

Mutual correlation and Event

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What is an individual? An individual is formed by its relationships with other individuals. Individuals are not substantive, but are formed in relationship. Moreover, individuality is a process that fluctuates and changes in relation to others. Matter, life, society, and the universe are composed of individuals in such a relationship that they influence each other. This is a philosophical examination that understands the individual as an event arising from mutual correlation.

1. Individuals and Events

What is an individual?

Galaxies, stars, planets, the sun, the moon, the earth, plants, animals, humans, and other things that we experience appear as individuals. We do not directly experience such universal concepts as plants, animals, or humans. The world we actually live in is filled with individuals. What exists in reality is many individuals that differ from one another..

Individuals or individual existences are usually finite in space and persistent in time. The individuality of an object is its uniqueness and identity in both space and time. The things we experience in our daily lives exist as such individuals, each independent and refusing to be mixed up with others. For this reason, Aristotle considered the individual to be the primary substance, and thought that individuality is possible only when various attributes are attached to it. Furthermore, he considered the essence of the individual to be an indivisible form, and that the individual is formed by the combination of the form and the material.

Certainly, with this flower, for example, we are experiencing the flower as an individual,

in a vivid way. Moreover, no two individuals are ever alike. No matter how similar individuals are, there are always differences. Every color is unique and every shape is unique, even in the color and form of an object. Even snow crystals, which look the same, are in fact, no two alike. Even the leaves of a tree, which look the same, are different from one another. As Leibniz said, if there are many things, they must be distinguished from one another. There are no two individuals that are indistinguishable from each other at all. ⁽¹⁾.

There is a single lily in front of me. This single lily flower exists right here and now. It is an irreplaceable individual. Moreover, I myself, who am looking at it, am an individual who cannot be replaced by others. A single lily flower, and me gazing at it, are both individuals. Both are individuals that exist only one and alone in this world. It is in such an individual that the beingness of the existent stands out starkly.

Heidegger devoted his entire thought to distinguishing between being and beings, and to questioning the meaning of that existence, which is said to exist uniformly, ie., what it means for a being to exist. However, we must rather consider that the truth of the being of beings is manifested in the individual being itself. It is in each individual being that being is expressed. How can there be being without beings?

Generating Individuals

However, what exists is generative. As long as we look at it from this perspective of generation, the common sense idea of the individual as a unified entity is overturned. Indeed, things usually appear to maintain their identity. However, there is no guarantee that they will remain identical forever. Even the most solid rock is changing and weathering from moment to moment. A single lily eventually bears fruit and then dies. I, as an individual, am always thought of as the same entity from birth to death, but in reality, I am constantly changing from childhood to adolescence, youth, adulthood, and old age. The substances that make up the body are also constantly being replaced. Mental experiences are also constantly accumulating. The notion that individuals remain the same is merely a preconceived notion. Individuals are also in the process of generation.

Hegel, in his theory of being in “The Science of Logic,” says that in “being-in-itself” (Dasein), being and nothingness are one and the same. He also says that something is itself <a becoming> (werden), a transition from being to nothingness, from nothingness to being, and a change ⁽²⁾. The individual is only as ever-changing.

The same one river is indeed one individual. But this river, too, changes over time. At the same time, the water that makes up the river is constantly being replaced. It is never the same water at any one time. As Heraclitus says, we both step into the same river and do not step into the same river. Different waters constantly flow in. It is this ever-changing water—never the same even for an instant—that constitutes the entity we call a river. And yet, no matter how far we break down that river's water, we cannot identify the water itself as an independent entity. Even when we decompose it down to water molecules, they too can be further divided. Ultimately, it is reduced to something like vibrations in a field. So then, does the individuality of water—or the individuality of the river—truly exist?

In just the same way, physical objects—including our own bodies—are nothing more than vortices, temporarily formed by ever-changing constituent elements. The concept of individuality is a vague one. The more we try to define or establish individuality, the more it unravels; individuality dissolves into the relationships with other entities and into the field that is formed through those relationships.

Even when we pursue the origin of our own individuality—that is, the self—it ultimately leads us to a connection with all other things. I am one with the ground upon which I stand; the ground is one with the single lily blooming upon it; and thus, the lily and I are also one. All things are one.

A cloud is a mass of water vapor. We recognize a cloud as a more concentrated collection of water vapor. A single cumulonimbus, it must be an individual. However, it changes its form one moment to the next. And the source of its individuality eventually disappears into the molecular relationships of water, which is composed of hydrogen and oxygen. The rocks, mountains, trees, and flowers we see before us are all individuals, but at the same time, like clouds, their individuality disappears into the relationships of all things. The individuality of the individual disappears in the ceaselessly swirling current.

Individuality as a relationship

When we pursue what the individual is, we find a relationship with others. Individuals do not exist by themselves. Both objects and organisms are diverse and changing. As they change, they interrelate with the individuals around them. Individuals are not independent entities with self-identity, but are non-entities that arise only in dependence on others. It is an abstraction and a fiction to think that individuals exist as entities. The idea that an

individual is an entity that exists and continues to exist on its own is nothing more than our preconceived notions.

The individual is in relationship. There is no individual apart from relationship. An individual is in relation to itself and at the same time in relation to other individuals. The state of an individual can only be grasped from the relationship between individuals. The more one pursues the individuality of an individual, the more ambiguous the basis of that individuality becomes, because the individuality of an individual is originally determined by its relationship with other individuals.

Therefore, it is not the case that an individual and an individual exist as self-identical substances in the beginning, and then a relationship arises. The substance itself is originally a relation. It is merely a cross-section of the process of generation and change through the disconnection and aggregation of relations that appears to be a substance. Every thing determines itself in connection with others. No thing is substantive; it is relational. Each individual must not be understood as a substance, but as a variable state that is everywhere correlated.

An individual is, rather, nothing more than a term within a set of relations. Given that, the individual as a relational term changes with fluctuations in those relations and is closely interlinked with the relations themselves. As a relational term, the individual determines itself according to its relationships, constantly transforming through its interactions with others. A relational term alters itself through its correlation with other terms and with the whole network of relations—and in doing so, it also transforms the relations themselves.

The meaning of a thing is not determined by itself, but by its relationship with others. It is through its relationship with others that a thing reveals its meaning for the first time. The meaning of a thing does not exist prior to the various relationships of things. The meaning of a word is also determined by its context. For example, the meaning of the word “red apple” changes depending on whether it is used in the context of shopping, eating, drawing, or math time. In the same way, we cannot think about the meaning of things without understanding the web of relationships.

Even in the case of the material world, one particle cannot be understood without considering its interaction with other particles. Since individual particles are originally generated as expressions of fields, the behavior of one particle is always linked to the behavior of other particles. Therefore, it is impossible to understand a particle without taking into account the behavior of other particles. The idea of a particle as a rigid body has

been discarded in modern physics because of the emphasis on the relationship between various events. In conventional classical physics, it was thought that there were objects that were independent of each other and that they had various relationships with each other. In reality, however, there are no independent objects, but only objects that are changing according to their relationships with others from beginning to end.

Not only in the physical world, but also in the life world beyond the physical world, a life form can always be a life form in relation to others. Life forms metabolize, multiply, and evolve, all in relation to other life forms and to the environment around them.

Beyond the world of life, even if we consider the society in which human beings operate, the identity of an individual, myself, is not possible without a relationship with others. The self is possible only in relation to others. One can be a person only by virtue of one's relationships with others. In fact, if one person could only adopt one attitude when interacting with others, like a machine, human relationships would not be possible. Society exists when people adopt various attitudes in response to their relationships with others. When we consider our actions in society, the meaning of those actions is not determined in themselves, but in relation to others. If I raise my right hand, whether it is a mere motion, a signal, a response, a greeting, an expression of anger, or an oath, is determined by my relationship with others.

Being is a relation. Everything in the world is in relation, and the world consists of relations and terms that relate to each other.

Meaning of Dependent Origination

Dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*) in Buddhism means that all things are in relationship. Dependent origination, if we return to the original meaning of the word, means that each works and arises together. This is the reason that Dependent origination came to be understood as conditional causation, meaning that everything arises from causes and conditions.

But the deepest meaning of Dependent origination, as interpreted by Nagarjuna, lies in the fact that all things are only in correlation. As it said "because there is this, there is that, because this is not, that is not, because this arises, that arises, because this perishes, that perishes," dependent origination means arising by condition, meaning that all things exist only in correlation with each other. Both the self and the other can exist only depending on

each other. They are in a relationship of mutual dependence and mutual support. All beings arise in dependence on other beings. This interdependence is called “dependent origination” in Buddhism. Nagarjuna, in his “Mūlamadhyamakakārikā” (Fundamental Verses of the Middle Way), mentions

“There has never yet been a single thing that has not been generated through dependent origination,” ⁽³⁾

referring to the correlation of all being.

A thing that exists only in correlation cannot exist independently in and of itself. Therefore, the doctrine of *pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination) also denies the notion of “substance.” No being exists as a substance. Nāgārjuna, understanding dependent origination as the emptiness (*śūnyatā*) of intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*), denied the self-identity of existing things precisely because he saw the non-substantial nature of what arises dependently. What comes into being through dependent origination—that is, what exists relationally—is empty. Fazang, who completed the philosophy of Avatamsaka, in his “Hua-yan wujiao-zhang” (Five Teachings of Avatamsaka), referred to this mode of existence through dependent origination—that is, existence within relationality—as *Paratantra-svabhāva*, or the “nature of arising through dependence on others.” As the term implies, *Paratantra-svabhāva* means that all things arise depending on others; everything comes into being within a web of relations. When this dependent mode of existence is misconstrued through deluded conceptualization, it becomes *Parikalpita-svabhāva*, or the “imaginary nature” that arises from mistaken attachment—viewing existents as independently existing substances and clinging to them as such. In contrast, when this mode of being is rightly understood—when all existents are seen as existing only through their dependence on others and accepted as they arise—it becomes *Pariniṣpanna*, or the “perfected nature,” the true mode of being. Moreover, Fazang taught that these three natures form a dual-layered unity—that they are, in fact, one and the same. The Avatamsaka philosophy deeply grasped the relational nature of all things in the world.

Individuality as an event

If everything exists only in terms of relations, then everything that exists in the world is an event that appears each time as a node of relations among various phenomena. The relations of events aggregate to form an event, and when they disperse, the event ceases to exist. The existence of a thing is due to a relation. Moreover, since this relation is always changing, to be is to become, and to exist is to generate. Only events come into being.

Therefore, individuality is not about the persistence of a self-identical thing, but rather about its new emergence as an event. Things and individuals are in a never-ending process, and we should not look for an enduring substance in them. There is no independent substance that does not change or move on its own. There is only a correlation between events, not the substance of things. Being is an event, an occurrence. It is not a thing, but an incident. The world is composed of countless events and is in motion. What exists is work and movement. What exists is what is being created, and what is being generated. Moreover, things are in constant motion, and nothing stands still.

For an event to come into being, all the events that preceded it, as well as all the events of the present, are involved. The existence of a single lily flower and my existence as I look at it are the culmination of all the events in the world. Since each event is a one-time event, the encounter between the lily and myself is also a one-time encounter.

Even in modern physics, particles are not isolated objects, but come into being as interconnected events. Therefore, each of them has a prior history. Here, the ultimate physical reality is no longer a thing. The idea of matter remaining identical at different points in time is already meaningless. Matter comes into being as an event. And what we call the solid attributes of matter become a function of events.

It was Whitehead who, under the influence of modern physics, sought the ultimate reality of the world in events. According to his book, "Science and the Modern World," events, as the ultimate reality of the world, arise and act everywhere, and do not simply exist. So here, the individuality of things is also taken as an event, not as an entity. Events occurring in the space-time continuum only temporarily form the individuality of things. A thing is a series of events. Being arises from events, not events arise from Being.

Moreover, events overlap each other and flow into each other. There is no single isolated event. Various events are intertwined and interrelated. We understand the generation of things as the emergence of an event that integrates all events out of the spatio-temporal

interconnection of such events ⁽⁵⁾.

Whitehead, in *Process and Reality*, replaced this notion of event with that of actual entity, the ultimate from which the world is composed. The difference is that the event emphasizes the continuous occurrence in generation, while the actual entity emphasizes the discontinuous occurrence of generation. However, they can all be considered the same concept in terms of the unit of generation. Thus, the actual entity, like the event, is neither an independent entity nor a constant subject in change. The active substantive is a generative thing anyway. One cannot go behind the actual entity to find something more real than the actual entity. Even in an actual entity, an actual entity contains the relations among all actual entities. Every actual entity exists within every other actual entity. The newly established actual entity contains within it all of the actual entity. It then unifies the active world and adds new factors. ⁽⁶⁾

Whitehead's thought emphasizes that everything arises in relationship, has no substance, and always generates. In this respect, Whitehead's philosophy is similar to that of the theory of dependent origination taught in Madhyamaka and Avatamsaka philosophy of Mahayana Buddhism.

2 Mutual Correlation

A World of Mutual Correlation

The material world is essentially a world of mutual correlation. All material phenomena are mutually correlated, and to explain one thing must explain all others. Elementary particles also interact with each other, and only through their interactions can their properties be defined. In the material world, time and space, mass and energy, particles and particles, all permeate each other. Subatomic particles are neither independently existing entities nor are they the basic building blocks of matter in isolation from one another. The world of elementary particles is an indivisible world that cannot be divided into component parts. The material world is an intricate fabric, in which connections of various kinds intersect, thereby determining its pattern. In the material world, every part is mutually correlated with every other part. The material world is essentially a system whose entire structure is determined by such mutual correlations, or in other words, a complex system as we call it today.

The life world, which is more advanced than the material world, is likewise a world of mutual correlation and a complex system. In the life world, too, a wide variety of elements maintain close relationships with each other and dynamically create new things. Again, each element cannot be separated from the others. The life world is also a whole world that is united with itself, and by nature, cannot be divided into parts. It is the world of life in which genes and genes, cells and cells, organs and organs, individuals and individuals, and species and species interact with each other, adapting to the environment and creating new structures. From genes to species, each individual is not separate and independent from the others, but is always in mutual correlation with the others. Therefore, each part of the life world can always exist only as a part of the whole.

The immune and metabolic systems of the human body are complex systems in which a myriad of elements are mutually correlated to form a cycle. The structure of the human body is such that it takes in the environment and adapts to it through the mutual correlation of diverse elements. The ecosystem formed by individuals and individuals of living organisms, species and species, is also an all-encompassing world in which all elements interact with each other in all directions, eating and being eaten, cooperating and competing with each other. There, all life forms are in close relationship. Life forms and life forms also permeate each other. The evolution of life also occurs from this mutual correlation of life forms.

The society in which human beings operate is also a world of mutual correlation and interdependence. Society, formed by communication, law, institutions, organizations, markets, and so on, is founded on a network of diverse relationships. Thus, its parts and pieces interlock with each other to form a single whole. There, a social event emerges under the influence of all the events that preceded it. Also, the influence of one act extends to all other aspects. This is because society is made up of a network of relationships. Social change and evolution also arise from this mutual correlation. Individuals and individuals, groups and groups, groups and individuals, interacting with each other, adapting to the environment, building new structures, and by doing so, changing the environment as well, are the characteristics of the societies in which humans operate. In such a mutual correlation society, the self and the other cannot be separated, but permeate each other within the other. Society is a complex system in which the self and others are closely mutually correlated and move dynamically. Therefore, the individuals who make up society are neither independent entities nor mere atoms cut off from the whole. The individual is part of the overall structure of society.

Outer space is also a world of mutual correlation. Here, galaxies, stars, planets, cosmic dust and gases, and all other kinds of matter in the universe are mutually correlated and interact with each other. The universe is an active state in which the constituent elements

within it pull, repel, collide, fuse, explode, move, and constantly interact with each other. Therefore, the matter in the universe is also closely mutually correlated and does not exist in isolation in space. The myriad events that occur in the universe also interlock with each other to create new things. Stars are born, grow, and die. The evolution of the universe also occurs through the inexhaustible mutual correlation of its constituent elements. The universe is a living being that is in a constant state of creation and flux.

From the micro material world to the macro universe, this world is a complex system. Here, in mutual correlation, countless elements interact with each other, continually creating new forms and structures. Moreover, in this mutual correlation, the movement of one element affects the movement of every other element, which in turn affects the original element, which itself changes.

Logic of Relations

To consider the logic of such a world of mutual correlation requires a <logic of relations> that sees things in terms of their mutual relations.

To be is to be in relationship. All things are established through relationships. Various relationships of various elements are compounded to form a diverse web of relationships, establishing a world of diverse mutual correlation.

Here, many elements interact vertically and horizontally in a close relationship. In this field of mutual correlation, elements and elements are repeatedly interacting with each other, or repelling, or attracting, or exerting an effect, or suffering a counter-effect. So, in this field of interaction, being active is at the same time passive. In other words, many elements are limiting each other. To limit the other is to limit the self. When I cast an action on another, I am also cast by another, and when I constrain another, I am also constrained by another. Therefore, causality in this world of interaction is a complex of contradictions, with cause becoming effect and effect becoming cause.

In a world of mutual correlation, every element is defined in relation to every other element. Here, one element does not exist in isolation from others, but in union with all other elements. No element exists independently or in isolation. The world of mutual correlation is a world that is inherently inseparable, like the individual organism and its environment, a world in which many elements permeate each other.

In a world of mutual correlation, they are thus interlocked with each other, because all elements are combined. Hence, here, as in the global ecosystem, everything affects everything. The arising of one event affects all events. And the movement of any one part, no matter how small, has its effect on all spheres.

In this world, everything is mediated. Everything is the medium of everything. In this sense, it must be said that everything is a predicate of everything. The classical subject-predicate relation is that the entity, as subject, constitutes the basic element of the world, and the properties and relations accompany this entity as predicates. However, if we treat things as entities separated from others in terms of entities and attributes in this way, there are some things that are obscured. Things are not, rather, subject and predicate, but predicate and subject. One thing is only in relation to all other things, and within one thing is contained the relation to all other things. One thing contains and is contained in one another and in the other. Herein lies the reason for the necessity of a <logic of relations> that understands one thing not as itself, but in relation.

Individuals are like connecting points in a web of mutual correlation, not independent substances. Individuals always contain relationships with others. All individuals are connected. Individuals and individuals are discontinuous and continuous at the same time.

Nor is the concept of inside and outside the individual immovable or existential. As is the case with metabolizing organisms, the individual is flexible enough that other things can come in and out. What is within goes out and what is without comes within. Inside and outside are interchangeable.

In a world of mutual correlation, events and occurrences are both distinct from each other and at the same time connected to each other and have commonality. Indeed, for mutual correlation to be possible, events must first be distinct and distinct from each other. To be distinct means that each event is mutually independent. However, since all events are at the same time related to each other, commonality must be found between different events in order for this relationship to exist. Just as there are both assimilative and catabolic effects in a living organism, under mutual correlation, there must be both difference and identity at the same time.

Therefore, also, the self-identity of events implies mutual difference: the proposition expressing self-identity, $A=A$, already presupposes a difference between A and non- A behind it. Self-identity contains a difference within itself and is self-identity only through this difference. Beyond the thoroughness of self-identity, one encounters difference. But at the same time, this difference must also include self-identity. Self-identity and difference are complementary, even though they seem to be opposites. Self-identity and difference are two sides of the same thing. For red to be red, it must be neither blue, green, nor yellow.

The world of mutual correlation is made up of a web of countless overlapping, intricate, and influencing events. Therefore, for a single event to occur, everything else is at work. The mutual correlation of events extends infinitely, both spatially and temporally, so that a chain of innumerable causes and conditions is at work to bring about a single event. Thus, a single

event in the present presupposes the workings of all previous events.

In this world of mutual correlation, a simple cause-and-effect relationship, in which one cause produces one result, does not hold true. The world of mutual correlation is a complex system of countless interlocking events in both time and space, so we must assume that countless causes produce countless results. Since no single event can be separate from the universe as a whole, there are innumerable causes and conditions at work in a single result. Thus, also, the same cause can produce exactly the opposite result, or a completely different cause can produce the same result. The world of mutual correlation is multi-causal and multi-fruitful, where one cause can produce many results, and many causes can produce one result. This is because there are countless conditions at work here that affect the outcome, not just the cause. Therefore, even if the same causes are at work under the same conditions, the results may appear differently. Modern science has overlooked this point because it is based on simple causal relationships. The correlation of diverse things cannot be reduced to simple causality.

Logic of Contradiction

The logic of mutual correlation is the logic of contradiction. In a world of mutual correlation, an event is itself in mutual correlation with all other events. The occurrence of every event occurs in conjunction with every other event. Therefore, every event encompasses all other events. Here, the law of contradiction is overcome. In a world of mutual correlation, A is both A and non-A. Rather, the self-identity of A being A is because A is not A. $A = A$ must imply $A = \text{non-A}$. In the world of mutual correlation, the opposites A and non-A, positive and negative, are compatible. And this is how generation occurs.

In a world of mutual correlation, the opposing terms of identity and difference must be compatible at the same time, since different things permeate each other at the same time. And by the same token, since everything here contains within the self a relation to the other, the self is the self only insofar as there is an other. Rather, the self is only the other of the other. The self and the other, which are opposites, are compatible within the self.

If the compatibility of opposites is called a contradiction, then we must say that this world of mutual correlation is made up of contradictions. It is not only about affirmation and negation, identity and difference, self and other. The world of contradictions, in which opposites such as continuity and discontinuity, inside and outside, active and passive, cause and effect are compatible and permeate each other, is the world of mutual correlation, in other words, a complex system.

To understand this world of contradictions, we can consider the world of life as a model.

For example, the individual organism, whether a plant or an animal, is covered by an outer skin, which distinguishes the individual from the environment, and at the same time, makes the individual and the environment continuous by moving things outside in and things inside out. Here, in fact, opposites permeate each other: inside and outside, self and other, identity and difference, continuity and discontinuity. And through this, the organism changes.

It was Hegel who fully developed the logic of such contradictions. In his *Science of Logic*, Hegel regarded opposing elements as each finding themselves in the other, and he thoroughly advocated the coexistence of contradictions. He called the coexistence of opposites "contradiction" and regarded this contradiction as the fundamental principle of the world.⁽⁷⁾ Accordingly, in this framework, identity includes difference, and difference includes identity; the opposition between identity and difference is unified. The internal is the external, and the external is the internal; the opposition between inside and outside is also unified. The opposition between active and passive, and between cause and effect in interaction, is likewise unified. Hegel's *Science of Logic* thus presents a "logic of relations" in which opposites are interconnected, mutually determine and mediate each other.

Nāgārjuna also developed a logic of relationality in his *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (Fundamental Verses of the Middle Way). Nāgārjuna viewed all existence through the perspective of *pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination), clarifying that all things exist through interdependent relationships. For instance, the opposing concepts of identity and difference are also in a state of mutual dependence. Things that are distinguished and opposed cannot exist without presupposing each other, and in this sense, they are interdependent. Hegel sought the unity of identity and difference through their mutual dependence and the contradictions between them. In contrast, Nāgārjuna argues that from this very relationship, the non-existence of both arises. The same applies to the relation between cause and effect. While Hegel seeks the unity of cause and effect through their mutual dependence and contradiction, Nāgārjuna arrives at the negation of the general concept of dependent origination from the contradiction within the interdependent relationship between cause and effect.⁽⁸⁾ The interdependence is inherently contradictory, and thus, things that mutually depend on each other cannot be established. However, it should be noted that Nāgārjuna's total negation is merely a process towards an ultimate absolute affirmation.

Monadology and Avatamsaka

It was Leibniz who formulated a clear metaphysical theory of a worldview in which all phenomena are interconnected and united. In his *Monadology*, Leibniz argued that the world consists of many monads, which are indivisible spiritual substances. Since many things are different from each other, monads exist as distinct individual entities. However, these many monads, which exist as heterogeneous individuals, are not unrelated to one another; rather, they are in a relationship where they mutually ground and justify each other. Things have sufficient grounds for their existence within the continuum of things. The monads themselves are grounded in the very continuity of things.⁽⁹⁾ Leibniz, too, viewed the world as a series of interconnected phenomena.

Whitehead, following Leibniz, also taught the coherence of events and phenomena, describing the universe as the mutual immanence of many actual entities. Whitehead believed that all things in the world do not possess the nature of substance but instead mutually contain one another, a concept he called the principle of relativity. He stated that actual entities exist within other actual entities. Therefore, every actual entity in the universe is a constituent element of another actual entity. From this, Whitehead also considered the unification of past and present, as well as the problem of causality.⁽¹⁰⁾ Whitehead's philosophy was one of mutual correlation, advocating for the co-presence of all actual entities.

However, the most profound culmination of the philosophy of mutual correlation, which fully develops the idea of universal mutual penetration and unobstructed interconnection, is found in Avatamsaka philosophy. Avatamsaka philosophy views the world as consisting of events that are interrelated both spatially and temporally, revealing the essential network of existence that constitutes the universe. This represents a unique interpretation of the Buddhist concept of *pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination), in which all things exist through mutual dependence and interrelation.

Avatamsaka philosophy divides the single world we experience into four realms, depending on the perspective from which it is viewed: the Realm of Phenomena, the Realm of Principle of Emptiness (*śūnyatā*), the realm of the Interpenetration between Principle of Emptiness and Phenomena, and the realm of the Interpenetration between Phenomena. The Realm of Phenomena represents the standpoint in which each individual thing asserts its own self-identity, opposing and obstructing one another. In contrast, the Realm of Principle Emptiness sees all things as existing in relationality and perceives the emptiness (*śūnyatā*) of all phenomena. The Realm of Interpenetration between Principle of Emptiness and Phenomena affirms the unobstructed interpenetration between principle (emptiness) and phenomena (actual things). In this view, all things are understood as events that arise from the field of emptiness. Finally, the Realm of the Interpenetration between Phenomena

is the realm in which individual things, while maintaining their own identity, are seamlessly interconnected with others without mutual obstruction. In this world, each thing becomes one with others, yet remains fully itself.

Among these, the ultimate worldview of Avatamsaka philosophy is found in the Realm of the Interpenetration between Phenomena. In this realm, each phenomenon functions as a distinct and individual entity, yet at the same time, all phenomena are interconnected and harmoniously interpenetrate one another without obstruction. The perspective of the Interpenetration between Phenomena teaches the seamless and unobstructed interrelation among distinct phenomena. While each event or thing remains separate and unique, they intersect and interact with one another without hindrance.

Avatamsaka philosophy explains the seamless interpenetration of phenomena using the concepts of "mutual identity and mutual inclusion". Mutual identity refers to the interdependence of different entities and the non-dual identity of opposites. From an ontological perspective, it is the mutual immanence of things. In contrast, mutual inclusion describes the interpenetrating relationship of different entities in their respective actions, emphasizing the mutual immanence from an ontological and functional perspective. Though there is a distinction between ontological and functional aspects, both mutual identity and mutual inclusion discuss the complementarity of opposites and the mutual immanence of all things. Every phenomenon in the entire universe mutually contains and penetrates others, existing in a state of harmonious interconnection and unobstructed flow.

Avatamsaka philosophy, while advocating the seamless interpenetration of all things, simultaneously fully affirms that in such a state of harmonious interconnection, all phenomena appear as distinct entities. This is explained through the concepts of powerful and powerless elements. While all things are fundamentally in a state of seamless interconnection, on the phenomenological level of existence, only the powerful elements emerge, while the powerless elements remain concealed. It is through the differing manifestations of power that an infinite variety of distinct phenomena come into being.⁽¹¹⁾

The perspective of the Interpenetration between Phenomena in Avatamsaka philosophy fully articulates that all things exist in a state of mutual correlation, and it is only within this mutual correlation that they can exist as distinct entities. Furthermore, the world of the Interpenetration between Phenomena described by Avatamsaka philosophy is not a static world; it is a dynamic world where phenomena continuously interact and generate one another without rest.

The dynamic world in which phenomena continuously interact and generate one another is none other than the world of complex systems. The world of complex systems is an interrelated world in which countless elements interact, influence one another, and

dynamically give rise to new emergent properties. The universe, the material world, the world of life, and human society are all such interrelated dynamic worlds and complex systems.

Note:

1. *Leibniz, Monadologie*, 9, *Bibliothèque de philosophie* (éd. A. Robinet) P.U.F., 1954, p.23
2. *Hegel, Wissenschaft der Logik I*, Ph.B. (Hrsg. Lasson), Felix Meiner, 1963, S.96 S.103
3. *Nāgārjuna, Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way), Chapter 24, Verse 19.
Translated into Japanese by Ryōtei Hakei. In *Kokuyaku Issaikyō: Indo Senshutsubu, Chūganbu I* (National Translation of the Complete Buddhist Scriptures: Indian Section, Madhyamaka Volume I) Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1976, p. 217.
4. *Fazang, Huayan Wujiao Zhang* (The Treatise on the Five Teachings of Huayan), Middle Scroll.
Translated into Japanese by Kiyotaka Kimura. In *Daijō Butten* (Chinese and Japanese Traditions), Vol. 7 (Mahayana Buddhist Scriptures). Tokyo: Chūō Kōronsha, 1989, pp. 61–85.
5. *Whitehead, Science and the modern World*, Cambridge U.P., 1953, chap.VII VIII
6. *Whitehead, Process and Reality*, Harper, 1960, part I chap.II III
7. *Hegel, Wissenschaft der Logik I*, *Gesammelte Werke Bd.11*, Felix Meiner, 1978, S.279-S.283
8. *Nāgārjuna, op. cit.*, Chapter 14: “Examination of Combination” (*Pratyaya-parīkṣā*), and Chapter 20: “Examination of Cause and Effect” (*Kāryakāraṇa-parīkṣā*), in the previously cited edition, pp. 148ff. and 183ff.
9. *Leibniz, op.cit.*, 39 32, p.69, p.73, p.89
10. *Whitehead, op.cit.*, p.65 pp.79-80 pp.97-98
11. *Fazang, op. cit.*, pp. 85–94.