**English abstract**

**On the Dialogue between Monotheism and Polytheism (abstract)**

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Globalization is one of the most prominent trends in this new century. I believe that the purpose of globalization is not to make our earth uniform, but to promote mutual understanding between different cultures that have their own values and beliefs. Among the many dialogues taking place between different cultures, I believe that the dialogue between monotheism and polytheism is very important.

In order to facilitate this dialogue, I will explain the basic structure of the Japanese mythology. The most characteristic feature of the myth is that the god who stands in the center of the pantheon does nothing. Although it is stressed that the god at the center is very important and noble, that god, in fact, has no power and no role. Many gods who are active and sometimes fight each other are harmoniously arrayed around this inactive central god. The most important aspect of this view is how every god is perfectly balanced by others. I call this structure of Japanese mythology "Hollow-center balanced structure."

If you read the Bible, you will understand that God stands in the center of universe and has power and principles that integrate the whole world. In contrast to the "Hollow-center balanced structure," I would like to call this monotheistic view the "Power (principle)-center integrated structure."

I do not intend to argue that one system is better than the other, but I would like to point out, apart from religion, those two different structures are reflected in social systems and individual thinking patterns. If we recognize the difference between two systems, we will be able to better understand each other. In this 21st Century, we will have to make a concerted effort to live with these two seemingly contradictory systems.