

Title	An ontological study of family
Sub Title	
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Publisher	三田哲學會
Publication year	1952
Jtitle	哲學 No.28 (1952. 3) ,p.A9- A10
JaLC DOI	
Abstract	
Notes	Abstract
Genre	Journal Article
URL	https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=AN00150430-00000028-0228

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An Ontological Study of Family

Yuzo Takasu

Sociology is on an equality with other social sciences in the fact that the object of each of them is an aspect of social phenomena. Sociology, however, has a more fundamental character than the other social sciences, because sociology has for its field the social relationships.

The unique feature of sociology will be clearly shown in the point that the elemental facts treated by sociology are different in quality from those treated by other social sciences. For instance, the fundamental elements treated in the field of economics are commodity, labour, capital etc. However, in this case, these elements are treated objectively as only "things" and are generalized and united into scientific order, while their meanings as the expression of social relationships are neglected.

On the other hand, the fundamental elements in social relations which are to be treated by sociology are social groups, habits, institutions, ideologies etc. Each of these is an expression of social relationship. Therefore, it is not only a "thing" but an expression of the ways of human existence and involves subjectivity.

Of course, we must always study sociology following the elemental facts themselves, and consequently we must take the empirical method to do so. But, if the last and the most difficult problems of sociology are lying in the synthetical grasp of concrete correlation of many facts, the study of these facts must be completed by the study of essential correlation. In this point, there exists the necessity of an ontological study which

proceeds from the study of phenomenon to the question of existence.

This essay is an ontological study of the family, as a part of philosophical anthropology; that is, the social ontology in man himself, and not that in the relationships of men.

In studying the existence of the family, I preferred the scientific, especially sociological way. I first introduced concepts of the family written by some sociologists, and believe that these concepts contain some truths regarding the being of the family, but, the incompleteness of the truths is to be completed by further study of the essential correlation in their beings.

But, here we are confronted by the gap which exists between the scope of the study of phenomena and that of the ontological study.

As a mediator for this gap, I preferred the "topological psychology" because I thought in this "field" human existence and individual manifestation or ontology and science coincide.

In this way, it seems that it is possible for sociology to reach ontology through psychology.

Of course, it is never our intention to mix these three, or to discuss the superiority or inferiority of their respective value.