

On Kazuta Kurauchi's Phenomenological Sociology

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Introduction

(Continued from former publication)

Part I The system of Kurauchi's Phenomenological Sociology

From a theoretical point of view, Kurauchi divided society into the following three levels of society¹⁾:

1. The level of “the society” with definite article which concerns the question of the “essential level of social experience”, that is, how social relations are possible. Social facts are, at first hand, our lived experiences in some society before any scientific training or leanings. To study this level of society we should engage in a phenomenological inquiry of our lived experience. For this level of study, Kurauchi accepted the theory of the reciprocity of perspectives founded by T. Litt as essential.²⁾

2. The level of society concerned with “social groups” which are made by people who agree about some common purpose, idea or fate. In this way, they experience a fusion of selves, in a “we feeling, Dou 同”, and realize some “integrated order, Sei 制”, in their common life and activity.

3. The level of capital letterS Society concerned with a “total society” which constitutes a highly complicated and self-sufficient social range called race or nation. Because a total society involves both historicity and individuality, many sociologists are skeptical about this category. Kurauchi, however, endorses it because, at first, a total society is the social space in which the total of human life is carried out and in which every cultural activity is carried out. Second, not only sociology but also other social sciences, such as anthropology, economics, and political science, embrace this category. As sociologists, we must make theoretical inquiries into this total social range, which shows peculiarities different

from the other two levels of society.

Chapter 1 The essence of social relations

The history of Kurauchi's sociological studies is detailed in his essay "Phenomenological Sociology ; Time and Society."³⁾ His study of the essence of social relations started from Simmel's theory of "mental interaction" and included Litt's theory of "the reciprocity of perspectives." Kurauchi founded his phenomenological stand point with the idea that we should start our study of society from our direct lived experiences. Our sense of belonging to some social group, our lived experiences in it, and our knowledge about it are always prior to any scientific inquiries, insights or verifications. This is the reason why we must start our study of social relations based on phenomenological analysis of our lived experience.⁴⁾ Litt's theory of the reciprocity of perspectives, which Kurauchi appraised as essential, frames the general problem of how society and culture are possible, as follows⁵⁾ :

(Citation)

- (1) Litt outlines the essential relations of individuals and society by using the theory of the reciprocity of perspectives, firstly by applying it to an "I and You" relation and then to a unified range (Geschlössenerkreis). And in the latter (social group), the total integration of a group is based on the fact that the group member themselves have lived experiences of integration. This approach is characterized as phenomenological analysis, a dialectical way of thinking which opposes subject and object division and is applied to the recognition of physical objects. Litt starts from the concrete living self (Taikenga 体験我), as opposed to the cognitive self (Ninshikiga 認識我), which is characterized as a self like a geometrical point without any extension, which is restricted in its ability to recognize the outer world.
- (2) For the cognitive self, the body itself is part of the world of objects, but for the concrete living self, the body is a necessary part of the recognized self. Because my body is inevitable part of myself, I have some continuity to the world which extends out of my body. To eliminate the limits of myself to the range of my body denies my real experiences. Spatial objects appear to my eye according to a

certain order centered in my body. This is called “perspective” and the decisive element of my perspective is the seeing I. Accordingly, my perspective is the changing lived reality which is affected by my locomotion.

- (3) The spatial objects in my lived experience are not divided from each other without relations, they are integrated in my perspective. At the same time, in our lived time experiences, the moments of our life, are not a linear succession of present points but are integrated and formed by the present. I myself am a structural totality which integrates the past, present and future as components of my self. If we use the linear concept of time of the cognitive self to study subject and object relations, namely physical phenomena, our lived experience in its subject and contents is resolved into some points without content. Here, we can transfer the concept of perspective to the lived experience of time, but our time experience has special characteristics which our space experience does not have. First, for me, the time experience is more fundamental than space experience. Second, in my space experience there are many objects which have their own existence separated from my perspective, but in my time experiences, every moment of my life can not exist separated from my time perspective. Yesterday is the yesterday looked at from today, but yesterday itself had today as its tomorrow, as a center of time perspective. In my time experience, my perspectives on the past and present intersect with each other and are reciprocal.
- (4) With this “reciprocity of perspectives”, Litt regulates the unification between I and You. Primarily, our “expressive movement (*Ausdrucksbewegung*)”⁶⁾ shows direct connections between inner mental excitement and expressive bodily movement. This means that the world to which we express ourselves is not merely a world of objects but is component of my life as a living being. In our expressive movements, we are making conversation with our lived world. The most significant phenomenon of unification between myself and the world is the unification between I and You. I find in you not a mere physical phenomenon but your inner being directly. In this relation, I experience you as a center of your perspective, just like I experience myself as a center of my perspective. In your perspective, I myself is you (which is) experienced by you. In finding you, I also find myself (as a center of perspective). Moreover, the fact that my perspective intersects with your perspective denotes that I and You are making up some unifying existential relationship which surpasses the mere subjectivities of I and You.

(This is the formation of intersubjectivity.)⁷⁾

- (5) From this reciprocity of perspectives between I and You, the notion of the unified range (Geschlössenerkreis) is introduced, which is based on the overlapping of other multiple identities in my perspective and your perspectives. The unity between I and You is regulated by the appearance of a third person who is a common uniting partner between I and You. In this unification of three persons or more, that is, in the unified range, common activities form some integration which closely connect common experiences and individual experiences. The total unification of a unified range (group) is not understandable when it is separated from my individuality as a center of my perspective. We need not assume a center, like the brain in an individual self experience, in a common group experience. The organization of the self and of society from a unity because of the different constitution of each existence.

In such a way, Litt concluded the dialectical integration between individuals and society through the structural analysis of self experience. This theory is in apparent opposition to Simmel's theory, which attributes the essence of society to mental interaction between individuals. Although Simmel's epistemology of society⁸⁾ discusses the logical structure of social existence and has some aspects which presuppose Litt's analysis, the notion of the self in his theory does not traverse the notion of the self as a cognitive subject who recognizes physical objects in the objectified world. Litt settled on experienced space as perspective, contrasting this to natural space as the place of physical objects. And he tried to explain social relationships as essentially the fact of experienced relations between human beings. Litt's theory of the essence of society is widely seen as having epoch-making significance. If we compare the cognitive self to a geometrical point, the living self is defined as a mass. The self has consciousness of many things in itself, including body, name, status, role, sense of belonging and of assertion. According to the way these foci of identification move, the self has various modalities (different selves). Litt defined this as the movements of reality. In such a way, when selves, which can take anything into their range, take in other selves, a society, which is the dialectical integration of unities and oppositions, is formed. Society is the experienced whole in each experiencing center, and the individual finds his self facing other selves. Society is of course made up of individuals, and the individual can be individual only in the society. This basic regulation between individual and society is widely seen a very conclusion which was

sought by many sociologists who tried to harmonize between the points view of social realism and social nominalism. In short, Litt's analysis is recognized as the most refined and influential theory of the essential relationship between the individual and society.

(Citation)

“The belatedness of self-recognition or self-awareness is true not only in the genetic sense but also in the structure of self recognition itself. When I reflect upon myself, I cannot remember my birth. When I experience my self-recognition, I am already there as a conscious being. I did not get my being when I first recognized myself, but the being called me was there before my recognizing it.

This being got its own self-recognition afterwards. Self-recognition is a function of being to perceive itself later on. This means formally that self objectivization includes the division of the self into a reflecting subjective self and reflected objectified self, but in reality there is nothing but one modality of being itself. According to Cooly, self-consciousness is but one aspect of social consciousness. So, this division is not original. Before I have self recognition, I am already impersonally a being and my consciousness of this fact is connected to my present experience of the self. In my self-recognition, I experience my present self, but this self is only one aspect of the being which has continued up to the present. The consciousness of this relation is called as the experience of the belatedness of self-recognition.

In our self-recognition we are aware of ourselves as self-standing and self-deciding beings, but the experience of the belatedness of self-recognition implies the negation of our originality as self-standing and self-deciding beings. It also implies that we are essentially connected to the world of other subjects which make it possible us to stand as selves and on which we depend. To sum up, it can be said that in the structure of our lived experience of self, there are two moments connected dialectically, a discontinuous experience which differentiate the self from others and a continuous experience which make the self depend on and connect to others.”⁹⁾

From my point of view, Kurauchazqai's theory of the experience of the belatedness of self-recognition gives us the deepest understanding of and insight into our experience

and knowledge of the existence of self, others and world based on the analysis of our own lived experience.

Every human being, including, of course, social scientists, philosophers and physicians, has experiences of society and the outer world from unconscious babyhood up to conscious childhood through language and nurturing. Through this process, our recognizing self is made up prior to any kind of scholastic or scientific inquiry, insight or verification. On the basis of this theory of the experience of the belatedness of self-recognition, the difficult problem of the recognition of an alter ego is wholly explained. Max Scheler presupposed an undifferentiated total experience before the division of self and other, and Litt presented expressive movement as the direct foundation of the alter ego. Kurauchi then laid out the basic continuity of our existence with others and the world in his analysis of the structure of self-recognition, based on “the experience of belatedness of self recognition”.

The experience of continuity with others and the world is well observed in artistic expressions (the continuity between man and nature), in group activities (the continuity between individual and group), and in the integrated self (the continuity between mind and body). I have developed a theory of Universal Projection in my book based on Kurauchi’s theory.¹⁰⁾

Ch 2 Theory of Groups

Kurauchi developed his own theory of groups expanding on Litt’s theory of the reciprocity of perspectives and unified range.¹¹⁾

Kurauchi pointed out the following three components as the bases of a group :

- 1) The existence of more than three members
- 2) The existence of commonly held goals or values by members, including a we-feeling (Dou 同) among members who share common activities to attain the end
- 3) The existence of necessary regulations or orders (Sei 制) to lead common activities

A group includes the most general level of social relations in a total society, which includes historical and individual characters. Between group unity and individual or personal unity, there are many cases, but both unities are intimately related to each other. Each member’s self consciousness or self feeling have a tendency to unite into the group

consciousness.

Although a group consists of many individual centers, in their levels of psychological life, a group has a tendency to become one super individual autonomous totality, with its own life, specific drive, and unique order, based on an attitude of mutual assistance between members.

Concerning the external forms of groups, Kurauchi examined the theories of Simmel, Durkheim, Bugles, Geiger and Gurvitch, with their typologies of number, space and duration.

On the problem of the internal forms of groups, Kurauchi referred to Tönnies's concepts of "Gesellschaft" and "Gemeinschaft", Scheler's differentiation of Mass, Lebensgemeinschaft, Gesellschaft and Gesamtperson, and Sombart's typology of imposed groups and made-up groups.

In conclusion, Kurauchi differentiated the following three types of groups, based on different ways of building up common we-feelings :

- 1) Groups based on common origins
(kinship and community)
- 2) Groups based on common means
(interest groups)
- 3) Groups based on common values

Ch 3 Theory of Total Society

Kurauchi formulated the concept of a total society based on the following three components¹²⁾ :

- 1) Communities as its basic element, which are prior to the formation of the total society
- 2) Organizations to make up its totality, including
 - (a) Social divisions of labor which contribute to meet the total interests of society
 - (b) Strata and class which organize vertical divisions of people
 - (c) States which contribute political integration
- 3) Communication to facilitate socialization, including
 - (a) Face-to-face communication
 - (b) Indirect communication (correspondence)
 - (c) Locomotion groups

(d) Mass communication

These three components of a total society correspond to group members, group order, Sei (制) and we-feeling Dou (同), but at different levels of constitution.

To analyze social changes in a total society, Kurauchi presented the three types of groups, Preceding groups 前集団, Present groups 現集団, and Subsequent groups 後集団, which affect changes in the power structure of the state. Changes in a total society are necessarily connected to changes in the organizing power structure of the state system.¹³⁾ Kurauchi also presents the concepts of Law, 理 Ri; Norm 法 Hou; Stream, 勢 Sei; and Fate, 命 Mei,¹⁴⁾ as the deciding elements of human will and also the keys to analyzing a total society.

Notes

Kurauchi's works are published in the following 5 vols :

『藏内数太著作集』第1巻～5巻, *Collected Papers of Kazuta Kurauchi*, Vol. 1～Vol. 5, 藏内数太著作集刊行会, The association to publish Collected Papers of Kazuta Kurauchi, 関西学院大学生生活協同組合出版会 Co-op of Kwansai Gakuin Univ. vol. 1, 1978, vol. 2, 1977, vol. 3, 1976, vol. 4, 1979, vol. 5, 1984. In the notes below the author uses “*Collected Papers*, vol. p. .”

1) *Collected Papers*, vol. 1, pp. 234–235.

2) T. Litt, *Individuum und Gemeinschaft* 3. Aufl. 1926.

3) Kazuta Kurauchi, “Phenomenological Sociology; Time and Society” translated by Yoshikuni Yatani in *The Faculty of Humanics Review*, Otomon Gakuin Univ. No. 17, 2004, pp. 113–140, 藏内数太「現象学の社会学—時間と社会—」『著作集第4巻』*Collected Papers*, vol. 4, 1979, pp. 3–32.

4) A. Schütz called this the construction of the first degree contrasting social scientists' theories with the construction of a second degree. Cf. Yoshikuni Yatani, 『生活世界と多元的リアリティ』*Life Worlds and Multiple Realities* 関西学院大学生生活協同組合出版会, 1989. pp. 1–2,

5) *Collected Papers*, vol. 1, pp. 160–162.

6) Expressive movement is often observed when we touch a hot oven unconsciously. We remove our hand shouting “ouch”, even though no one is around to hear me. Litt explains this as responding to the outer world and the alter ego in my lived experience.

7) A. Schütz also uses the theory of the reciprocity of perspectives, not referring to Litt's originality. According to Schütz, the basis of intersubjectivity in the social world is found in 1) the postulate of the changeability of stand points and the postulate of the accordance of relevance between I and You. These two postulates consist of the reciprocity of perspectives. A. Schütz, *Sinnhafte Aufbau der Sozialen Welt*, 1936. Cf. Yoshikuni Yatani, note 4) pp. 12–13.

G. Gurvitch referred to Litt's concept of the reciprocity of perspectives when he explained the basic social relations as “nous” and “rapport avec autrui.” G. Gurvitch, *La vocation actuelle de la sociologie*, 1950.

Japanese sociologists who refer to the reciprocity of perspectives include Takada Yasuma 高田保馬『改訂 社会学概論』*Introduction to Sociology revised edition*, 1950, and Watanuki Tetsuo

- 綿貫哲雄『社会学通論』 *Outline of Sociology*, 1945.
- 8) G. Simmel, *Sociology* “Exkurs über wie ist grellschaft möglich,” 1908. pp.
 - 9) *Collected Papers*, vol. 1. pp. 166–167.
 - 10) Yoshikuni Yatani, *Life Worlds and Multiple Realities* 『生活世界と多元的リアリティ』 pp. 100–102. 「わかるということの多層性について (1)」
 - 11) *Collected Papers*, vol. 1, pp. 170–224.
 - 12) *Collected Papers*, Vol. 1, pp. 234–263.
 - 13) *Collected Papers*, vol. 1 pp. 263–267.
“Preceding groups 前集団, Present groups 現集団, Subsequent groups 後集団”, (my translation).
『追手門学院大学社会学部紀要』 *Bulletin of the Faculty of Sociology, Otomon Gakuin Univ.* No. 2, 63–82, 2008.
Collected Papers, vol. 4, pp. 99–120, 1979.
 - 14) *Collected Papers*, vol. 1, pp. 7–10, pp. 271–278.
“法則 Law · 運命 Fate · 規範 Norm · 潮流 Stream” (my translation). 『追手門学院大学人間学部紀要』 *Faculty of Humanics Review, Otomon Gakuin Univ.* No. 20 pp. 155–180, 2006. *Collected Papers*, vol. 4, pp. 35–60, 1979.

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