

Epistemological Emphasis and its Applicability to Family-Clinical Studies in Early Research:  
Based on the Theories of Bateson, Laing & Esterson, and the Concept of Adult-Children

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“Family Therapy” is the general term for inclusive theories of interpersonal support directed to not only individuals but also the ‘family as a whole’, which are recently attracting increasing attention. Family Therapy originated in “Family-Pathological Study” of schizophrenia, and has gradually become clarified while carrying on the practical methods and theoretical essences of Family-Pathological Study.

Based on the pioneering work by Ackerman (Family-Psychodynamic Model) and Bateson et al. (Communication Model), Family Therapy continues to produce successive new theoretical models and practical techniques, with extraordinary interest in ‘Epistemology’ as a driving force of its development. Epistemology is an argument of Philosophy of Science, and focuses on the ‘process of knowing’ by <Us> who face <the World>; in terms of Family Therapy, it means the question concerning the contents of recognition by <therapists> who face <an inter-relational world between the patient and his/her family members>. While ‘Linear Causality’ and ‘Circular Epistemology’ have become key concepts, most family therapists disregard the former, which supposes a linear linkage of ‘cause’ and ‘effect’, and basically rely on the later, which emphasizes various relations between multiple elements in order to find some circular and self-recursive structure in a whole family without depending on the terms of ‘cause’ or ‘effect’.

Using this circular epistemology, Family Therapy has also positively adopted “Systems Theory.” So as a <Structure Model> related to general systems theory, <Systemic Model> related to self-organizational theory, and <Narrative Approach> related to self-generational theory, each model has been established while gradually paralleling the developmental course of systems theories. Now these developments have reached the level where the therapy situation can be grasped as a large circular system including the <therapist> himself. In addition, Systems Theory is also employed to consider the fluid, inter-cooperative support system beyond borders with other clinical divisions or with other medical specialists.

However, the author has the following doubts concerning Family Therapy itself. The first is a fundamental discomfort with the ‘epistemological change’ represented in the description “from ‘Linear Causality’ to ‘Circular Epistemology’.” Though modern family therapists generally recognize this change as axiomatic, the author cannot help regarding this description as an *extremely linear* one. In other words, the author is concerned that the description “*from* ‘Linear Causality’ *to* ‘Circular Epistemology’” would be accepted under progressivism or exclusivism in which this epistemological change could be regarded as a natural consequence under the progress of scientific intellectualism, while any other regressive arguments are regarded as absolutely worthless. In this way, the most typical model of Linear Causality which family therapists assume is the ‘exogenous model’ that has long been applied in Family-Pathological Study, namely, the ‘Psychoanalytical Dynamic Model’ based on the concept of “(Psychological) Trauma.” At this point, the author would like to emphasize that when considering epistemological change, we should, without progressivism relying on the idea that “the change *has occurred*,” focus on how scientific ‘criticism’ with logical-practical appropriateness has been developed ‘between’ Pathological Study and Family Therapy; in other words, we should always keep in mind how ‘in-between thought’ with intra-critical moment has been developed *just in the middle* of linear causality based on the concept of Trauma.

The second point is a discomfort with very natural 'Functionalism'. Functionalism means, in this context, a position in which heightening and exercising various, inherent 'functions' of each family member could be essential to problem-solving. Looking at this position, a problematic situation supposedly means a state in which some functional 'disorders' detrimental to a whole family are partially included. When this functionalistic position is inseparably related to System Theory, Family Therapy with circular epistemology tends to naturally consider these 'functions' affirmatively. The author is convinced, however, that Family Therapy should show more interest in *a case or situation that several functions were driven could be truly problematic*; that is, Family Therapy should have much more deeply engaged the epistemological view that could explore the problems embedded in such 'functions.' At this point, we should also keep in mind some 'in-between thought' which has remained right before simple functionalism.

Based on the above, in Chapters I and II, through the Double-Bind theory proposed by Bateson et al., the author clarifies the epistemological emphasis of this theory, formulated between Pathological Study and Family Therapy, in the middle terms of 'psychological trauma study', *no longer* in terms of Family Therapy. The original epistemological development of psychological trauma also continues separately from Family Therapy. Though its development has been engaged in the dichotomy of "<temporally-spatially divided trauma> or <repeated-prolonged trauma>" so far, in the latest version of DSM, *a further essential and fundamental argument concerning epistemology* is included in the section on PTSD diagnosis. Then, the author considers how the family studies of Bateson et al., who managed to overcome temporally-spatially dividing epistemology through the key terms of 'self-validating' and 'abstractness,' must include an intra-critical moment as an 'in-between thought' against new, undergoing epistemological argument.

In Chapters III and IV, through discussion of the study of Laing & Esterson, the author clarifies how they achieved overcoming functionalism. At the same time as Bateson, they investigated and interviewed some families with schizophrenia-diagnosed daughters from the existential-phenomenological viewpoint. Then, some repeated-prolonged trauma situations with multiple 'mystifications' and 'collusions' were comprehended not as functional 'disorders' situations, but as paradoxical matters which had arisen *as far as* each family member desperately 'seeking' or 'satisfying' their own functions. The author, through discussion of 'the Danzigs' case in *Sanity, Madness and Family*, clarifies how each member fell into 'excessive-seeking states' of functions, and how the dynamics of 'excluding' some specific members worked in the end. In addition, we should focus on the element of 'religion'. In the case of 'the Danzigs,' some cultural norms or institutions in terms of religion, or further socio-cultural experiences and memories of the previous generation have had some background influence. Under these impersonal pressures, some excessive-seeking states seemed to be created.

Finally in Chapter V, through the subject of "Adult-Children (AC)", the author investigates the applicability of the above discussions; in other words, with reference to the above discussions, the author first clarifies how to analyze this subject from the viewpoint of 'Culture' which has been overlooked so far. The AC problem established in United States was hitherto understood to occur in some types of 'dysfunctional family'. Conversely, in Japanese arguments which later imported this concept, the AC problem is understood to occur in some form of 'function-seeking family'. Furthermore, in this context, it is thought that some cultural norms or values in Japanese society, as well as those mentioned in Laing's discussion, have strong effects as impersonal pressures. While clarifying distortions between function-seeking families and cultural pressures through the key concepts of 'role ego', '*amae* (dependency)' and '*seken* (society)', the author also clarifies epistemological possibilities of understanding the AC problem based on the concept of psychological trauma which was discussed in Chapters I and II.

Now in this dissertation, the author identifies the family studies of Bateson et al, and Laing & Esterson, as "Family-*Clinical* Studies" or "Family-*Clinical* Theories" in order to emphasize that these studies are located 'between' Family-Pathological Study and Family Therapy.