

Accumulating Analyses of the Present State of Society: Message to the World from Japan Sociological Association for Social Analysis (SASA)

Japan Sociological Association for Social Analysis (SASA)

1. Goal:

The association's goal is to strive to promote analyses of the current state of society and to strive to deepen the theories and methods used for this as a collaborative undertaking through the mutual cooperation of its members.

2. Contents of Activities:

The association engages in activities that cover a diverse range of fields throughout sociology, including urban and rural areas, regional welfare, families, and industry, as well as theories on these, for the sake of analyses of present conditions that link together the reality behind family life and local communities with the structures of and fluctuations in contemporary society at the macro level. Originally, there were research associations that served as the parent organizations for the Sociology Research Institute at Kyushu University (Kyushu Sociological Society, Association for Social Analysis), but in 1996 these were reorganized into the association's current open configuration as its circle of activities were gradually expanded out to the entire country and then throughout Asia.

Capitalizing on the nimbleness of being a small-scale association, it holds regular research meetings twice a year (summer and winter; 124 such meetings have been held as of the winter of 2012). It also actively engages in communication based around the publication of *Social Analysis* (39 volumes in total as of 2012), which is a journal that is published annually, as well as the issuance of a quarterly newsletter. As of 2012 the association had around 160 members, of which about 15 are members who reside overseas.

As for other projects by the association, it holds symposia and lectures to which it invites researchers from Japan and overseas, and also publishes sociological texts and translated works on an irregular basis. The following are among the books that the association has published.

- Short, James F. (Translated by the Association for Social Analysis), 1986, *Sekai no Shakaigaku: Chihei to Shouten*, Tokyo: Kouseisha-kouseikaku, 1986. (Original: Short, James F. (ed.), *The State of Sociology: Problems and Prospects*, was published in 1981 by Sage)
- The Association for Social Analysis (ed.), 1986, *Shakaigaku no Genzai (Contemporary Sociology)*. Tokyo: Kouseisha- kouseikaku.

3. History:

The Kyushu University Sociological Association (Chairperson: NAITO Kanji) was launched in 1966 and centered mainly around the alumni association. It got a fresh start as the Association for Social Analysis (Chairperson: SUZUKI Hiroshi), which was organized as an independent

association, in March 1985, and in 1996 it became the Japan Sociological Association for Social Analysis (Chairperson: Suzuki Hiroshi), which has persisted down to the present.

The originators of the 1966 Kyushu University Sociological Association include the people listed below.

- Naito Kanji, Suzuki Hiroshi, NAKAMURA Masao, and SHIGYO Arashi

In addition, it also included the following people as honorary members.

- ATOJI Yoshio, ARUGA Kizaemon, KITAKAWA Masao, KITANO Seichi, KURAUCHI Kazuta, SHINMEI Masamichi, TAKEDA Ryoza, TAKADA Yasuma, DAIDO Yasujiro, TOKUNAGA Shintaro, and MAKINO Tatsumi

The association got its start from the following sorts of research reports in 1966 and 1967.

1966

1st meeting: General meeting establishing the Kyushu University Sociological Association

2nd meeting: "Research on Political Awareness," KAWARAI Haruyo, ISHIKAWA Yoshiyuki, SHINOHARA Takahiro, SAKURAI Takashi, and MAKI Masami

3rd meeting: "Sociology in Postwar Japan," Suzuki Hiroshi

4th meeting: "A Sociological Study on Retired Coalminers," DOI Taira

1967

5th meeting: "Miscellaneous Thoughts on Family Surveys," Naito Kanji

6th meeting: "A Few Considerations on Sociology of Domination (Soziologie der Herrschaft) by M. Weber," YOMIYA Michinori

7th meeting: "Farmers' Social Consciousness and Their Inclination towards Farming," YAMAMOTO Yozo

4. The Association's Organization (as of 2012):

Chairperson: MIURA Noriko (Honorary Professor at Yamaguchi University; urban sociology, East Asian studies)

Directors: INAZUKI Tadashi (Professor at the University of Kitakyushu; urban sociology)

MISUMI Kazuto (Professor at Kyushu University; mathematical sociology, group process theory)

Shinohara Takahiro (Honorary Professor at Kagoshima University; urban sociology)

TANI Tomio (Professor at Konan University, ethnicity theory, sociology of religion)

TSUJI Shoji (Professor at College of Healthcare Management; sociology of time, history of sociological theory)

YAMAMOTO Tsutomu (Professor at Prefectural University of Hiroshima, community sociology)

Social Analysis Editor in Chief:

Inazuki Tadashi (Professor at the University of Kitakyushu; urban sociology)

Auditors: SASAKI Takeo (Professor at Seinan Gakuin University; industrial sociology, East Asian studies)

TAKANO Kazuyoshi (Associate Professor at Kyushu University; sociology of community welfare)

5. The Association's Activities

5-1. The Association's Main Interests: Taken from Its Special Committee Series: "Reading Contemporary Society"

The Special Session Series: "Reading Contemporary Society" is a session where reports that last approximately one hour are given and then followed by discussions, thus allowing for well-rounded exchanges of opinions. These have been held since the 106th meeting (in 2003), and the following sorts of reports have been presented at them.

"From 'Value-free' to a Lack of Values and Valuations: One Perspective for Reading Contemporary Society" by YOSHIME Katsuhiko (Oita University) 106th meeting (2003, Chikushi Jogakuen University)

"Contemporary Society Seen from the Viewpoint of Depopulation and the Aging of Society" by KIRA Shin'ichi (Oita Prefectural College of Arts and Culture) 107th meeting (2004, Ube Frontier University)

"Aiming for the Creation of a Contemporary, Fundamental Theory of Agricultural Sociology: From the Standpoint of Theories of Agricultural Life" by TOKUNO Sadao (Kumamoto University) 109th meeting (2005, Yamaguchi Prefectural University)

"Preservation Activities for Terraced Rice Fields in a Mountain Village: Based around a Video Introduction" by Yamamoto Tsutomu (Prefectural University of Hiroshima) / MICHIOKA Hisao (Yamato Museum) 110th meeting (2005, Kagoshima University)

"The Formation of and Challenges for a Sociology of Time" by Tsuji Shoji (Yamaguchi University) 111th meeting (2006, Kyushu University)

"Studies on Agricultural Villages Undergoing Depopulation" by Yamamoto Tsutomu (Prefectural University of Hiroshima) 112th meeting (2006, Kumamoto Gakuen University)

"The Capitalist Cultures and People of Major East Asian Cities" by Tani Tomio (Osaka City University) 113th meeting (2007, Kimita-onsen Morino-izumi (Miyoshi City, Hiroshima Prefecture))

"Structural Transformations in Chinese Society under Globalization: Considerations based on the 'Underlying Structures' Paradigm" SASAKI Mamoru (Kobe University) 114th meeting (2007, Seinan Gakuin University)

"Capitalism and Sociology" by MUROI Kenji (Kagawa University) 115th meeting (2008, Fukuoka University)

"Suicidal Tendencies in Japan in Recent Years" by EGASHIRA Daizo (Hiroshima University) 116th meeting (2008, Prefectural University of Hiroshima)

"Modern-day Poverty and Society-related Resources" by Inazuki Tadashi (The University of Kitakyushu) 117th meeting (2009, Oita University)

“Depopulation, the Aging of Society, and Community Welfare” by Takano Kazuyoshi (Kyushu University) 118th (2009, Kyushu University)

“Routine Migrations in Depopulated Areas” by KAKU Kazunori (Shimonoseki City University) 119th meeting (2010, Kyushu University)

“In Search of Collective Structures for Heterogenic Elements: Markets, Nation States, and Communities” by Misumi Kazuto (Kyushu University) 120th meeting (2010, University of Miyazaki)

“From the ‘Informatization’ of Regions to the ‘Regionalization’ of Information: Considerations on ‘Social Compliance Frameworks’ for Regional Informatization” by KIDO Hideyuki (Kagoshima University) 121st meeting (2011, Nakamura Gakuen University)

“Changing Work Patterns and Occupational Consciousness” by Sasaki Takeo (Seinan Gakuin University) 122rd meeting (2011, Kagawa University)

“Pluralism among Community Leaders and the Institutionalization of Participation” HAYAMI Seiko (Yamaguchi University) 123rd meeting (2012, Yamaguchi University)

In attempting to decipher the main interests of our association, the case could be made that emphasis has been placed on the following sorts of issues.

- (1) Local regions, with a particular inclination towards research on provincial cities, agricultural villages, and mountain villages
- (2) Research oriented towards globalization in Asia and internationally
- (3) An interest in applied sociological problems, such as social problems and social welfare
- (4) Interest in basic sociological theories, including theory and doctrine
- (5) While there are various different styles of research, these are converging on analyses of the current conditions in contemporary society

5-2. The Association’s Main Interests: Taken from Its Freely Submitted Reports

Reports that have been freely submitted to the association are shown in Table 1. First off, from these it can be affirmed that research reports in a diverse array of domains have been given, with this revealing that subjects like Asia, agricultural villages, theory, cities, medical care and nursing, and welfare constitute the core of people’s research interests. If we were to re-categorize these in terms of Asia, local regions (agricultural villages, cities), theory, and welfare broadly defined (medical care, nursing, and welfare), then more than anything the major difference between now and back when the Kyushu University Sociological Association was launched in 1966 and 1967 would be the increase in research on Asia.

However, local regions, theory, and welfare broadly defined are remarkably similar to the research trends from back in 1966 and 1967. It would seem that herein lies our association’s intellectual tradition. A similar trend could be pointed out based on the research trends in the special committees mentioned above.

Table 1. Number of Freely Submitted Reports by Subject (2000 – 2011)

Subject	No. of papers	Subject	No. of papers	Subject	No. of papers
Asia	34	Agricultural village	31	Theory	27
Cities	21	Medical care, nursing	21	Welfare	19
Education	14	Politics, state	11	Methodology	10
Companies, the economy, labor	9	Family	8	Ethnicity	7
Internationalization	6	Gender	5	The environment	4
Sports	3	Abuse	2	Social class, hierarchy	2
Memory	1	Disasters	1	Young people's time consciousness	1

Note: The subject of each report was judged as comprising only one main research subject.

6. International Exchanges

6-1. Exchanges with Researchers from Other Countries

Our association also enthusiastically carries out exchanges with researchers from other countries. The following Western and Asian researchers (who are non-members) could be mentioned for having given reports at our association, contributed to our journal, and so forth.

- 1981, *Annual Review of Sociological Studies*, No. 12

“Professional Commentary on Recent Radical Change in Indicators of Marriage and Family Orientation in the U.S.,” John A. MCKINSTRY (United States)

- 1984, *Annual Review of Sociological Studies*, No.14

“Middleman Relations and Urban Conflict between Minorities,” Ronald Tadao TSUKASHIMA (United States)

- 1985, *Social Analysis*, No.15 <Special contribution>

“Perceptions of Timing of Life-Course Transitions: A Cohort Comparison in Manchester, N.H.,” Tamara K. HAREVEN (United States)

- 1987, *Social Analysis*, No.16 <Special contribution>

“Der Kampf der Götter; Von der Religionskritik Zur Religionssoziologie,” Wolfgang SCHLUCHTER (Germany) tr. by Yoshime Katsuhiko

“Perceptions of Timing of Life-Course Transitions; A Cohort Comparison in Manchester,

- N.H.," Tamara K. Hareven (United States) tr. by SUEMURA Naoko, Suzuki Hiroshi
- 1989, *Social Analysis*, No.18 <Special contribution>
- "Ethic of Conviction and Ethic of Responsibility: A Problem of Demarcation," Wolfgang Schluchter (Germany)
- "Nishijin in Crisis," Tamara K. Hareven (United States) tr. by SAKAGUCHI Keiko, Suzuki Hiroshi
- 2000, *Social Analysis*, No.28 <Special contribution>
- "The Aging of Population in Sri Lanka and Japan: Socio-Economic Implications," K.A.P. SIDDHISENA (Sri Lanka)
- 1983, 46th meeting
- "Women and the Americanization of the Immigrant Family," Charlotte G. O'KELLY (United States)
- 1983, 48th meeting
- "Patterns of Black-Jewish Conflict in American Cities: The Case of Black Anti-Semitism," Ronald T. Tsukashima (United States)
- 1985, 52nd meeting
- "The Life Course," Tamara K. Hareven (United States)
- 1986, 58th meeting
- [Lecture] "The Battle of the Gods," Wolfgang Schluchter (Germany) (Interpreted by: YONEZAWA Kazuhiko, Yoshime Katsuhiko)
- 1988, 64th meeting
- "The Japanese Matsuri (Kyoto Gion Matsuri) in the Changing Urban Community," Tamara K. Hareven (United States)
- 1990, 71st meeting
- [Special lecture] "Trends in Studies on M. Weber in Contemporary Germany," Wolfgang SCHWENTKER (Germany)
- 1991, 76th meeting
- "The Family in Contemporary America: The Effects of Family Life on Health," T.N. GARLAND (United States)
- 1992, 81st meeting
- "Sociology as a Profession," Hansjurgen DAHEIM (Germany) (Interpreted by: Yoshime Katsuhiko)
- 1992, 82nd meeting
- [Special lecture] "Beijing's Sociologists," DU Jin (China)
- 1997, 93rd meeting
- "The Defeat of Islamic Fundamentalism: A Sociological Perspective," Kazem ALAMDARI (United States)
- 1999, 97th meeting
- "'Honorable Elders' of Japan vs. America's 'Old People': Comparisons of Knowledge and Attitudes toward Aging and the Aged among College Students in the United States and Japan."

Naoko OYABU-MATHIS (United States)

- 2000, 99th meeting

“The Aging of Population in Sri Lanka and Japan: Socio-Economic Implications”

K. A. P. Siddhisena (Sri Lanka)

- 2003, 105th meeting

Special lecture: “Korean Social Change and Korean Sociology,” PARK Myoung-Kyu (South Korea)

- 2008, 116th meeting

“A Sociological Critique of the Multinational Corporation,” Steven L. ROSEN (United States)

It is believed that moves towards globalization will only accelerate in the future, and so the association aspires to carry out exchanges with researchers from other countries in a more vigorous manner.

As can be seen from a look at information like the locations at which its meetings have been held and the affiliations of its Chairperson, Directors, Auditors, and the people giving reports mentioned above, the association mainly carries on with its activities in Kyushu, Chugoku, and Shikoku (however, its members are spread all throughout Japan). It is said that globalization boosts the significance of the local, and in this sense the Japan Sociological Association for Social Analysis has a strong desire to contribute to world sociology from its locally based position.

6-2. Expansion out to Asia

The Japan Sociological Association for Social Analysis is an association that is open to Asia in terms of both its geographical and historical position. The increase in research on Asia has already been touched on above. There are also many Asian researchers in the association, with international students (graduate students) from Asia affiliating themselves with it as members and then providing support for the activities of the Japan Sociological Association for Social Analysis after returning home to their own countries.

The 108th meeting [Taiwan Meeting] was held (on December 25 and 26, 2004, National Chengchi University) thanks to the assistance of Dr. LIN Hsien-Tiung, a Professor at National Chengchi University in Taipei. Moreover, “Special Feature: Changing Local Communities and Cultures in East Asia” was published in the 33rd edition of *Social Analysis* based on reports from the academic conference in Taiwan. The following sorts of research reports were included in this academic conference and special report.

- 108th meeting [Taiwan meeting] (December 2004, National Chengchi University)

“The Attitude of Taiwanese Undergraduates against Old People and Their Purposes in Life,”

CHUANG Hsiu-Mei (Taiwan) and RAI Ming-Chun (Taiwan)

“Community Consciousness and Way of Life in Banqiao, Taiwan,” Lin Hsien-Tiung (Taiwan)

- 2006, *Social Analysis*, No.33

“Community Consciousness and Way of Life in Banqiao, Taiwan” Lin Hsien-Tiung (Taiwan)

“The Attitude of Taiwanese Undergraduates against Old People” RAI Ming-Chun and Chuang Hsiu-Mei (Taiwan)

“Problems and Prospects of Aging Chinese Society: Through International Opinion Surveys for University Students” WANG Shang and Miura Noriko (China/Japan)

The association would like to continue to deepen exchanges with Asia further in the future.

7. Post-3.11 Response

Owing to its experiences with the eruptions of Mount Unzen Fugen-dake in Kyushu (which first erupted in November 1990), the Japan Sociological Association for Social Analysis has amassed an extensive body of research on the sociology of disasters and the environment. As for typical writers in this vein, the following book was written by a research team (Suzuki Hiroshi, YAMASHITA Yusuke, Hayami Seiko, Muroi Kenji, and YAMASHITA Akiko) that was led by Suzuki Hiroshi, an Honorary Professor at Kyushu University and the association’s first Chairperson. What is more, the association has turned out a large number of researchers, both from within this team and outside of it, who proceeded to engage in research on the 3.11 earthquake and nuclear power plant problem, the Kobe earthquake, heavy rainfall disasters in Kyushu, and more.

- Suzuki, Hiroshi (ed.), 1998, *Saigai-toshi no Kenkyu: Shimabara-shi to Fugen-dake (Studies in a Disaster-Stricken City: Shimabara City and Fugen-dake)*, Fukuoka: Kyushu University Press. (1st meeting of the Japanese Association for Urban Sociology, Isomura Award)

8. Contact Information

Information on the Department of Administrative Affairs of the Japan Sociological Association for Social Analysis is below. We encourage anyone who has an interest in the association to get in touch with us.

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