

From a Sociology of Japanese Uniqueness to a Sociology of a Transnational World: Towards the Second Century of Sociology in Japan

**Japan Sociological Society
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HISTORY

Sociology was introduced to Japan from the West after the Meiji Restoration of 1868 in terms of the Freedom and People's Rights Movement, labor movements, and socialist movements. It was also introduced as a modern academic discipline to be pursued at university in a bid to develop human resources that would drive modernization. As Japan's imperialistic inclination deepened at the beginning of the 20th century, sociology began to grow in strength as an academic, social scientific discipline.

In 1878 the American Professor Ernest F. FENOLLOSA was invited to Tokyo Imperial University to begin lecturing on sociology, with this marking the beginning of academic sociology in Japan. In 1883, ARUGA Nagao wrote the book "Sociology," which claimed to be the first written book about sociology in Japan. Fenollosa was succeeded by TOYAMA Shoichi, who followed the traditions of Herbert SPENCER's sociology. In 1892, Toyama became the Head and Chair of Sociology at Tokyo Imperial University.

Capitalism in Japan advanced following the Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War. As capitalism advanced, various problems faced by the ordinary people who constituted society became more visible. Young sociologists became interested in analyzing and solving these problems. Conventional general sociology, based on the organic view of society of Auguste COMTE and Spencer, turned out to be insufficient for this task. Therefore, sociologists approached the problems based on empirical sociology, formal sociology, and psychological sociology from the West. In 1923, young sociologists with TAKATA Yasuma and TODA Teizo in the lead founded the Japan Sociological Society, thus institutionalizing Japanese sociology.

However, empirical sociology and formal sociology could not appropriately deal with the rise of militarism and fascism from the 1930s. Gradually, the sociology of Japanese nationalism became dominant. This suggested that the basis of society did not lie in the demand for individuals' rights but in serving the family, that the union of such families formed the nation, and that the head of the nation was the Emperor.

After the Second World War, the divinity of the Emperor was denied and a new constitution based on the human rights of the individual was instituted. The *Zaibatsu* were dissolved and land reform to restrict the power of landowners was implemented. A new civil code was introduced, and the legal basis of the conventional family system was abolished. Furthermore, an American-style educational system was introduced, and sociology in higher education came to be viewed as being a

more important scientific discipline than before.

Under these circumstances, the sociology of narrow Japanese nationalism lost its authority and American sociology, social psychology, and anthropology were introduced to Japan. Sociology based on these disciplines became popular as a democratizing science together with Marxism. It is not necessarily wrong to see the efforts by UNESCO and Western sociologists behind the democratization of Japan. Japan has attended the International Sociological Association (ISA)'s World Congress of Sociology from 1950, and has produced members of the ISA's executive committee. Since then, internationalization and international cooperation have been a latent but irreversible feature of the Japan Sociological Society (JSS). However, with the outbreak of the Cold War the United States began emphasizing the achievement of a stable democracy through economic growth rather than through democratization and de-militarization. Thus, a sociology of modernization and industrialization emerged. While not always at ease with one another, the sociology of democratization and that of modernization and industrialization were at the forefront of Japanese sociology until the second half of the 1960s.

The second half of the 1960s witnessed huge social changes symbolized by the revolution of 1968. The sociology of democratization and that of modernization and industrialization were criticized for their Western-centricity, intellectual orientation, abstract philosophies, and for not avoiding an order maintenance function. Then, symbolic interactionism, phenomenological sociology, conflict theory, and critical theory emerged, creating a multi-paradigm situation in sociology. Today, sociology in Japan has been further influenced by Western innovations in knowledge, such as in semiotics, linguistics, structuralism, the poststructuralist revolution, and postmodern theory.

Seventy years have passed since the dawn of democratization in Japan. Today, Japanese sociology faces a serious challenge in evaluating the progression of democratization, modernization, and industrialization (and moves towards an information society), and the consequences of each of these transitions. To be sure, Japan successfully constructed an economic society that led the world after the war and created a typical mass-consumer society. However, it is inconceivable that the collaborative lifestyle and shared common interests typical of people's everyday lives before the war completely disappeared after the war. The issue lies in the ways in which Western civil society relates to this lifestyle, and how this relationship will develop in the future. Regardless of whether this is evaluated positively or negatively, many phenomena described as uniquely Japanese relate to this lifestyle. To solve the problem, western sociology should be introduced accurately, and sociological theory unique to Japanese society should be developed.

In addition, this task must be performed based on a good grasp of historical context. Japanese society was the first outside the West to successfully modernize, democratize, and industrialize, however, this success was based on suffering in many areas in Asia. Fully aware of this historical fact, the task should be approached from a post-colonial perspective.

In short, Japanese sociology has reached the stage where it analyzes Japanese society from a global and post-colonial perspective, creates universal sociology based on this analysis, and

transmits it to the world.¹

THE JAPAN SOCIOLOGICAL SOCIETY TODAY

Membership Analysis²

As of November 2012, the number of members of the Japan Sociological Society exceeds 3,600. Membership has grown steadily following the expansion of higher education in the 1970s and the provision of postgraduate education in the 1990s. However, since the second half of the 2000s, the rapid growth of membership is in question in that the number of members leaving the Society has been balancing out the number of new members joining.

With regard to membership by age, Figure 1 (“Temporal changes in the number of members of the Japan Sociological Society”) shows the enrollment age of Society’s members (total number) inducted by 2014. About half of the current membership is comprised of members who joined in the 2010s and those who have been members for less than ten years. Figure 2 (“The Japan Sociological Society: Number of normal/graduate members”) indicates that postgraduate members comprised about 20% of the Society’s membership at the time the data was collected. This means that one in every five members is a postgraduate member. In Figure 3 (“Members of the Japan Sociological Society: Trends in the number of normal members and postgraduate members”) we see that many current postgraduate members joined the Society after the 2000s. The large proportion of membership comprised by young and postgraduate members is attributed to the expansion in the provision of postgraduate education since the 1990s, as mentioned earlier.

A gender breakdown of membership (see Figures 4 and 5) indicates that 70% of its members are men and 30% are women. The proportion of women among postgraduate members is 40% (Figure 5). While it is predicted that women will still face obstacles in establishing themselves in academia, the proportion of women in the Society is expected to increase in the future.

How many members of the Society work outside the academic institutions as sociologists? According to the 2010 membership list these members totaled around 150 (about 4%). The vast majority of members work in academia. In other words, Japanese sociology is overwhelmingly academic and scientific, and the future task is to facilitate the use of sociology outside of academe.

Research Areas

What research do members of the Japan Sociological Society undertake? The Japan Sociological Society has surveyed members’ research areas and identified 31 categories (32 if the “other” category is included). Members select up to three categories closest to their area of specialization. The total number of selections is reported. Figure 6 (“The Japan Sociological Society:

¹ From 1986 till 1998, the Japan Sociological Society published and distributed *Bibliography of Japanese Sociological Literature in Western Languages* at the World Congress of Sociology of the International Sociological Association. See each volume’s preface for the history of Japanese sociology.

² This section relies on Shirahase Sawako and Tabuchi Rokuro, 2008.

Total number of members by research area, 2014”) indicates that the research areas selected by more than 500 members are, in order of popularity, “social welfare, social security, medicine,” “culture, religion, morality,” “communication, information, symbols,” “family,” and “social philosophy and history of sociology”. The research area IDs and research areas are listed in Figure 6. The research areas selected by between 300 and 500 members are, in order of popularity, “general theory,” “comparative sociology and area studies,” “social psychology and social awareness,” “agricultural, forestry, and fishing communities and local communities,” “social history, ethnology, life history,” “gender and generation,” “education,” “management, industry, labor,” “cities,” and “social pathology and social problems”. As relatively wide categories tend to be selected, this specialization distribution does not necessarily match the reality of sociological research measured in published books and articles. However, it can be pointed out that members’ research interests are diverse and widespread.

The diversity of specialization is hugely varied in terms of gender composition by research area. Figure 7 (“The Japan Sociological Society: Total number of members by research area and gender, 2012”) shows a number of research areas where the ratio of female researchers exceeds 30% (the ratio of women in the total membership). Ordered according to the ratio of women, these areas—excluding the “other” category—are “gender and generation” (70%), “family” (58%), “comparative sociology and area studies” (43%), “ethnic problems and nationalism” (42%), “discrimination” (42%), and “social welfare, social security, medicine” (41%). In contrast, research areas with a smaller proportion of women include “economy,” “leisure and sports,” “social philosophy and history of sociology,” “general theory,” “knowledge and science,” and “planning and development”. This shows that in some research areas, female researchers are visible, and in others they are not.

Does age and generation influence members’ area of specialization (See Figure 8)? The research areas showing activity from a relatively high proportion of members who joined the Society after the 1990s are “ethnic problems and nationalism,” “communication, information, and symbols,” and “gender and generation” (about 70% is comprised of members who joined after the 1990s). In addition, these areas attract many young researchers. On the other hand, the research areas with a smaller proportion of members who joined after the 1990s include “life structure,” “demography,” and “planning and development.” These are traditional research areas, but as research trends have shifted it is assumed that they are now often included in other research areas. For example, “planning and development” is included in fields such as welfare or area studies. The fact that the ratio between postgraduate and normal members and the period of joining differs between research areas suggests that sociological research interests in Japan shift according to the needs of the time.

The major activities undertaken by the Japan Sociological Society are its Annual Conference and the publication of official journals. First, I will discuss the Annual Conference.

The Japan Sociological Society will hold its 88th Annual Conference in the autumn of 2014. It will alternately be hosted by universities in the Kanto area and those in other areas. The conference usually attracts about 1,000 to 1,200 attendees. The Annual Conference is made up of general research reporting sessions, special sessions (sessions organized by committees of JSS and ad-hoc

groups in JSS who also set the themes), themed sessions (sessions organized by research committees addressing themes set in response to immediate sociological issues), and so on, and around 300 presentations are delivered annually. Recently, the number of sessions delivered in English has increased. Also, joint sessions with the Korean Sociological Association and the Chinese Sociological Association are organized alternately. In addition, although not organized in the form of a joint session, exchange with the Taiwanese Sociological Association is sometimes facilitated. Furthermore, to promote the research of young sociologists worldwide, the Japan Sociological Society holds an annual TRAVEL GRANT competition for starting scholars living outside Japan. Grant winners of the competition are invited to present their papers at the Annual Conference to promote their research activities.

Official Journal

The official journal of the Society is entitled *Shakaigaku Hyoron* in Japanese. Since the Japan Sociological Society was founded in 1924, the title of its official journal has changed a few times, although the current title has been in use since 1950. Articles submitted by members undergo a rigorous review process, and only those submissions accepted after review are published.

Let us now focus on the shifting trends with regard to articles published in the journal, with 1980—witness to a big shift in sociology in Japan—as a threshold (see Table 1).

Since 1980, 756 articles have been published, 11% more articles than were published in the period from 1950–1979. The largest number of articles submitted is in the area of “social philosophy, social theory, history of sociology,” followed by “general theory,” the number for which remains unchanged from 1950–1979.

The most rapidly growing area in terms of the number of published articles is “planning and development,” which has increased eight-fold. However, this represents a growth from one to eight articles, and in relation to the total the proportion has increased from 0.15% to 1.1%, a hardly notable growth. Other areas boasting more than a three-fold increase are “social history, ethnology, life history” (a four-fold increase), “law” (a three-fold increase), “ethnic problems and nationalism” (5.4 times as many published articles), “knowledge and science” (4.67 times as many articles), “leisure and sports” (a three-fold increase), and “the environment” (4.75 times as many published articles). This highlights the diversification of published areas.

In contrast, the number of published articles has decreased in the areas of “social change” (0.67 times less than the number of published articles), “social groups and organizations” (0.66 times less), “family” (0.53 times less), “agricultural, forestry, and fishing communities, and local communities” (0.46 times less), “cities” (0.44 times less), “management, industry, labor” (0.69 times less), “economy” (0.50 times less), and “comparative sociology and area studies” (0.26 times less articles). Each area has seen a reduction in the number of published articles and in its share of the total number of published articles. Although it is impossible to deduce this from the data, it can be speculated that the reason behind the decline is the development of specialist journals in each research area.

The Society’s official journal in English, namely the *International Journal of Japanese*

Sociology, is an annual publication. Launched in 1992, it was originally published by the Society, but Wiley Blackwell took over publication as of Issue 3. It was originally envisaged as a peer-reviewed journal, but because it was difficult to attract enough articles that passed the review process, the norm has become to plan a special issue and then to commission articles. Nowadays each volume is composed of commissioned articles and peer-reviewed articles. The special issues so far include:

- No. 1 Postwar Japanese Social Change Since the Early 1970s,
- No. 6 Remarks on the Past and Present Status of Japanese Sociology,
- No. 8 Socialization,
- No. 9 Social Stratification and Social Mobility, the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake,
- No. 10 Modern Society and New Religions,
- No. 11 Media and Culture,
- No. 12 Japanese Society and Ethnicity,
- No. 13 Japan and Asia in the Era of Globalization,
- No. 14 Gender Analyses in Japanese Sociology,
- No. 15 Environmental Governance in Japan,
- No. 16 Japanese Sociology and Social Surveys,
- No. 17 Partnership and Parenthood in the Lowest Low-Fertility Countries,
- No. 18 Social Change and Social Policy in East Asia,
- No. 19 Social Context of Medicine in Japan,
- No. 20 Cool Japan,
- No. 21 Seventy Years of Japanese Sociology.

As stated in the submission guidelines, the journal welcomes submissions from not only researchers in Japan, but also from those across the world. It is hoped that many researchers will submit their work so as to deepen the discussion with researchers in Japan.

The Bibliography of Japanese Sociology

The Japan Sociological Society includes a Database Committee under the Executive Committee that compiles and maintains the “Bibliography of Japanese Sociology,” a collection of bibliographical information of sociology-related literature published in Japan or by Japanese researchers. On January 14, 2012, it comprised the bibliographical information of 110,348 items. It contains information published in existing sociology-related bibliographies, such as “the Catalogue of Sociology-related Literature,” and continuously collects bibliographical information by requesting that members of the Japan Sociological Society and related associations provide information. Also, it has started to collect systematically sociology-related bibliographical information on literature published in sociology-related journals and bulletins.

The Japanese Association for Social Research

In 2003, the Japan Sociological Society established the Organization for Recognition of Social Researchers with the Japan Society of Educational Sociology and the Behaviometric Society of Japan. The Organization was an indispensable pillar of sociological research and education and the basis for their societal growth. The aim is to develop human resources that can conduct scientific social research. The Organization was reformed into the Japanese Association for Social Research in 2008. The Association evaluates applications from university students who have completed the specified courses on social research and social research practice, and certifies the qualification of those social researchers who passed the evaluation. Every year, more than 3,000 undergraduate students are awarded the qualification of certified social researchers. Around 2,000 postgraduate students and established researchers have been certified as specialized social researchers within these ten years. The Association holds seminars, research events, and lectures, and publishes its journal “*Shakai to Chosa*” (*Advances in Social Research*) to disseminate social research. The idea of a certified social researcher qualification stemmed from the educational practices at Kwansei Gakuin University, and its importance will continue to grow as a tool for making sociology indispensable in civil society.

Japanese Sociology Trends since the 1990s: A Focus on Theory

In recent years the journal of the Japan Sociological Society, “*Shakaigaku Hyoron*” (Japanese Sociological Review), has continued to publish reviews pertaining to each research area and other essential themes. We now focus on sociological theory. A review by KITADA Akihiro (2007) focuses on articles written between 2000 and 2003.

According to the reviewer, sociological theory searches for logic and concepts to mediate the different sub-fields of sociology through careful empirical and conceptual analysis. Following KOTO Yosuke’s definition of sociology in 1980-1995 as postmodern sociology, Kitada defines sociology in this current period as post-postmodern sociology. He identifies three directions within post-postmodern sociological theory. The first deals with the issue of justice and norms, the purpose of which is to solve the main problem of postmodern sociology. Here, theory must wrestle a lack of self-reflexivity with regard to the theoretician’s political position. The second develops sociology as an empirical science so that it can evolve into a more sophisticated theoretical science. The third direction lies between the two, and veers away from both directions.

The first theory refers to two types of social constructionism. Social constructionism refers to a methodology that attempts to understand the process through which reality is constructed through representation, while bracketing questions about reality. The first type of social constructionism is a program for empirical research that aims to establish the sociology of social problems as a successor to labeling theory. NAKAGAWA Nobutoshi is a major theoretician in this category (Nakagawa, 1999; 2001). Another type of social constructionism focuses on a speaker’s political and social positioning, and understands this as a theoretical practice closely connected to the practice for change. A representative of the second type of social constructionism is UENO Chizuko (2001; 2002).

The second theory, conceptualized by Niklas LUHMANN, had a great influence in Japan in the 2000s, although the theory has been popular since the late 1970s. Furthermore, herein lies the problem that will deepen and widen this theory. Luhmann's theory is radical constructionism, however, it is much more radical than radical constructionism. It is elaborated and interpreted as a theory of the investigator rather than a theory of the object. Its proponents include BABA Yasuo (2001) and NAGAOKA Yasuyuki (2006). Many theories have been developed on the basis of Luhmann's theory, including the sociology of money, theory of law systems, theory of education systems, historical sociology, and theory of risk, among others (Fukui, 2002; Kasuga, 2003; Ishido, 2000; Tanaka & Yamada, 2004; Takahashi, 2002; Yamaguchi, 2002; Komatsu, 2003).

The third theory refers to an expansion of the theories by Pierre BOURDIEU, Jürgen HABERMAS, Anthony GIDDENS, and Talcott PARSONS, all of which, alongside those of Luhmann, have been the principal theories in sociology in Japan for a long time. Bourdieu's theory was based on his investigations on cultural reproductions and habitus up through the 1990s (Miyajima, 1994). However, since the 2000s, Bourdieu's theory has also been applied to other fields (Miyajima & Ishii, 2003; Kato, 2002). Habermas' theory of communicative action has been under investigation for some time. Since the 2000s, the focus of investigation has changed it to a theory of the public sphere. Discussions on Habermas' public sphere in sociology contributed to the development of the theory of the Japanese public sphere (Jo, 2001; Hoshikawa, 2003; Yoshida, 2000). The same can be said for Giddens' theory. Until recently, Giddens' theoretical work was at the center of the study. After 2000, discussions on modernity were also emphasized. His "Third Way" debate has been studied and disseminated (Imada, 2000; Miyamoto, 1998).³ Parsons' theory had a great influence on Japanese sociology after the Second World War. The 2000s were a type of Renaissance Period. In 2002, a symposium marking the 100th anniversary of Parsons' birth was held, at which many of his high-quality studies were presented (Tominaga & Tokuyasu, 2004; Takagi, 2002; Takagi, 2003; Yui, 2002).

The fourth theory focused on by the reviewer is ethnomethodology, which developed in parallel to phenomenology and social constructionism. At the beginning of the 2000s, ethnomethodology was established as its own scientific program intended to produce original empirical and theoretical products. It was supported by NISHIZAKA Aogu (1997; 2001), YAMAZAKI Keiichi (2004), YOSHII Hiroaki (1999; 2002; 2004), and YAMADA Tomiaki, amongst others. They attempted to elaborate on basic concepts, theory, and fieldwork as a method.

The fifth theory highlighted by the reviewer is the theory of "Self and Society." This theme is one of the most important since George Herbert MEAD. Later, in connection with structuralism and the sociology of emotional labor, the theory has undergone major development. KATAGIRI Masataka's symbolic interactionism (2000; 2002) points out the close relationship between self, memory, and story. ASANO Tomohiko's narrative theoretical theory of self (2001) and Nishizaka's theory of self and society (2003) are two more proponents of this theory.

³ The Japanese translation of Giddens' *The Third Way: the Renewal of Social Democracy*, Polity Press, 1998 was published in 1999. Since then many of Giddens' books have been translated into Japanese.

Finally, the reviewer focuses on the Japanese sociology of the 2000s, namely the social theory of freedom, theory of power, theory of institution, public sociology, and theory of morality. All these deal with the question of norms (Sudo, 2000; Seiyama, 2000 and 2006; Mikami, 2003).

Thus far, the review of trends has covered ecology, urban studies, territory, internationalism, social welfare, family, labor, regional studies (Eastern Asia and Southeast Asia), mass media, mathematical sociology, culture, immigration, ethnicity and nationalism, migration studies, social pathology, the Internet, theory, Luhmann, studies on the history of social research, religion, parties, the history of Japanese sociology, Parsons, class and stratification, science and technology, and Max WEBER.

Evidently, sociological theory trends in Japanese sociology are similar to those in sociologically advanced countries, but at the same time unique to Japanese sociology. As explained earlier, since the areas of social philosophy, social theory, the history of sociology, and general theory are the most active research areas in the Japan Sociological Society with the highest number of articles published in *Shakaigaku Hyoron*, these theoretical trends can be seen as representative of trends in the Society as a whole.

OUR MESSAGE TO THE WORLD

As mentioned at the end of the section describing the history of the Japan Sociological Society, Japanese sociology is faced with the urgent need to reflect on post-war Japanese sociology and to change its basic character accordingly. Sociologists themselves are making efforts to meet this demand. The immediate triggers are the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake (1995) and the Great East Japan Earthquake (2011).

The Great East Japan Earthquake was a natural disaster; however, it was at the same time also a man-made disaster. In 1923, Japan experienced the Great Kanto Earthquake in which more than 105,000 people died or went missing. However, it is said that this had limited effects on only a small number of natural scientists, and consequently there was no major change in people's way of thinking. In contrast, the Great East Japan Earthquake has revealed the problems in Japanese society and has necessitated major changes in people's lives and ways of thinking. In thinking about the damage caused by the earthquake and recovery, a multitude of issues need to be considered. These include the problem of a declining population; problems faced by an ageing society; economic, political, and social problems; energy problems; problems with lifestyles; environmental problems; and problems related to co-existing with foreigners. Also, because none of these problems can be solved within the nation-state framework so taken for granted in sociology, sociologists are urged to make efforts to develop a supra-national sociology. Furthermore, social scientists are urged to be objective analysts, while at the same time being "involved" social scientists who support the victims and areas damaged by the earthquake. Policy making for relief and recovery is also needed. Recovery from the earthquake disaster should not merely entail restoring the original conditions in damaged areas. The Pacific coastal areas of the three Tohoku prefectures that suffered serious damage from the Great East Japan Earthquake were areas sending primary products, young workers,

and electricity generated by coal fire and nuclear reactors to the big cities. Even if these areas were restored to their pre-earthquake conditions, unless there are changes in the conventional structure the people displaced by the earthquake will be socially eliminated from these areas as well. Therefore, true recovery for these areas means fundamentally reforming the existing structure. This would transform these sites into cutting-edge areas socially, scientifically, and technologically, and into sources of natural energy creation. In short, restoring these areas, and Japan for that matter, after the Great East Japan Earthquake should mean a fundamental shift in Japanese society, a civilizational transformation, and the creation of new social sciences.

Many sociologists immediately started researching issues related to the earthquake. Following their lead, the Research Committee of JSS at that time (chaired by FUNABASHI Harutoshi) set up a co-ordination committee for research into earthquake-related issues and facilitated the exchange of information among members. Based on its research findings, the Sociology Committee of the Science Council of Japan provided policy recommendations for recovery. Work on earthquake-related and recovery issues by sociologists has been evaluated as being the most active in the humanities and social sciences in Japan. In addition, policy recommendations from sociologists are different in that they also contribute to forming structural relationships between sociology and the government through the Science Council of Japan, whereas most conventional policy recommendations are by individual researchers and research groups. In this way, Japanese sociology is transforming itself into a public sociology by developing its capacity to contribute to solving the various problems faced by people in today's society. The Sociology Committee of the Science Council of Japan plans to publish the outcomes of its earthquake-related research on its website in English.

As mentioned in the "history" section of this article, one consistent characteristic of Japanese sociology is its internationalization and international co-operation. This is difficult to see in context that sociology was imported from the West and the production, consumption, and education of sociology, based on imported material, has been carried out domestically in Japanese. However, because of this fact, this international characteristic becomes an even more important one deserving of recognition.

The development of sociology in post-war Japan is almost parallel to the development of the International Sociological Association (ISA). ISA was set up in 1948 with help from UNESCO, and its first World Congress of Sociology was held in 1950. The Japan Sociological Society sent delegates to the Congress, and ODAKA Kunio was elected as a member of the ISA's executive committee. This shows that post-war Japanese sociology aspired to be the science of democratization of Japanese society, and that Japanese sociology was trying to promote the internationalization and international co-operation of sociology using ISA as a stepping-stone.

At that time, ISA organized large-scale international collaborative research into social stratification and social mobility. Odaka took it back to Japan, organized a research group, and reported the group's research findings at the 2nd and 3rd World Congress of Sociology. Large-scale international collaborative research led by ISA then came to an end, but the Stratification and Social Mobility Survey has been continued by many sociologists in Japan. A research group is organized

every ten years and, using the Japanese government's five-yearly census data as its basis, it conducts a detailed analysis of social stratification and social mobility. Much world-class research has been produced from this tradition, and it is an important feature of Japanese sociology.

The traditions of internationalization and international co-operation in Japanese society have been maintained by successive leaders of the Japan Sociological Society. At the beginning of the 1970s the Japan Sociological Society was asked by ISA to host a World Congress of Sociology. To this, the Japan Sociological Society responded that while it did not have the capacity to host a World Congress, it would be willing to organize sociology in Asia. In 1973, the Japan Sociological Society hosted the first Asian Sociologist Conference in Tokyo with the assistance of UNESCO and ISA. Delegates from 12 countries in the Asia and Pacific Rim region participated in the Conference to discuss "social development in Asia." Since then, Japan has hosted the Conference in 1978, 1981, and 1984. Today, this tradition is manifest in the Japan Sociological Society's exchange agreements with sociological associations in Korea, China, and Taiwan, and in its engagement in international exchange.

With these historical developments in mind, the fact that the Japan Sociological Society is organizing the 18th World Congress of Sociology in 2014 can be seen as a dreams-come-true for the Society. Over the 70 years since the Second World War, the Japan Sociological Society has grown substantially in terms of organization and research. It has sent a number of members to the ISA's executive committee, and with President Ferdinando CARDOSO, WATANUKI Joji served as Vice President. The number of ISA members has increased and there were more than 200 participants at the World Congress in Gothenburg. As such, Japanese sociology is increasingly recognized abroad: Case studies can be found in the book review section of the *International Journal of Japanese Sociology*; the Japanese Society Series and the Stratification and Inequality Series are both published by Transpacific Press, while the Japanese Studies series is published by Routledge.

Following the World Congress of Sociology in 2014, Japanese sociology will be entering the stage where it reviews the development of sociology thus far and forms new visions for the future in anticipation of the 100th anniversary of the Japan Sociological Society. For this reason, as one of the National Association Sessions at the World Congress of Sociology in Yokohama, a session to theoretically examine the internationalization of Japanese sociology from a global perspective is being planned.

Most likely, an important points of discussion will be the ways in which Japanese sociology has indigenized sociology imported from the West in response to the reality of Japanese society, and a question whether it has produced universal theory through the struggles with this reality.

In organizing the 18th World Congress of Sociology 2014, the Japan Sociological Society and Japanese sociologists are pleased to recognize our indispensable membership in international communication channels in sociology, and would like to declare that we will make even more efforts to facilitate international exchange for the further development of sociology. We would also like to make a suggestion regarding this point drawing from the history of the Japan Sociological Society and ISA. To encourage further development of ISA and national sociological associations across the world, it is reasonable for us to propose to organize international collaborative research on important

issues in today's society, just as ISA did in its early days. This idea is expected to serve as an important basis for building supra-national sociology and for developing national sociological associations and sociology in those countries without their own national sociological associations.

Needless to say, the Japan Sociological Society and Japanese sociologists fully understand Japan's position in the international sociologist communication network. Reflecting on Japan's position in world history between advanced national societies and developing national societies, our role is to bridge and mediate the two. This mediation function should be rooted in a post-colonialist perspective.

There are many challenges left for us, too. With reference to the history described earlier, now that we have organized a World Congress of Sociology, organizing the sociological associations and sociologists of the countries in the Asia and Pacific Rim region remains one of our challenges. The Conference, which has been organized by Japan three times, and once each by Korea and China, has not been held since then, which is a problem in the international context. Because while there is the European Sociological Association, the Latin American Sociological Association, and the African Sociological Association, it is a major lacuna that there is no sociological association or conference that covers the Asia and Pacific Rim region. Filling this gap with the assistance of many sociological associations is no doubt one of the challenges the Japan Sociological Society is expected to address.

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図 1

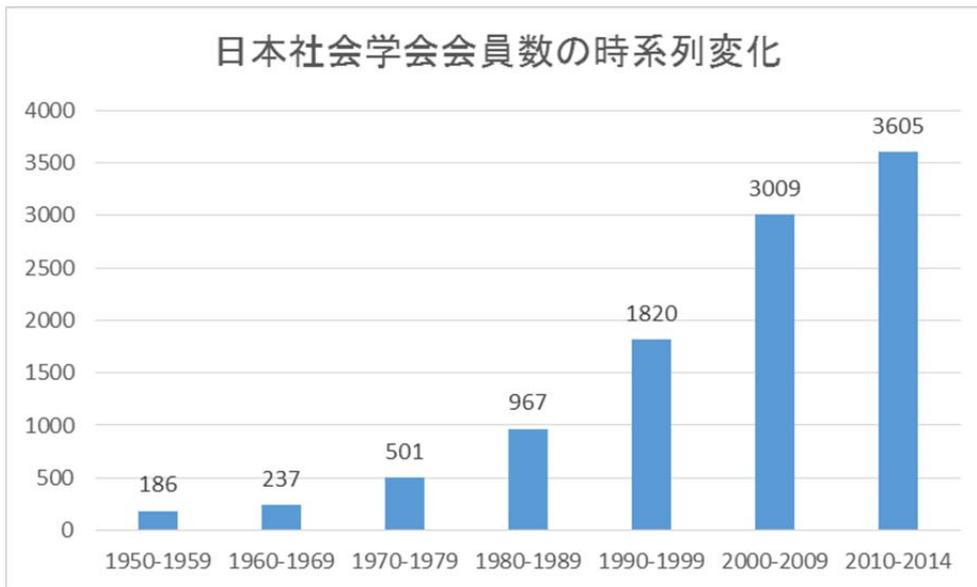


Figure 1. Temporal changes in the number of members of the Japan Sociological Society 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, 2010-2014.

(Source: Shirahase Sawako and Rokuro Tabuchi, 2008, recent data added)

図 2

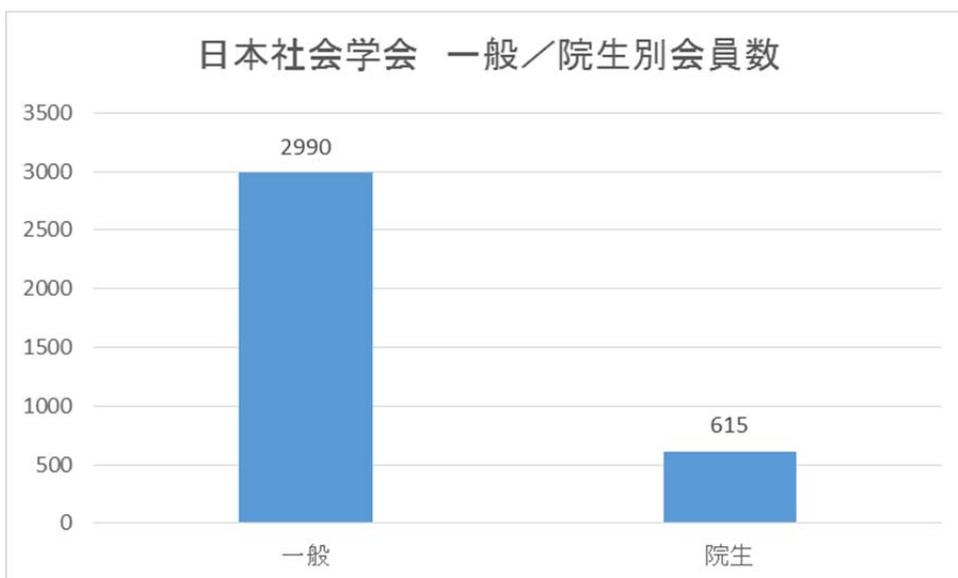


Figure 2. The Japan Sociological Society: Number of normal/graduate members (2014) Normal, Graduate.

(Source: Shirahase Sawako and Rokuro Tabuchi, 2008, recent data added)

図 3

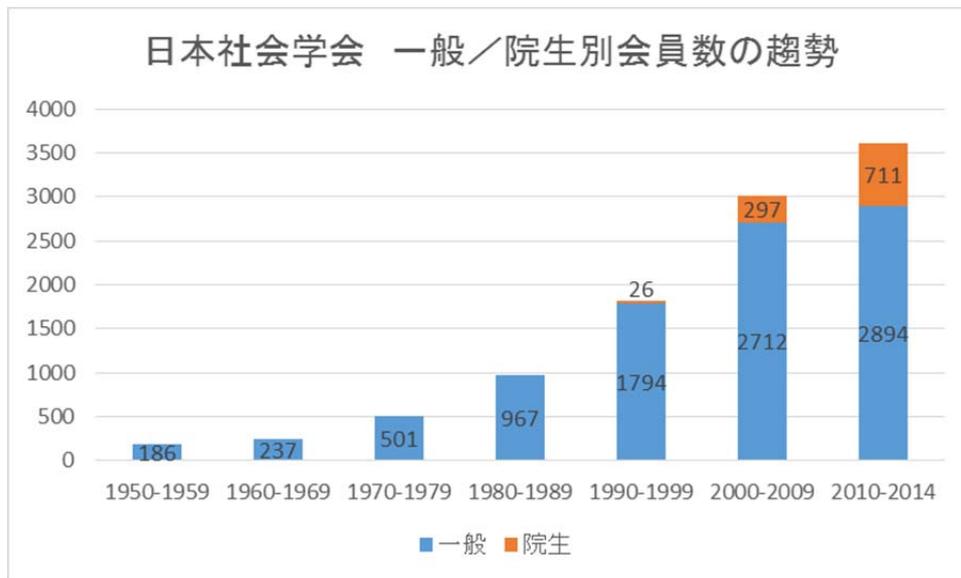


Figure 3. Members of the Japan Sociological Society: Trends in the number of normal members and postgraduate members (2014)

Postgraduate members / Normal members

1950s, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, 2010-2014

(Source: Shirahase Sawako and Rokuro Tabuchi, 2008, recent data added)

図 4

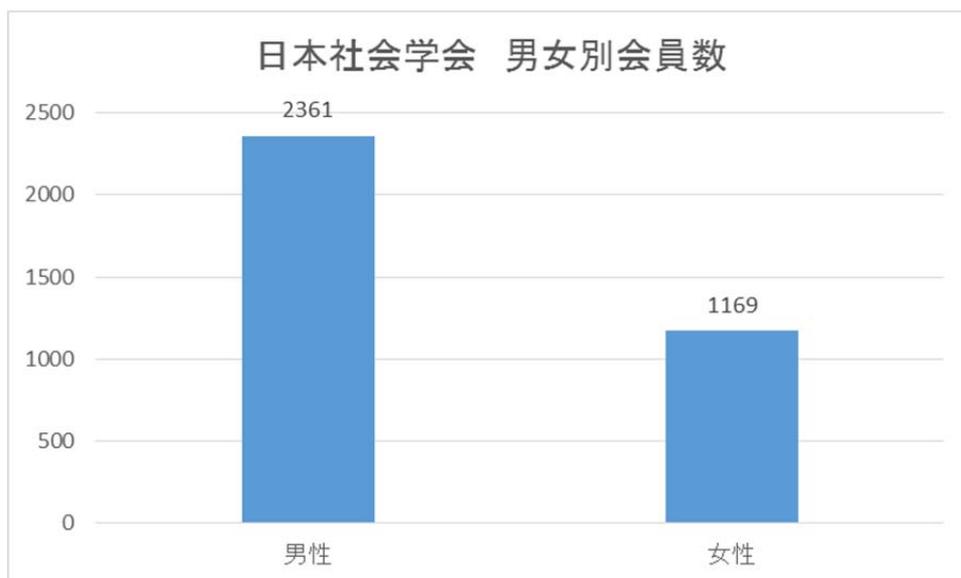


Figure 4. The Japan Sociological Society: Membership by gender (2014), Men, Women

(Source: Shirahase Sawako and Rokuro Tabuchi, 2008, recent data added)

図 5

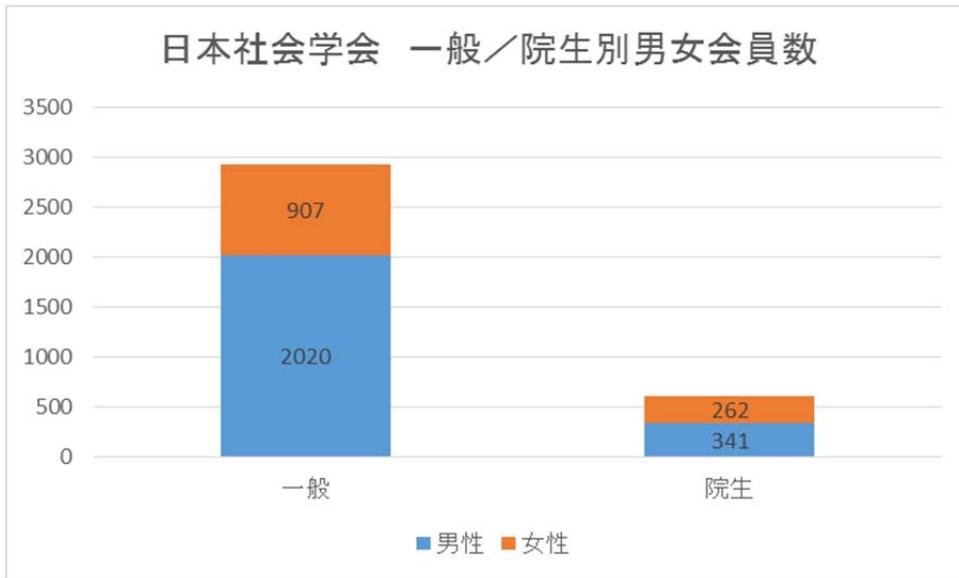
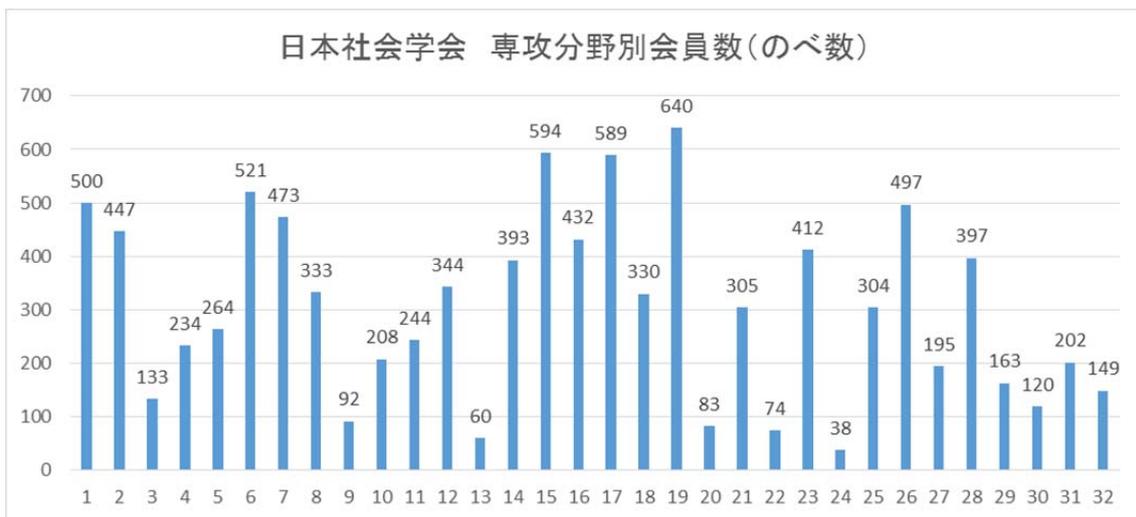


Figure 5. Membership of the Japan Sociological Society: Gender breakdown by membership category—normal members and postgraduate members (2014)

Normal, Postgraduate / Men, women

(Source: Shirahase Sawako and Rokuro Tabuchi, 2008, recent data added)

図 6



ID Number	Research areas
1	Social philosophy, social theory, history of sociology
2	General theory
3	Social change

4	Social groups and organizations
5	Class, stratification, social mobility
6	Family
7	Agricultural, forestry, and fishing communities, local communities
8	Cities
9	Life structure
10	Politics and international relations
11	Social movement and collective behaviour
12	Management, industry, labor
13	Demography
14	Education
15	Culture, religion, morality
16	Social psychology and social consciousness
17	Communication, information, symbols
18	Social pathology and social problems
19	Social welfare, social security, medicine
20	Planning and development
21	Sociological methods, research methods, measurement
22	Economy
23	Social history, ethnology, life history
24	Law
25	Ethnic problems and nationalism
26	Comparative sociology and area studies
27	Discrimination
28	Gender and generation
29	Knowledge and science
30	Leisure and sports
31	The environment
32	Other

Figure 6. The Japan Sociological Society: Total number of members by research area (2014)

(Source: Shirahase Sawako and Rokuro Tabuchi, 2008, recent data added)

図 7

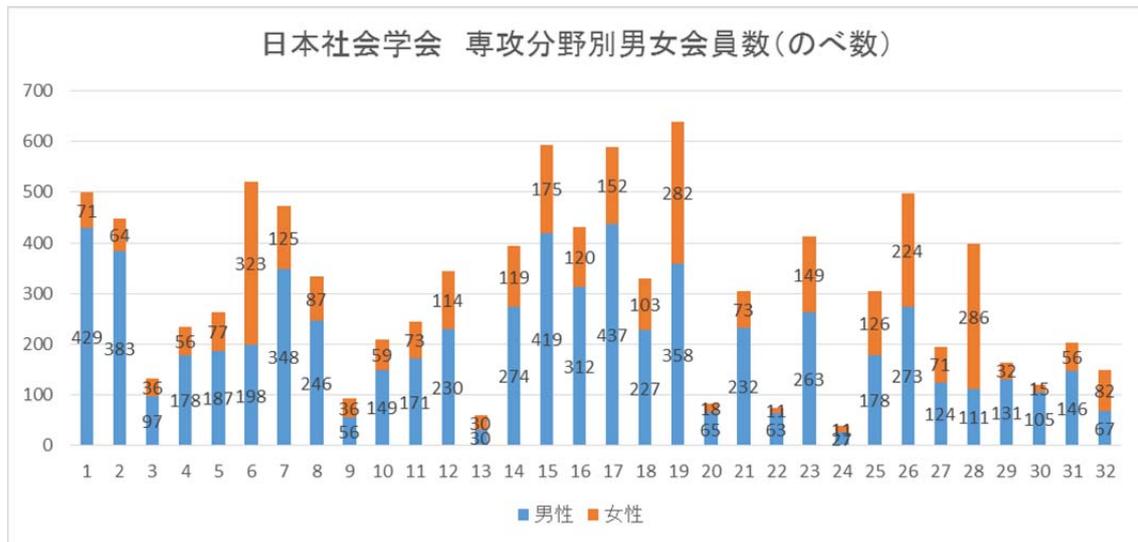


Figure 7. The Japan Sociological Society: Total number of members by research area and gender (2014)

Lower Men, Upper Women

(Source: Shirahase Sawako and Rokuro Tabuchi, 2008, recent data added)

図 8

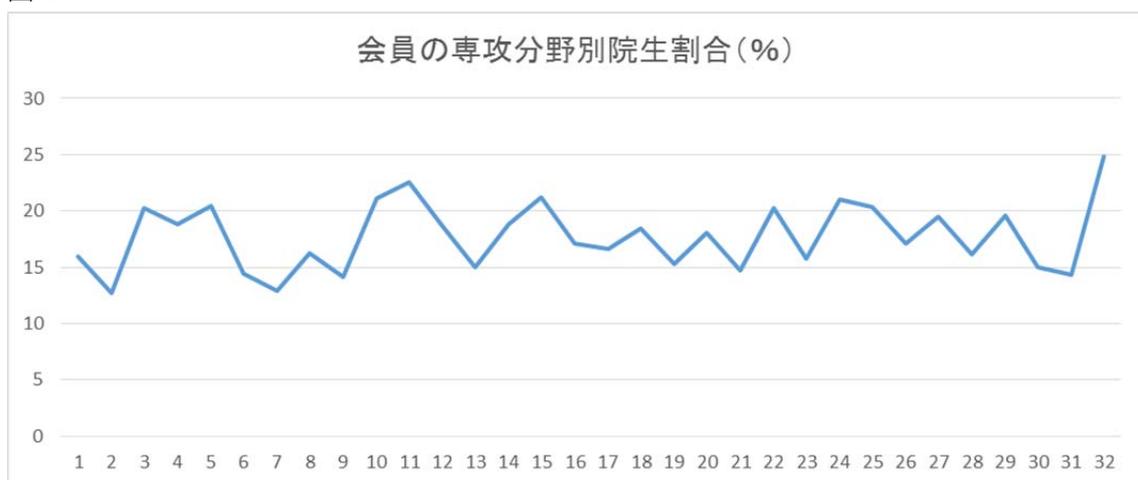


Figure 8. The Japan Sociological Society: Ratio of graduates by research area (%) (2014)

(Source: Shirahase Sawako and Rokuro Tabuchi, 2008. Recent data added)

Research Area	Total		1950-1979 (A)		1980-2010 (B)		Comparison (B/A)
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Social philosophy, social theory, history of sociology	237	16.49%	118	17.33%	119	15.7%	1.01
General theory	146	10.16%	63	9.25%	83	11.0%	1.32
Social change	15	1.04%	9	1.32%	6	0.8%	0.67
Social groups and organizations	63	4.38%	38	5.58%	25	3.3%	0.66
Class, stratification, social mobility	60	4.18%	26	3.82%	34	4.5%	1.31
Family	55	3.83%	36	5.29%	19	2.5%	0.53
Agricultural, forestry and fishing communities, local communities	86	5.98%	59	8.66%	27	3.6%	0.46
Cities	52	3.62%	36	5.29%	16	2.1%	0.44
Life structure	33	2.30%	9	1.32%	24	3.2%	2.67
Politics and international relations	43	2.99%	14	2.06%	29	3.8%	2.07
Social movement and collective behavior	37	2.57%	16	2.35%	21	2.8%	1.31
Management, industry, labor	76	5.29%	45	6.61%	31	4.1%	0.69
Demography	18	1.25%	8	1.17%	10	1.3%	1.25
Education	39	2.71%	17	2.50%	22	2.9%	1.29
Culture, religion, morality	58	4.04%	16	2.35%	42	5.6%	2.63
Social psychology and social awareness	33	2.30%	13	1.91%	20	2.6%	1.54
Communication, information, symbols	38	2.64%	13	1.91%	25	3.3%	1.92
Social pathology and social problems	21	1.46%	11	1.62%	10	1.3%	0.91
Social welfare, social security, medicine	42	2.92%	16	2.35%	26	3.4%	1.63
Planning and development	9	0.63%	1	0.15%	8	1.1%	8.00
Sociological methods, research methods, measurement	33	2.30%	16	2.35%	17	2.2%	1.06
Economy	18	1.25%	12	1.76%	6	0.8%	0.50
Social history, ethnology, life history	20	1.39%	4	0.59%	16	2.1%	4.00
Law	8	0.56%	2	0.29%	6	0.8%	3.00
Ethnic problems and nationalism	32	2.23%	5	0.73%	27	3.6%	5.40
Comparative sociology and area studies	59	4.11%	47	6.90%	12	1.6%	0.26
Discrimination	10	0.70%	4	0.59%	6	0.8%	1.50
Gender and generation	33	2.30%	13	1.91%	20	2.6%	1.54
Knowledge and science	17	1.18%	3	0.44%	14	1.9%	4.67
Leisure and sports	4	0.28%	1	0.15%	3	0.4%	3.00
The environment	23	1.60%	4	0.59%	19	2.5%	4.75
Other	20	1.39%	7	1.03%	13	1.7%	1.86
Total	1437	100.00%	681	100.00%	756	100.0%	1.11

Table 1 Number of papers published in JSR per research area