

Newsletter No.14

**Construction of
Death and Life Studies
Concerning Value and Culture of Life**

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The Abyss of the Animals, the Solitude of Humans

Kiyokazu Nishimura (Professor, Faculty of Letters,
Aesthetics)

In the previous issue of this newsletter (No. 13, April), my colleague Professor ICHINOSE Masaki wrote a piece entitled “The Face of the Philosopher.” According to it, animals – and in particular dogs – stare straight at us humans and without a blur their gaze penetrates through to our hearts. This is, as Professor Ichinose puts it, because “their existence in the world is pure being, without good or evil” and “in this way, the face of an animal appears to humans like that of a philosopher.” Professor Ichinose stresses that “this is in no way the mere perception of an indulgent dog lover,” but to somebody like me who has never had the experience of keeping a dog or a cat, this comes across like the special emotions afforded a pet by its loving owner. In this sense, I even feel envious of that relationship.

However, is the fixed stare of a dog or wild animal – that transcends good and evil and penetrates us utterly – truly the gaze of the philosopher who looks hard at the naked existence of the world? Or is it a gaze directed at an abyss that is unknowable for us humans? Do our gazes actually ever meet?

According to *Wild Animals in Captivity: An Outline of the Biology of Zoological Gardens* by Heini Hediger, a species of animals only lives in a specific environment – the so-called biotope of that species – that corresponds to the habitual necessities of that particular species. A single biotope is usually inhabited by several individual specimen (or pairs, or groups of specimen) belonging to the same species, and these specimen have therefore the tendency to divide a single biotope into several zones. The smallest division is called a “territory.” Animals are spatially tied to their territory, which they mark and defend. Carnivorous animals possess larger territories compared to herbivores, as they require a large number of herbivores to live in their territory as their prey. In this way, within one area there co-exist and overlap the territories of numerous species in a complex whole. In some cases, the species whose territories overlap ignore each other, in other cases they live together in a symbiotic relationship, and yet in other cases they compete with each other. A lion will ignore a hyena it encounters inside its territory, but will not show the same tolerance to an unknown lion it comes across. Of particular importance is the relationship between predator and prey. To herbivores, a carnivore is a predator and therefore an enemy. In this sense, humans have become the most dangerous common enemy of all the wild animals after evolving into the supreme predator by acquiring the technique of hunting in groups.

From a physical point of view, humans can be said to be “deficient animals” as they did not develop a set of specialized capabilities that suit their surrounding environment. Humans – as deficient life-forms – are haunted by an excess of stimuli that deviate from the instinct-based “Nature’s Plan” and unforeseeable surprise attacks. Exactly because of this, humans are forced to overcome these calamities through “scrutiny” and “foresight” in order to secure

their future. We call the peculiar environment of the human species “world.” When humans leave nature behind by the way of culture, what they come to perceive then is an environment that is there for them to shape: the “world.” Humans are the “subject” of a gaze that projects the possibilities of its own being in the world. However, for animals vision – alongside hearing and smell – is only a sensory organ adapted to their environment based on Nature’s Plan. In the case of animals, the act of looking does not constitute a gaze.

The significance of the fact that the act of looking in the case of animals does not constitute a gaze is that the eyes of humans and animals can never meet in a strict sense. Even though on occasion the biotope or territory of an animal may overlap with the living space of humans, for animals humans are in the first order alien visual signals, that have to be either attacked, avoided, or ignored. For humans, on the other hand, the various things they encounter in the world are not only mere visual signals. They are the object of the projecting gaze directed towards future possibilities, and therefore, the other is also seen as the subject of a gaze that in turn penetrates oneself. It is thus natural that primitive humans for whom animals were formidable opponents would perceive the meeting of a glance from the keen eyes of an animal with their gaze as a confrontation. The personification of animals originates in the nature of the human eye as a projecting gaze.

Even people who normally are not interested in animals will feel the urge to feed the wild monkeys in Nikkō or feed the deer in Nara with rice crackers and pet their heads. Is this because we, as beings who have already for a long time lived within culture, are fascinated by the eyes of animals who stare at us from within the unfathomable abyss of nature? And because we feel the want to come into touch with that divine bond with the animals which is believed to hide the deepest strata of our own existence by exchanging glances with them? Opposed to these false convictions, the monkey who has been fed by humans before will audaciously snatch food out of the hands of unsuspecting visitors and intrude into residential houses. The deer in Nara Park that have become used to being fed watch closely to discern who carries the sought-after rice crackers with them. In case one does not carry rice crackers, they look in a different direction, and even if one approaches them closer they show no interest. Even if it looks as if our gaze meets with that of the animal looking in our way, the darkness of nature that is lurking in their eyes is deep and we appear to their eyes only as visual signals of foreign bodies.

It may be true that dogs and cats that are kept as pets are sensitive to our glances and may give us an affectionate look back. In reality, however, it is likely that the pet owner has merely been integrated into the social hierarchy of the animal as a parent-substitute or conspecific. Regardless of how affectionate the relationship between human and animal may appear, it is something fundamentally different from two humans exchanging glances. Animals that have become accustomed to humans, such as domestic animals, do not so much as prepare for a struggle or attack upon contact with humans but simply avoid our gaze, blink, and trot on. That they can be this disinterested in humans is certain proof of the tranquility of their life. The relationship between animals and humans is obstructed by the rift that exists between nature and culture, and there is no way that we can mingle equally. Is

it proper to say that humans who became an isolated species by leaving the wild behind, are spellbound in their solitude to inquire in a human way into issues such as the existence of the world, good and evil, and the meaning of beauty? Or is this all only the howling of an “underdog (*makeinu*)” who has never experienced the special joy of living with a dog after all?

The Size of the Soul

Masataka Takeshita (Professor, Faculty of Letters, Islamic Studies)

During the course of the second half of the last academic year and the first half of the current academic year I have been reading Pseudo-Ghazali’s short treatise *The Precious Pearl concerning the Disclosure of the Sciences of the Hereafter* with my students in an undergraduate Arabic seminar. This work deals with the fate of the soul after death, as can be discerned from its title. Its contents are divided into two main parts. The first part covers the period from a person’s death, over his burial up to his initial trial in the grave. The second part of the work discusses eschatological issues, such as the resurrection of the dead and the Last Judgment. While the Qur’an, the revealed scripture of Islam, discusses eschatology in detail, it remains largely silent about what happens to the soul between the death of a person and the Judgment Day. The sayings (*hadith*) attributed to the Prophet Muhammad and the rich imagination of later preachers and scholars based on these sayings were used to fill the intellectual void regarding this issue. The first part of *The Precious Pearl*, which we read in class, is a representative product of this kind of imagination. Both the editor of the Arabic text and its English translator ascribe this work to al-Ghazali, who was an eminent Muslim intellectual active during the second half of the eleventh century and the beginning of the twelfth century. Just like *The Precious Pearl*, the last part of his main work *The Revival of the Religious Sciences* discusses issues of the afterlife. Indeed, *The Precious Pearl* mentions this work several times. While on first glance this work indeed appears to have been composed by al-Ghazali, most scholars do not accept it as a genuine work of al-Ghazali, as the ideas concerning the soul expressed in it differ greatly from those found in *The Revival of the Religious Sciences*. In *The Revival of the Religious Sciences*, the soul is thought of as an immaterial substance. The soul has neither shape nor size, does not take up space, and cannot be perceived by the senses. Its existence can only be known through introspection. Compared to this, *The Precious Pearl* describes the soul in astonishingly material terms. As the time of one’s passing away draws near, the soul gathers in the heart. From there, it gradually ascends through the throat, leaving the body by way of the mouth. The Angel of Death catches the soul when it tries to fly away, and the soul is described to shiver in the hand of the angel like mercury. According to Pseudo-Ghazali, the size of the soul of the believer at this point is that of a bee, while the soul of a non-believer has the size of a locust. Thus, the soul of a non-believer is larger than that of a believer. A soul caught by the Angel of Death is led to heaven by other angels. However, souls that do not belong to prophets or saints are turned back at some point in heaven. Around

the time when the washing of the deceased begins, the soul returns to the side of its mortal body. After the washing, when the corpse is clad in a burial shroud, the soul becomes attached to the chest on the outside. In this way, the soul enters the grave together with its former body.

Thus, the soul was thought to possess an actual size and occupy a spatial position after death. However, it cannot be seen by ordinary humans. The only humans who can see a soul are those special people whose veil has been lifted from their eyes by God. These people do not see the soul as having the size of a bee, but witness it in the form of a ghost with the looks it had during its lifetime. Also, there are instances in which the soul speaks. As the funeral procession advances towards the graveyard, it says in a low, groaning voice “Hurry up!” or “Not so fast!” In other cases, it will start recounting the wondrous things it has seen in the afterlife. However, just as the soul cannot be seen by ordinary people, its voice cannot be heard by them either. The only ones who can perceive the voice are those special people who have been enabled to do so by God. The Prophet Muhammad was one of these extraordinary people. He took pleasure in listening to the descriptions of the afterlife by the dead. The only opportunity for ordinary people to converse with a soul is in their dreams. The souls of the departed appear to people in their dreams and tell them about their various experiences in the afterlife. Thanks to these dreams, the living can gain detailed knowledge of the afterlife.

**Book Review: Tadashi Nishihira, *Encountering with Education*
(2005, University of Tokyo Press)**

Shigeyuki Akiyama (COE Researcher,
Education)

This work is not about Life and Death Studies *per se*; although it does address a number of pertinent issues throughout. Likewise, despite the title, it is also not a monograph on educational theory. The author writes that death education is the death of education. Further, “If death education is about teaching death, this has gone beyond education; and is something else. The project of education does not work when one teaches about death, and it dies” (P. 80).

When one broaches the question of death, or of how death can be taught, the very aporia of modern education—that those who know teach those who do not—faces the possibility of coming undone. To put it another way, “Schools are based on pushing death out. When death, birth, and other mysteries of life are discussed, the teacher themselves are often confused.” (P. 82).

However, the author writes that these “mysteries of life” (i.e., death, life, happiness, the nature of time and experience), these “cosmologies, metaphysics, myths, and faiths” are all issues that we must now speak of (P. 123).

Perhaps, though, all of these issues are such that, in the end, one can say very little about; any attempt to put these concepts into words may be doomed to failure from the start. However, while clearly realizing this, the author seems to have

chosen to speak. In what follows, I would like to talk a little about the fundamental problem of choosing such a path.

As I noted above, the careful omitting of the “mysteries of life” is a fundamental condition for education. In other words, for education to work, it is necessary that something is left unsaid. Further, it is this expulsion and covering up that has secretly provided the backbone of education. When education encounters Death and Life Studies, however, what can be obtained? Perhaps what can be obtained is the possibility of a space in which the dissolution (and reconstruction) of education is possible. Today, however, it does appear that the question of life and death has been effectively absorbed by our hygienic educational system. If the modern episteme is a circular one, based on the creation of an other, and also on consuming that other internally, then this process is no different.

At the same time, though, if Death and Life “Studies” is a form of academic practice in which all of our knowledge of death, which has been unconsciously passed down [through the ages], is studied in the wake of the breakdown of traditional communities (i.e., we now consciously study and transmit knowledge concerning death). Of course, that the demands of our age make it now possible to transmit this knowledge concerning death, this also means that death has lost its original “horrific” quality. I think, though, that those in Death and Life Studies realize the difficulty of actually coming face-to-face with death; this is the antinomy of our current situation.

Perhaps when we seriously address this problem—that is, how to deal with the episteme of death in a fashion that does not sterilize and trivialize death and make it something for mere consumption—both Education Studies and Death and Life Studies face the possibility of having their very foundations as academic disciplines rocked. Accordingly, this encountering of these two disciplines may be a “dangerous” one, leading to the deconstruction of both. This is the fundamental issue that we are required to face.

Now I must quickly change my tack. When one speak so simply of death, life, and the “mysteries of life” is there not the possibility that these issues become trivialized and neutralized—made into nonsense, even? I wonder, though, if it is not this kind of cynical attitude that evinces a fear of “something,” and that this is a way of fundamentally keeping that “something” safely away from us. In our everyday lives, this “something” is always present. And yet by denying the realization of this fact, one is able to permanently avoid coming face-to-face with this “something.” Is perhaps such action (in which one assumes that there is “something” which can never be reached or understood), paradoxically, responsible for creating a great hunger for this “something”? Is not the belief that one can never reach an understanding of the “mysteries of life” not self-fulfilling?

The path by which these “mysteries of life” are confronted is one fraught with danger. If, though, this is how we can conceive of both education and Death and Life Studies, Nishihira’s book can be said to be both one dealing with both fields.

Addendum: Tadashi Nishihira is a member of the COE Death and Life Studies program. Please see his “Narratives of Sexuality in one’s childhood: His/Her

Understanding of Sexuality and Death” (contained in this volume) for further information. This paper was first presented at the June 12th, 2004 symposium “Perspectives on Death and Life and the Actuality of Providing Care.”

Afterword on the Symposium “Beyond Life and Death”

Fumihiko Sueki (Professor, Faculty of Letters, Buddhist Studies)

As reported in the DAL S Newsletter No. 13, cooperation between the two COE-backed institutes “Construction of Death and Life Studies” (DAL S) and the Komaba Campus “University of Tokyo Center for Philosophy” (UTCP, part of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences) is progressing successfully. On April 24th, 2006, a symposium under the title “Beyond Life and Death – Reexamining Buddhism” was jointly held at the Interdisciplinary Hall in the Administration Office Building on Komaba Campus as part of this cooperation. In fact, this event was the culmination of the Contemporary Buddhism Seminar that was held five times over the last several years and besides offering a summary of the seminar’s up-to-date work it also sought to give a sense of the future prospects of this topic.

The symposium’s speakers were the two driving-forces behind the Contemporary Buddhism Seminar, professors SUEKI Fumihiko and KOBAYASHI Yasuo (Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, UTCP). Professors TAKEUCHI Seiichi (Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology, DAL S) and Nakajima Takahiro (Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, UTCP) acted as discussants, and professor KADOWAKI Shunsuke (Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, UTCP) took over the role of chair-person.

Based on his new book *Bukkyō vs. Rinri (Buddhism vs. Ethics)*, Professor Sueki discussed the relationship between ordinary ethics and transcendental ethics. While he argued for the importance of ordinary ethics in mediating between differing value systems, he also pointed out that the issue should be taken to a level beyond ordinary ethics since the roots of value beliefs remain ultimately incomprehensible. Therefore, it should not be a matter of “overcoming life and death,” but of “progressing towards life and death.” Namely, life and death should not be hidden but, rather, it is necessary to illuminate life and death. Professor Kobayashi, based his discussion on the essay “*Shogyō-mujō Kō*” (Thoughts on Impermanence) by the renowned Buddhist Reverend OIKAWA Shinkai that was published in the magazine *Shunjū* in November 2005. Despite being an



accomplished Buddhist and monk well versed in Buddhist ethics, Buddhist ethics failed in helping Reverend Oikawa come to terms with the sudden death of his own nephew. Professor Kobayashi raised the issue of the limits of what Buddhism can accomplish and argued for the need to develop a Buddhist practice that cannot be subsumed under ordinary ethics.

While acknowledging the validity of Professor Sueki's distinction between ordinary ethics and transcendental ethics, the first discussant, Professor Takeuchi, pointed out that in everyday life the two are commonly found in unison. Therefore, a return to ordinary ethics should also be possible. The second discussant, Professor Nakajima, reminded the audience of the possibilities of Buddhism by bringing up Buddhist memorial services that deal with unnatural deaths and arguing that Buddhist vows, especially the vow of not taking life, give concrete expression to Buddhist transcendental ethics in reality. Inspired by the arguments of the presenters and discussants, there was a lively response from the audience, with natural scientists talking from the perspective of their respective fields and Buddhist monks involved in new forms of practical activities asking numerous questions. The interest in the debate was so great that the event came to an end long after the scheduled closing time, with the chair of DALs, Professor SHIMAZONO Susumu, giving the ending address. The venue was reverberated with the excitement of the approximately one-hundred participants ranging from first-year students to established scholars and members of the general public, giving evidence of the immense interest that exists in the subject.

Many young researchers from DALs took part alongside their colleagues from the UTCP project in this symposium, and the event also had the benefit of fostering academic exchange between the two sides. It is anticipated that the experiences gained from this event will result in further close cooperation between the two COE institutes in advancing their projects, and that the event will contribute to developing active cooperation in research and teaching between the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

Report on the Lectures and Workshops by Professor Nick Zangwill

Masaki Ichinose (Associate Professor, Faculty of Letters,
Philosophy)

On May 9th and 10th of this year, the COE project Death and Life Studies and the Society of Philosophy Japan jointly organized a lecture and workshop with Professor Nick Zangwill, who has been – among other positions – lecturer at the University of Glasgow and Fellow at Saint Anne's College at the University of Oxford. Professor Zangwill is a researcher in



the field of aesthetics who has concentrated on the study of the aesthetics of music, and has published, to name just one of his publications, the monograph, *The Metaphysics of Beauty* (Cornell University Press, 2001). However, his work is not limited to the field of aesthetics alone. Professor Zangwill has also worked and published on issues related to ethics and the philosophy of mind. On this occasion, too, he discussed ethical issues. Originally, I had met Professor Zangwill during my time of studying in Britain and this has been a delightful reunion for me.



The topic of the first day was “The Indifference Argument,” and Professor Zangwill discussed the central issue that has occupied ethics since Kant: the relationship between moral judgment and the motivation for action. Professor Zangwill took up the issue of the conflicting claims of the Kantian internalist position, which claims that it is moral judgments which essentially determine the motivation for action and the Externalist position that sees moral judgment and motivation for action as separate issues and argues that actions are determined by factors external to moral judgment (such as desires). In his talk, the professor sought to demonstrate that the externalist position is more persuasive. He proposed the so-called “indifference argument,” which claims the non-interdependence of moral judgment and actions, using a number of examples to illustrate his argument. In particular, his example of mercenaries who engage in acts of killing despite acknowledging that killing a human is bad was striking. Based on concrete examples like this and minutely investigating counter-arguments from the internalist position, he argued for the rightfulness of the externalist position. During the questions and answers session, there were numerous questions from the floor. I, myself, raised the question of the existence of a qualitative difference between the internalist position and the externalist position, as the former has generally been a normative argument that calls upon people to base their actions on moral judgment, while the latter merely describes the relationship between judgment and action from the perspective of human reality. Professor Zangwill responded that indeed the relationship between norm and description is not a simple one.

The topic of the second day was “Perpetrator Motivation: Some Reflections on the Browning/Goldhagen Debate.” The central issue of this day was the Holocaust. Compared to the previous day, the second day dealt with an issue with a strong empirical side represented by the problem of historical perception. In this sense, it was a topic perfectly suited to the Death and Life Studies framework. Professor Zangwill discussed the academic argument that has been raging in recent years between the two historians Daniel J. Goldhagen and Christopher R. Browning in his attempt to understand the Holocaust. Opposed to Goldhagen, who argues that the ideology of anti-Semitism alone was responsible for turning many Germans into

mass-murders, Browning sees anti-Semitism as only one of several factors and influences that made German soldiers commit these acts. Professor Zangwill, investigating various forms of evidence and a number of schools of interpretation concerning the evidence, supported Goldhagen's position. Again, during the Questions and Answers session, many questions were raised. Among these questions, the issue was raised of exactly who should carry responsibility for the genocide, and the debate grew in philosophical depth. Professor Zangwill said that there should be further examination of the issue of responsibility and expressed his interest to learn more about the Japanese debate about the war and war responsibility.

During these two days, we were able to engage in a substantial debate that went even beyond what we had hoped for. After the first talk, there was a welcoming event for Professor Zangwill at the restaurant Forest Hongō, where the discussion begun during the talk was eagerly continued by the workshop participants and young members of the COE staff. During this discussion, I gained the distinct impression that the Life and Death Studies project had once again made progress.

Special Exhibition at the Komaba Campus Art Museum:

“Living According to the Holy Book: From the Formation of the Torah to the Establishment of Judaism”

**Hiroshi Ichikawa (Professor, Faculty of Letters, Religious
Studies)**

This exhibition is held from May 26th (Fri) 2006 to July 23rd (Sun) at the Art Museum on the Komaba Campus. The exhibition is an attempt at reconstructing the everyday-life practices of Jews who gave birth to and lived out the Holy Book. We aim to achieve this reconstruction by presenting two distinct sets of exhibits: Jewish scriptures from the Israel Museum in Jerusalem and artifacts unearthed in archeological excavations.



Also, seen in connection with the ongoing COE project, this exhibition intends to make a contribution to Death and Life Studies from the vantage point of traditional Religious Studies and to deepen understanding of the Christian and Islamic traditions through a contemplation of the religious life of their fellow monotheistic faith: Judaism. The exhibition is sponsored by the two COE projects, Death and Life Studies at the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology (Hongō Campus) and the University of Tokyo Center for Philosophy (UTCP) at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (Komaba Campus).

One of the educational and academic significances of the exhibition is the fact that a translation and detailed commentary of the Hebrew religio-ethnic texts on display has been made by four graduate students of this university and is available as a supplementary booklet. Also, in view of the fact that the exhibition is held at the Komaba Campus, which is home to a large number of undergraduate students, efforts have been made to combine education and research by holding thematically-related lectures during the duration of the exhibition.

We are happy to announce that this exhibition and its related projects are receiving the cooperation of a number of lecturers of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. On the Komaba Campus side of this project, for instance, the person in charge has been Professor ŌNUKI Takashi. Furthermore, Professor MIYAMOTO Hisao gave a talk as part of the research seminar “How did the Holy Book become the Sacred Scripture of Judaism?” on June 5. Professor SUGITA Hideaki and Associate Professor Hermann Gottschewski will both give talks on the occasion of the symposium “Prayer in Everyday-Life: On Various Aspects of the Communication with God in Monotheism” on June 24. The organizational structure of this exhibition is as follows:

Organization: Religious Studies Department, The University of Tokyo
Art Museum, Komaba Campus, The University of Tokyo

Sponsors: 21st Century COE Project Death and Life Studies, The University of Tokyo
21st Century COE Project the University of Tokyo Center for Philosophy
The Embassy of Israel in Japan

Project Cooperation: Mr. Khder BAIDUM (Jerusalem-based antique dealer), Mr. NAKAMURA Haruo (part-time lecturer at Ōu University), Graduate Students of the Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology (Hongō Campus): ŌSAWA Chieko, SHIMODA Hideharu, YAMAMOTO Shin’ichi, SHIDA Masahiro.

Special Lecture jointly held by Death and Life Studies(DALS) and the University of Tokyo Center for Philosophy(UTCP)

Hiroshi Ichikawa (Professor, Faculty of Letters, Religious Studies)

Time: July 21st (Fri) 17:00-19:00

Location: Room 113, Law and Letters Bldg. 1, Hongō Campus

Speaker: Leora F. Batnitzky

(Associate Professor, Department of Religion, Princeton University)

Topic: Levinas’ View of Death and its Relation to Judaism

Commentators: KOBAYASHI Yasuo

(Professor, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, University of Tokyo)

Chair: ICHIKAWA Hiroshi

(Professor, Graduate School of Humanities and Sociology, University of

Tokyo)

Introduction to the Speaker:

Professor Leora Batnitzky is a young and active scholar of Emanuel Levinas and contemporary Jewish philosophy. The talk on July 21 is made possible by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, which invited Professor Batnitzky to Japan for a short-term research stay. Professor Batnitzky will arrive in Japan at the end of July to engage in a joint study of the reception of Emanuel Levinas in Japan. She is scheduled to hold a series of lectures in the Faculty of Letters over four days from July 24 to July 27 on contemporary Jewish philosophy with particular attention given to Emanuel Levinas. The topic of the July 21 talk is deeply connected to the research subjects of the two COE projects. In particular, the religious aspects of Levinas have so far received little attention in Japan, and it is expected that Professor Batnitzky's talk, which will address this side of Levinas' thought, will greatly benefit our understanding of Levinas.

Short Outline of the Academic Achievements of Professor Leora F. Batnitzky:

Among Professor Batnitzky's many achievements, the greatness of her academic vision and the valor with which she conducts her research have to be particularly noted. Special mention has to be also made of the professor's achievements in discussing the direction of the contemporary Jewish spirit by locating modern Jewish thinkers such as Franz Rosenzweig, Martin Buber, Emanuel Levinas, and Leo Strauss in Judaism's spiritual context in western modernity. One of Professor Batnitzky's important contributions to the field lies in extracting the problems and issues each of these thinkers addressed from the mutually influencing relationship between the Jewish religious tradition, the western philosophical tradition, and western Christian theology. Having lived through the great historical upheavals of modern times, from the enfranchisement of Jews in the modern west through the First World War, mass immigration to the United States, the rise of the Nazis, the Holocaust, and the founding of Israel, these four thinkers represent modern Jewish thought like no others. Furthermore, Professor Batnitzky currently supervises the compilation of a collection of Martin Buber's works on philosophy and religion and is engaged in unearthing unpublished works by Buber at the Buber Archives in Jerusalem.

Main Publications:

Leo Strauss and Emmanuel Levinas: Philosophy and the Politics of Revelation, Cambridge University Press 2005.

Idolatry and Representation: The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig Reconsidered, Princeton University Press, 2000.

"Renewing the Jewish Past: Buber on History and Truth," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 10:4 (2003), 336-350.

"Encountering the Modern Subject in Levinas," *Yale French Studies*, 104 (2003) special issue on "Encounters with Levinas," edited by Thomas Trezise, 6-21.

"On the Suffering of God's Chosen: Christian Views in Jewish Terms," edited by

Tikva Frymer-Kensky et al, *Christianity in Jewish Terms*, Westview Press, 2000, 203-220.

Announcement of a Public Lecture by Professor Verres

Susumu Shimazono(COE Program Chair, Faculty of Letters, Religious Studies)

Professor Rolf Verres of the University of Heidelberg, where he teaches on the realm that lies in-between medicine and psychology, is also an artist and a practitioner of music therapy. He was born in 1948, studied medicine and psychology in Germany and the United States (the University of Muenster, the University of Heidelberg, Stanford University), and possesses qualifications both as a medical practitioner and as a psychotherapist. Professor Verres is head of the Department of Medical Psychology at the Heidelberg University Medical Centre, where he has pioneered new healing methods. Professor Verres is a researcher and clinician who has studied issues of death and life from an original angle for many years now. His experiences in having to wrestle with the fears of cancer patients facing their own deaths culminated in his book *Die Kunst zu Leben- Krebs und Psyche* (The Art of Living – Cancer and the Psyche), one of his numerous publications.

The interests and activities of Professor Verres are truly manifold. Apart from the aforementioned projects, he is also interested in fieldwork on popular psychotherapy, and is involved in a wide range of activities, having established the “Centre for Intercultural Psychology” at the University of Heidelberg and created a project offering psychological assistance to women who cannot bear children in cooperation with the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology of Heidelberg University Medical Centre. Furthermore, he is an accomplished pianist who has released albums such as *Feuer Wasser Erde Luft – Piano-Impressionen* (Fire Water Earth Air – Piano Impromptus). Several volumes (foremost the two volumes *Paradies and Heidelberg*) of his photography have also been published.

I can announce with great pleasure that Professor Verres will be giving a talk on August 29th (Tue) with the title “Living with an Incurable Disease – the Possibilities of the Hope of Living towards Recovery and the Afterlife” in room 315 of the Law and Letters Building 1 at the Hongō Campus of the University of Tokyo from 15:00 to 17:30. Professor Verres is so kind as to also give a piano performance on the occasion. The talk will be held in English, and interpretation in Japanese will be provided for the discussion. The words and performance of the doctor, psychotherapist, and practitioner of Death and Life Studies, Professor Verres, will offer the opportunity to share a moment of deep reflection on death and the fears that modern man is facing.

Workshop: The Sociology of Death and Life

Shōgo Takegawa(Professor, Faculty of Letters, Sociology)

It is difficult to say that issues concerning death and life have had a major place in Japanese sociology. Of course, although these ones have also not been a highly popular area of inquiry, a body of research does exist abroad. In particular, as the boundaries between life and death are often faced in the medical care field, empirical research on the question of dying has been amassed in the field of medical sociology. Influenced by this, interest in this area is beginning to take root in Japan as well.

Similarly, sociological research interested in the human body (and its ultimate frailty) as seen in health care has started to increase. The question here, however, is not that of the process of dying. Rather, it is the question of how life can be prolonged. Due to an increase in geriatric care, along with the graying of Japanese society, and also in facing of a number of natural and technological disasters [i.e., earthquakes], the sociology of care has recently received a great deal of attention.

In our COE symposiums and workshops, a number of sociologists have visited us to discuss this question. “Issues of Care, Education, and the Culture of Death and Life”(June 2004), “Learning from Bethel”(November 2004), “Care and Self-decision” (November 2005) are all examples of this. This time, in order to examine how a sociology of death and life could be created, we would like to examine a number of issues which we haven’t been able to fully address in the past (i.e., dying, death, the afterlife, and the role of the bereaved). Panelists include SOEDA Yoshiya (Kinjō Gakuin University), ŌOKA Yorimitsu (Chūkyō University), and NAKASUJI Yukiko (Aichi Educational University). SATŌ Kenji (University of Tokyo) is one of several scheduled discussants. More detailed information will be made available shortly. In the interim, I have attached a tentative program schedule. We look forward to your attendance and participation.

Workshop: The Sociology of Death and Life

Time: December 14th (Sat)

Location: Faculty of Letters, University of Tokyo

Panelist: SOEDA Yoshiya “Sociology of Death” (tentative title)

ŌOKA Yorimitsu “Welfare after Death” (tentative title)

NAKASUJI Yukiko “Culture of Death” (tentative title)

Chair: TAKEGAWA Shōgo

Discussant: SATŌ Kenji et al.



Tübingen / Toulouse Research Trip

Susumu Shimazono(COE Program Chair, Faculty of Letters, Religious Studies)

The study of death and life in Europe has been going on for some time. Accordingly, we are currently planning on holding two symposiums on the European continent (Germany and France) and also observing a number of related

facilities.

I (Shimazono), Professors Tada, Matsunaga, Sekine, and Associate Professors Ikezawa, Suzuki, along with more than ten young researchers will be traveling to Europe. A number of scholars in both France and Germany will be joining us. Although members of our program first went abroad (Florence, Italy) in March 2003, this is the first time we will be visiting overseas along with such a large contingent of young scholars.

Our presentations in Tübingen will focus first on bioethics in Japan and Asia, and then on bioethics in Japan and Europe mainly between these young scholars. We also plan on observing local hospices and related other facilities in the area.

At the University of Toulouse, we will continue to broach many of the issues brought up in our February 2006 symposium, "Death and Beyond." Along with Professor Tada's keynote speech, forums for young Japanese and French scholars to interact will also be provided. In Toulouse, we are planning on visiting graveyards and monasteries.

What is particularly notable about this research trip is that the young scholars themselves have been preparing for and planning this event. We believe that this will be an important attempt in setting the stage for future developments in Death and Life Studies.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Program Leader

SHIMAZONO Susumu <Religious Studies>
TAKEUCHI Seiichi <Ethics, deputy program leader>

Section1:Re-thinking Death and Life Studies from the Perspective of Practical Philosophy

KUMANO Sumihiko <Ethics>
ICHINOSE Masaki <Philosophy>
MATSUNAGA Sumio <Philosophy>
SEKINE Seizo <Ethics>
SAKAKIBARA Tetsuya < Philosophy>

Section 2: Images and Perspectives on Death and Life

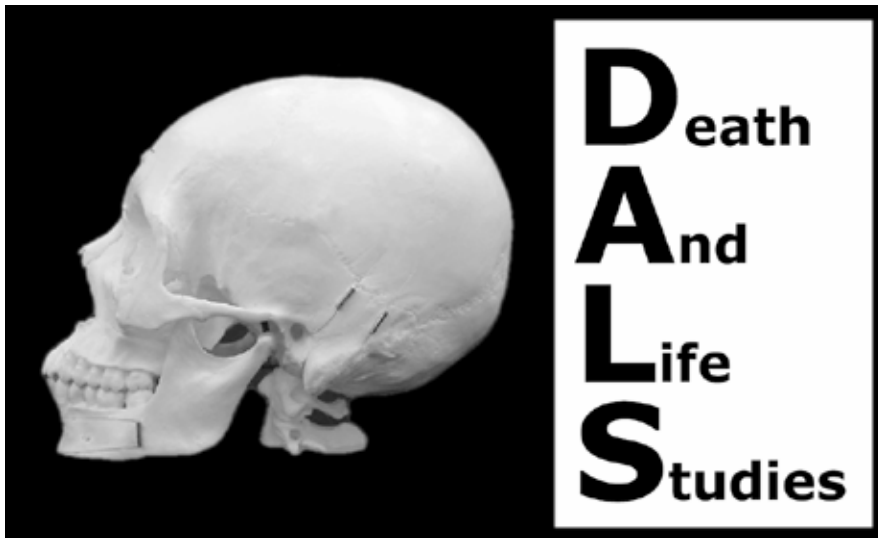
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Section 3: Civilization and Values Concerning the Perspectives of Death and Life

SHIMODA Masahiro <Indian Philosophy>
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ICHIKAWA Hiroshi <Religious Studies>
IKEZAWA Masaru <Religious Studies>
KOJIMA Tsuyoshi <Chinese Philosophy>

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