear to form the basis of human psychological happiness. Although there may be a need to distinguish between differing standards for micro-level happiness and happiness in a macro sense (or welfare standards), the thoughts and beliefs (including religious views) of individuals do spread, are linked to community-level thoughts, and develop into choices of economic structures, political demonstrations, military interventions over territorial issues, and terrorism. It goes without saying that it is important to build social relationships based on positive feelings amid limited rationality and incomplete information.

¹⁷ Yūki Tashiro (specialist in psychology) kindly provided guidance on the relation between hope and happiness.

4. Building a theory of social relationships

The field of complexity science analyzes the relationships between the many agents that form a society; from the perspective of this field, it is possible to posit the concept of a “critical point” in the societal sense of the related relationships at the community level, as considered in this study. Multilayered (stratified) economic regional integrations of communities in Southeast Asia, such as ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership), and TPP (Trans Pacific Partnership), provide mutual sources of tense relations. Since any differences in religion, thought, and core values (e.g., democracy and respect for human rights) are deeply rooted in the identities of the communities in question, this phenomenon can easily reach the critical point that forms the border between stabilization and destabilization. Further, at this critical point, sensitivity (i.e., the degree of influence of disturbances) is high, and small-scale disturbances, such as trade frictions, expressions of political support or non-support from industrial groups, regional protests, and so forth, may expand towards system-wide disturbances. A certain degree of sub-system diversity can be assumed to have a positive effect on the regional integration between nation-states as a comparative advantage, but when the degree of diversity reaches a critical point, this diversity is linked to the destabilization of the system of regional integration in question, and it leads to calls for the creation of a new system.

Lastly, I consider the meta-theory of stratified structures and relationships. A stratified structure is a structure in which several strata form a nest; in the social sciences, the general rule is to apply names to the agents in each strata (e.g., individual → household → ethnicity or regional government → nation-state → integration of nation-states → ecosystem) and to then discuss the interactions within these strata. There are limits to this approach, however; there are “meso” parts that link the micro and macro, and, even within the individual level, various emotions, ideas, and so on greatly and unpredictably influence behavior.

Chaotic meso areas that involve unpredictable matters allow for neither micro studies that assume complete rationality nor discussions with only macro, whole-picture indicators, as typified by average values; there is a need to discuss relationships in a way that goes beyond the relationship between each agent and that freely associates with these micro and macro levels.

In scientific analyses of fluids, such as water, discussion has developed around the Reynolds number, defined as inert forces divided by viscous forces. Specifically, it has been suggested that the critical Reynolds number, observed at the point at which a fluid's

normal smooth flow (also called laminar flow; the relationship with neighboring liquid particles is smooth) turns into the turbulent flow that accompanies disordered relationships (i.e., when the relationship with neighboring liquid particles is unpredictably complex), is a universally fixed number for fluids (Sakaguchi, Kusano and Suetsugu 2008).

In societal relationships, the circumstances are extremely complicated. Nonetheless, one could consider the existence of a so-called societal Reynolds number, that is, an attempt to contrast the inert forces of the whole society (i.e., the magnitude of the centripetal force moving society in a certain direction) with the viscous forces between agents on the more micro strata that make up the society (i.e., the forces that provides a sense of societal solidarity); perhaps, once the distance between the measures of these forces exceeds a fixed level, agents who choose not to follow the centripetal force of the whole society (i.e., agents who have low stickiness with other agents) start to noticeably exhibit behavior deviating from the norm, and the state suddenly shifts from a normal state (laminar flow) to a disturbed state (turbulent flow).

This notion is not limited to discussions surrounding regional integration, as aspects such as income, ethnicity, and religion could be interpreted similarly. When there are low viscous forces between agents at a certain stratum, the societal Reynolds number is higher, and once this number exceeds a critical point, a turbulent flow state is reached in the upper strata, which ends up being expressed in the form of migration, refugees, terrorism, economic crises, and so forth. Societal inert and viscous forces are deeply related. The inert force of a “one nation first” approach may end up being cut off at a point at which the stickiness (i.e., the ties between businesses and industrial and citizen groups that form a nation state) is weak; this situation can be seen directly in, for instance, the example of the Trump administration in the US, inaugurated on January 20, 2017, and the results of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, as well as in the state of disputes surrounding the correction of domestic income gaps. Going forward, more specific research should be conducted on the relationships between agents taking into account the stratified natures of the micro, meso, and macro levels in terms of regional integration and taking as case studies the regional integration surrounding ASEAN, for instance, and the possibility of East Asian regional integration between Japan, China, and South Korea.

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