Durkheim’s sociology of suicide and suicide in contemporary Japan:
From the perspective of the relationship between men and women

Toshio SAKAMOTO

ABSTRACT

Émile Durkheim’s unique analysis of suicide is well known. Using social statistics, he attempted to find the causes of suicide exclusively in social factors and not in individualistic factors. He believed that suicide could shed light on society and this article is an introduction to a study that analyzes suicide in contemporary Japan from the Durkheimian perspective.

Suicide rates in 20th century western countries are drastically altered from the 19th century, when Durkheim researched them. Analyzing several current studies on suicide, this article suggests an interpretive perspective that focuses on the rapidly changing form of the relationship between men and women in Japan, where high suicide rates have lasted more than ten years.

Key Words: suicide, Durkheim, relationship between men and women
“Japan-ness in Religion”

Mitsuru HASHIMOTO

ABSTRACT

How the concept of “religion” was introduced into modern Japan and how “Japan-ness” was established in religion as well as in culture are discussed.

Key Words: religion, Japan-ness, mysticism
The issue of part-time employee system in Japan: Comparisons with the UK, Netherlands, and Spain

Masaharu NOSE

ABSTRACT

Japanese industrial society developed the Japanese model of lifetime employment, an atypical employment system that helped to lead Japan to considerable industrial success in the post-war period. But in the information technology society this model has become increasingly inappropriate.

Presently, the part-time employee system, which is underdeveloped in Japan, has become an indispensable element to the prosperity of developed countries. In this paper, the employment systems of the UK, Netherlands and Spain are analyzed and an argument is presented for which parts of the present Japanese employment system should be reformed. In particular, I argue that the Japanese part-time employee system should be especially reformed to conform to global paradigm/model changes.

I conclude that Japan should not only protect temporary employees but also make permanent employee-employer relations more flexible.

Key Words: atypical employee, part-time, temporary, permanent, agreement
A Background Study of Canadian English

— Canadian Daily Life and Language (1) —

Hisao ASADA

ABSTRACT

A more complete understanding of the background of language will be effective in any approach to the grammar and usage of language. In a series of my papers (2009a, 2009b, 2009c, 2010), we have argued that daily life in England—from the author's personal experiences and knowledge from having lived in Nottingham, England—will help in an understanding of British English.

From March to September in 2010, the author was able to live and study in Toronto, Canada as a visiting research scholar at the Department of English, the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, York University, with financial support from Kwansei Gakuin University.

Toronto, the largest city in Canada, is fairly close by Ottawa, the capital city, and is situated less than several hours from French/English bilingual region of Quebec. It also has excellent transportation links to other areas in Canada, making it is one of the best areas for the study of Canadian English.

Daily life and research at York University was most useful, and the author was able to gain many valuable insights into the culture of the Canadian people, as well as discovered many things not known before.

The present paper deals not only with Canadian English but also with Canadian culture, involving a number of aspects of everyday life in Canada including the manners and customs of the Canadian people. The topics I deal with are (1) grammar and usage of Canadian English, (2) influence of British and American English, (3) familiar expressions, such as Toonie Tuesday, and (4) Walk-in Clinics in Canada. It may safely be said that these topics are explored from points of view not well known here in Japan.

Daily life in Toronto showed a number of real images and actual situations of life in Canada not well known in Japan. In addition, the author has been inspired to study its background so as to have a better understanding of Canadian English.

It is hoped that the paper the author is currently writing on the background of Canadian English will add to the information already known, and will lead to a more complete understanding of the language as well as daily life in Canada.

Key Words: Canadian English, Canadian daily life, Canadian culture and tradition
Simmel and “Individual–Society Problem”

Yousuke KOTO

ABSTRACT

Georg Simmel held the same views about sociology all his life, though they were expressed in slightly different ways in different periods.

1. Period of Über Sociale Differenzierung [On Social Differentiation]
Both “individual” and “society” are merely nominal as sociological terms, and only interactions actually exist. Sociology aims to explore the correlation between “individual” and “society,” both of which are concepts that have been secondarily constructed from such interactions. Sociology clarifies the correlativity between the expansion of groups and the development of individuality.

2. Period of “Das Problem der Sociologie [The Problem of Sociology]”
Other social sciences can also designate the interaction between individuals, or Vergesellschaftung as a recognition target. The key concept of “Formen der Vergesellschaftung” has been proposed to classify the sociology-specific targets.

3. Period of Soziologie [Sociology]
Facing the expansion of groups does not necessarily imply the development of individuality; in fact, the “form” is reconstructed as “a priori” of social recognition. The harmony between individuals and society is redefined as “a priori” that maintains the integrity of the concept of society instead of an actual society.

4. Period of Grundfragen der Soziologie [Fundamental Questions of Sociology]
The sociological approach has been promoted as an amalgamation of three spheres to achieve harmony between society and individuals. Pure sociology studies the interaction as such first; subsequently general sociology empirically investigates the correlation between individuals and society; finally philosophical sociology explores the correlativity between individuals and society at a philosophical level. The fundamental questions of sociology lie in the pursuit of the correlation between individuals and society in defiance of the reality in which harmony between society and individuals has not been realized.

Key Words: interaction, construction of individual, construction of society.
Justice in contemporary Marxist class analysis:
Examination of exploitation by E. O. Wright and J. E. Roemer

Namie NAGAMATSU

ABSTRACT

This article aims to clarify what is justice in contemporary Marxist class analysis according to E. O. Wright and J. E. Roemer, and also what is the relationship between justice and exploitation or class analysis based on exploitation. Contemporary Marxist class analysis considers that the class structure entails exploitation relations based on property relations of productive assets. This article discusses what Wright and Roemer think justice is when they judge exploitation is “unjust”. Following their principle of justice, Wright and Roemer morally criticize the class structure for producing undesirable results for individual lives—inequality of the material conditions of life. After clarifying the relationship between exploitation and moral judgment, this article discusses how exploitation that has been criticized could be reformulated, and finally claims that the class analysis based on exploitation has effectiveness.

Key Words: class structure, exploitation relations, productive assets
“The development of an Immigration Simulation (IS) and measuring the effects of intercultural training”

Naoka MAEMURA
Junzo KATO
Takehiro FUJIHARA

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to develop a gaming simulation, the Immigration Simulation (IS). Some intercultural simulations already exist (e.g., BaFáBaFá, Barnga.) They are essentially role-playing style games with group interaction. IS also uses role-playing and re-creates a situation in which one community accepts immigrants. Participants are divided into two groups with different imaginary languages, and play a simple card game among each other. The two groups are in separate rooms and are not given any information about the other group. Halfway through the game, some participants visit the other group and try to interact with members of the other group. After a short stay, some of them, the “temporary” immigrants, go back to their own group and other, “permanent” immigrants stay in the other group until the end of the game. There are also “host” participants who stay in their own group and receive the immigrants. In order to confirm the validity of the IS, 93 university students took part in the game. After the game, participants’ description about what they felt during the intergroup contacts was analyzed. As a result, not only immigrants but also host members experienced culture shock through the game. However, the level and characteristics of the shock were different for each role—temporary immigrants, permanent immigrants, and host. IS could be effective as an intercultural training method.

Key Words: immigration, gaming simulation, intercultural training
The influence of social network on the development of volunteer groups in a community (1)
~The qualitative research by interview to the leader of volunteer group~

Junzo KATO
Takehiro FUJIHARA

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to investigate the influence of social network, such as personal network, community network and inter-group network, on the formation and expansion of volunteer groups in a community.

In the interviews, fourteen people consisting of leaders, representatives and founders of volunteer groups were asked to respond what kinds of network they used from the stage of foundation until present. Ten target groups consisted of 5 environmental volunteer groups, 4 welfare volunteer groups and 1 multipurpose volunteer group.

Firstly, the interview survey revealed that individuals who had similar orientations and/or interests formed new volunteer groups. Thus, at the stage of formation, intimate relationship among individuals was important. Next, at the stage of group expansion, it was found that a personal network such as acquaintances and/or friends and a community network which was newly formed by public events and/or advertisements were used. Moreover, volunteer members belonged to two or more groups, not a single group. This result suggested that multiple memberships produced inter-group network among volunteer groups, and promoted group development.

Key Words: volunteer, social network, developmental stage of group
The Theory of Relative Deprivation Revisited (5)

Kenji KOSAKA

ABSTRACT

The present paper is the continuation of earlier articles by the author on the same topic. One of the steps to develop a theory of relative deprivation was taken by James A. Davis (1959), where he made a 'formal-theoretic turn' so as to explain the generation of relative deprivation with a formal definition of relative deprivation and a construction of a conceptual model assuming that actors compare themselves with others randomly. He also introduced explicitly the related concepts such as ‘relative gratification’ and a ‘feeling of unfairness,’ and on the other hand, ‘relative subordination/superordination’—and a ‘social distance’ by incorporating the ‘in-group’ and ‘out-group,’ and eventually ingeniously and successfully explained formally the ‘nine excerpts’ of episodes taken up earlier by Merton and Kitt (1950).

Key Words: relative deprivation, The American Soldier, reference group, missed opportunity
Describing Social Beauty—a Report from Educational Activities

Kojiro MIYAHARA

ABSTRACT

This paper is a report on the educational practices of social aesthetics in this researcher's classes and seminars at the School of Sociology, Kwansei Gakuin University. Nearly four years have passed since this researcher began introducing social aesthetics into teaching and research activities in undergraduate seminars. In these educational and research activities, each student has been encouraged to describe or write out his/her encounter with 'social beauty' in everyday life. The descriptions of their experience of 'social beauty' have been mutually shared and examined through group discussions in order to understand the aesthetic (i.e., neither physiological nor ideational) pleasure of feeling the 'social' (i.e., association of individuals). The descriptions of 'social beauty' have been not only appreciated in themselves, but also utilized as primary data for intellectually analyzing the conditions or principles which may underlie the emergence of 'social beauty' in light of various socio-aesthetic studies in social and human sciences (G. Simmel, S. Ishikawa, Organizational Aesthetics and others). Based on the reports and essays on 'social beauty' written for by the students, this paper proposes a general guideline for 'describing social beauty' and examines a method of doing social aesthetics that starts from the awareness of 'social beauty' in everyday life.

Key Words: social aesthetics, social beauty, association, common pleasure
The genealogy and sociological research of the conductor (2)
—— From the perspective of cultural sociology ——

Seiichiro HIRATA

ABSTRACT

The question of what the conductor does on stage is of interest. This paper discusses the genealogy and sociological research of conductors from the perspective of cultural sociology. Specifically, this paper focuses on the following four points: 1) Adorno’s essays about the problems of music in popular culture and the conductor, and the relation between the conductor and the orchestra; 2) Discussions about celebrity and the idea that the conductor’s leadership is based on celebrity; 3) Social and historical research of classical music clearly showing that classical music as an idea materialized in civil society and that this idea is also a source of the conductor’s authority; and 4) Pierre Bourdieu’s research on art, particularly when considering the formation of the genre of a cultural work historically (though his views are not so effective when discussing the modern conductor of already established classical music). As a result, this research shows that the conductor’s leadership comes from “music as ideas” and “music as playing practices.” How conductors combine these two aspects is important. Moreover, if the relativization of “music as an idea” is progressing, as some sociologists have pointed out, then the conductor’s leadership is changing.

Key Words: conductor, cultural sociology, sociology of music
Dichotomy, Conflict, Tautology:
The Theory of Eisho Omura Revisited

Takashi MATSUMOTO

ABSTRACT

Durkheim, Goffman, Labeling-perspective, the theory of Eisho Omura may be placed in this genealogy. However, the purpose of this report is to disregard such genealogy and to present “Omura theory” not reduced to such genealogy. The essence of Omura theory is based on two principles:

1) Conflict between two principles, and 2) two principles becoming one.

This report examines a series of arguments by Eisho Omura based on this perspective and presents contemporary significance of Omura theory.

Key Words: dichotomy, conflict, tautology