

26th KUASS
(Kyoto University African Studies Seminar)

Ecological and biological foundations of sign use

※ 日本語でのご案内は3ページ目をご覧ください。

Date: Aug 8, 2014 (Fri.), 15:30 – 18:30

Venue: Medium Seminar Room, 3F Inamori Center,
Kawabata Campus, Kyoto University

Lecturer: Dr. Donald F. Favareau (National University of Singapore, Dr./ Associate Professor)

Discussant: Koji Sonoda (Kyoto University)

This time we invite Dr. / Associate Professor Donald F. Favareau <<http://www.usp.nus.edu.sg/aboutusp/people/cv/uspfdf.html>> from the National University of Singapore. Dr. Favareau has actively worked on the field of Biosemiotics since he gained a PhD of this field in UCLA. In this seminar we will ask Dr. Favareau to give us a talk titled “The evolutionary development of sign-mediated ways of being in the world” in order to reconsider the ecological and biological foundations of sign use. Mr. Koji Sonoda (Kyoto University), who has actively studied communication among hunter-gatherers, will facilitate discussion at the seminar.

* The talk is given in English without translation. Admission free for attending the seminar.

* After the programme we will have a reception

* For the reception, contribution for the actual expenses will be required.

* For attending reception, please inform us your (1) name, and (2) affiliation, to the following email address t-nomura@asafas.kyoto-u.ac.jp, for preparing the reception.

Email: t-nomura@asafas.kyoto-u.ac.jp

ABSTRACT:

Sign processes permeate the lives of all creatures in the natural world. Sign use makes possible not only such higher-order human abilities as spoken language and written texts, but also underlies such communicative animal behavior as the calls and songs of birds and cetaceans; the pheromone trails of insect colony organization and interaction; the

mating, territorial, and hierarchical display behavior in mammals; as well as the deceptive scents, textures, movements and coloration of a wide variety of symbiotically interacting insects, animals and plants.

Perhaps less obvious phenomena that are based on signifying (sign) relations are the chemoreceptive signals by which single celled animals negotiate their world (and upon which the human body's immune system operates); the chemical-electrical events that constitute the sensory messages and motoric signaling of the brain and central nervous system; and the DNA nucleotide sequences that, when decoded by cellular mechanisms, scaffold the construction of body form from the inanimate molecules of the genetic code.

All of these phenomena are examples of "sign use" – substitution relations whereby something is "re-presented" to an organism by something other than itself. However, it is obvious that the natures of these sign processes differ from each other in a number of important and yet not always clearly delineated ways – ant trails are not neural pathways, T-cells are not thinking agents, and human symbolic language cannot be reduced to the iconic and indexical communication practices of songbirds, monkeys, or whales. Thus, up until very recently, no one discipline has attempted to provide a synthetic explanation of how the processes of sign use and the processes of biology might relate for various organisms – and how these relations might differ across the spectrum of biological life.

This talk will introduce you to the recently developed field of *biosemiotics* – the interdisciplinary study of sign processes as they occur variously across the biological spectrum. Examining the close relations between living systems and their sign systems (hence the term: *bio-semiotics*), this still-emerging discipline seeks to trace the evolutionary development of sign-mediated ways of being in the world from its beginnings in the transmission of information across single cells to its most complicated realization in the abstract forms of human thought, and is dedicated to exploring the means by which living organisms themselves bring into being the critical *signifying* relations whereby the necessarily situated and interdependent processes of life are collaboratively instantiated, acted upon and inhabited.

Co-hosted with: Center for African Area Studies, Kyoto University,
JSPS Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (A) "Cultural and ecological foundations of education and learning: An anthropological study on rhythm, imitation, and exchange (Primary Investigator: Akira Takada)"

記号使用の生態学的・生物学的基盤

日時：2014年8月8日（金）、15:30–18:30（※終了後、懇親会を予定しています。）

場所：京都大学稲盛記念館3階、中会議室

※ 講演は英語で行われます。日本語資料は発表要旨のみとなります。

※ 研究会は事前申込不要／参加無料。

※ 懇親会では実費で会費を徴収する予定です。準備のため、懇親会に参加を希望される方は下記のメールアドレス<t-nomura@asafas.kyoto-u.ac.jp>まで(1)お名前、(2)ご所属、を記してご連絡ください。

今回は、シンガポール国立大学准教授の Donald F. Favareau 博士 <<http://www.usp.nus.edu.sg/aboutusp/people/cv/uspfdf.html>>をお招きします。Favareau 博士は、UCLA で学位をとられて以来一貫して生物記号論(Biosemiotics)についての研究を精力的に進めてこられました。今回は Favareau 博士に“The evolutionary development of sign-mediated ways of being in the world” というタイトルでの話題提供をしていただき、さらに狩猟採集民のコミュニケーションを専門とする新進気鋭の研究者・園田浩司氏（京都大学）にディスカッサントをお願いして、記号使用の生態学的・生物学的な基盤について探りたいと思います。

共催：文部科学省 科学研究費補助金 基盤研究（A）「教育・学習の文化的・生態学的基盤：リズム、模倣、交換の発達に関する人類学的研究」（代表：高田明）