

Reconstruction of social sciences from a gender perspective —To end “disadvantage from gender difference”



Professor Miyoko Tsujimura

Modern Civil Law, General Legal System, School of Law

Born in Tokyo in 1949. Graduated from the doctoral course, School of Law, Hitotsubashi University, and acquired a Ph.D. in Law. Has served on the Science Council of Japan, President of Japan Association of Gender and Law, Director of the Japan Public Law Association, and as a member of committee of specialists, the Council for Gender Equality, Cabinet Office. Currently, Professor, School of Law, Tohoku University, also selected as a Distinguished Professor.

<http://www.law.tohoku.ac.jp/gcoe>

Gender issues have been discussed mainly in the field of sociology. On the other hand, Professor Miyoko Tsujimura has approached issues in the fields of constitutional law, and gender law, and brought to light gender issues in laws that have been ignored. She has addressed, for example, the constitutionality of the provision of the Civil Code that prohibits only women from getting remarried for six months after divorce, and theoretical relation between military service and gender. Thus, she has brought up different viewpoints for gender issues that reside in the Constitution, discussing them from a standpoint of elucidating the theories of human rights.

Professor Tsujimura is currently the Leader of the G-COE Program: Gender Equality and Multicultural Conviviality in the Age of Globalization, presiding over many international symposiums. Her work, “Constitutional Law and Gender,” published as a result of the G-COE, was recently awarded a Showa Women’s University Prize for Studies of Women’s Culture. It was highly regarded for many of its ideas, such as positive actions and a quota system, which could be incorporated into actual policies.

It was her encounter with *La Declaration des droits de la femme et de la citoyenne* (The Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Female Citizen) by Olympe de Gouges that guided her to the study of gender and law, when she was studying in Paris during her master’s course. As a woman she had a lot of problems in continuing to study law, which was considered a “men’s discipline,” and was extremely impressed with this work, which clearly says that The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen ignores the rights of women. When she returned home, she translated this Declaration for the first time in Japan. It was the starting point of her activities.

“Gender issues in the Constitution should not be addressed as marginal at all, but as a main subject,” says Professor Tsujimura, who thinks it necessary to enlighten academic experts in law. She is planning to revise the textbooks on the Constitution and books on comparative constitutional law that she has so far published, and to publish “The Possibilities of Gender Research and Social Sciences” series, co-edited with Professor Mari Osawa, Ph.D. in economics.



Professor Tsujimura has produced brilliant achievements including her book titled “The Constitutional Principles of the French Revolution” awarded Le Prix Shibusawa Claudel 1990. “I am not in the field of gender because I am a woman, but I persist in looking into it from the perspective of a scholar in constitutional law,” she says.



A G-COE International Seminar titled “Gender Equality in Multicultural Societies: Gender, Diversity and Conviviality in the Age of Globalization” was held in August 3 and 4, 2009. Professor Frances Olsen and Professor Chizuko Ueno were invited, there were lively discussions.

Her fields of study are broadly divided into 4 groups, “constitutional law,” “comparative constitutional law,” “French Constitution,” and “gender and law.” She is vigorously working on 17 books in many areas.



The second Showa Women’s University Prizes for Studies of Women’s Culture for “Constitutional Law and Gender – Prospects for Gender Equality and Multicultural Conviviality,” was published in 2009. The ceremony for the prize was held on May 25 2010.

My favorite

Olympe de Gouges gave great influence to Prof. Tsujimura. The Place Olympe de Gouges in the 3rd arrondissement of Paris was named after her in 2004. Prof. Tsujimura often travels to Paris because she has studied the French Constitution. She always visits this place, where she reminds herself of the starting point for her study of gender and law and to reaffirm her resolve.

