

ペットから学んだ異文化

Learning About Other Cultures from Pets

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Hello everybody. For the next 30 minutes, I would like to talk about pets from a somewhat different point of view to that of today's other speakers.

I have been working in the pet food industry for the past 30 years. The company I currently work for sells a huge amount of pet food all over the world. Over the course of these 30 years I have attended numerous conferences around the world and I paid repeated visits to approximately 30 countries to attend product development meetings. In the course of my travels I have met a great number of people and had countless opportunities to see how people relate to their pets in different ways and in different places.

These days, in many countries that were not previously among the pet food industry's target markets, as average incomes have risen and more people have begun to keep pets, a growing number of animals are being kept as pets. So the size of the pet food market is expanding. Countries such as Russia and China have not yet grown into such large pet food markets, but as their national income levels rise, they will become huge markets. Anticipating the future value of such markets, my company is now selling pet food in over 100 countries and producing pet food at 62 factories dotted around the globe. Each year worldwide - mainly in America, Asia and Europe - we sell a total of about ten times the volume of pet food that the Japanese pet food industry sells

Overall, in retail price terms, the world pet food market is worth approximately 7 trillion yen. According to research conducted by my company, the total number of dogs or cats kept by people is estimated at about 700 million worldwide. These numbers have been

continuously expanding up to now, and we consider it to be a trend that will continue for the foreseeable future. For example, in the United States, about 170 million pet dogs and cats are now being kept, and this number is continuing to increase.

On this map, the locations marked in red represent the places I have visited on business trips, and those marked in blue represent the places I have lived during the course of my work. The reason why I have been running around the world so much is that the pet food industry has become enormous. The industry started over a century ago in the United States and over 80 years ago in Europe. In Japan, it began to develop about 40 years ago.

As in any business, when a company tries to develop a new market, the usual method is to introduce products that have already been successful in existing large markets. I think major representative Japanese companies such as Sony and Toyota operate in this way. This is an easy method when dealing with functional products. But in the case of some products, such as pet foods, which combine functional and cultural attributes, a number of things can occur that impede cultural transfer.

In the figure shown here, the items along the axis on the right are products sold according to their function without much consideration to cultural differences. Examples of such products include cars, watches and cameras. In the case of cars, there are some slight differences and functionally modifications for use in countries with left-hand or right-hand drive traffic systems and to meet the requirements of various other

national laws. And where consumer tastes differ from country to country, product design may be varied to reflect these differences. But even so, the structural parts of cars do not change very much.

However, pet food is a product that belongs squarely on the left side of the figure. The bottom of the left side is set at zero and the top at 100, so you can see that culture exerts a considerable influence over pet food. For instance, many Japanese people tend to keep small dogs. From a global perspective, both the overall numbers and the ratio of very small dogs kept in Japan are high. The kind of food that dogs prefer to eat does not differ very much from country to country, but this isn't the case with cats. For example, in Germany approximately 80% of cats prefer to eat meat, but in Japan the corresponding ratio is less than 5%. There is a tendency for people to choose food for their pets based on what has been given to similar animals in their country traditionally, and also based on the common idea that food nutritious enough for people must be sufficiently nutritious for pets too. Likewise, each country's culinary culture is reflected in the design of its pet food.

In Western-style meals, meat is considered to be the central item, but in Japanese-style meals, vegetables and fish generally play this role. So although the wild ancestors of dogs and cats would not have eaten vegetables at all, in Japanese pet food, both dog food and cat food contains vegetables. However, cats would never eat vegetables on their own initiative, and if the carbohydrate content of the food was too high, they would not be able to digest it. In ways such as this, a country's culinary culture has a large influence on the design of its pet food.

When I put vegetables into pet food for the first time in 1987, the president of our US headquarters, who was on a visit to Japan, asked me, "When was the last time you saw a dog walking into the garden to eat the vegetables?" Then I replied, "No, I've never seen a dog go into a vegetable patch, but nor have I ever seen a cat go into a pond, swim around and catch a fish. But 95% of cats in Japan love fish." The foods that have

traditionally been given to pets in a given country and the way pets have lived there have a major influence on pet food design.

In this next figure, the bottom axis is a chronological record, showing how long it takes for pet food to provide the necessary calories to maintain a dog or cat's life. The United States is at the top. Pet food was put on sale first in the US and then introduced into the UK, and the last of the second group of countries where it was introduced were Germany and France. This figure shows that pet food consumption spread rapidly once the products and communication methods improved.

The horizontal axis bar shows how long it took to reach the same level of calorie adequacy in different countries. The figure shows that the newer the market, the faster pet food popularization occurred in line with improved products and communication methods. For example, communication with consumers was originally conducted via magazines and the radio. In the 1950s, the first television advertisements were aired. This led to a dramatic leap forward in the effectiveness of pet food advertising.

In order to transfer successful cases into new markets, we generally translate the stories of how the pet food became popular with consumers in successful countries. The stories are used in the new countries. In this translation process, what methods of persuasion do we have to include? We try to differentiate the product itself from the alternatives, explain the benefits it offers and why the product provides these benefits. I personally had a lot of difficulty carrying out this task in the Japanese language.

This was because the Japanese language doesn't have a wide range of comparative adjectives or verbs. In English, it is easy to say "good", "better", and "best", or "strong", "stronger" and "strongest". But in Japanese, we can only really say "better" and "stronger". So in Japanese, there is no practical method of comparison apart from to modify nouns by attaching an adjective or adverb. In the case of verbs too, there are no comparatives. In Japanese, we rarely make use of

comparative expressions and there are few absolute expressions either. The Japanese language has plenty of static expressions, but is relatively poor in terms of dynamic expressions.

I was bothered about where this difference in expressive style came from, and it took me three years before I came to a satisfactory conclusion. There are very few books in Japan that mention this sort of subject. The only one I could find was a book on the subject of comparative pet cultures, written by Giichi Kamo, a former president of Otaru University of Commerce. I couldn't find anything else. There were no books by Westerners who study the Japanese. Accordingly, I decided to find out for myself why this difference existed. So whenever I had a chance to make a business trip to Europe, I made a point of visiting the museums and art galleries in that place.

If you visit art galleries in particular, and you view pictures of members of the aristocracy painted in the eighteenth century, you will almost always find a realistically painted dog standing or sitting at the subject's feet. However, if we look at traditional Japanese ukiyo-e illustrations or hunting scenes, we very rarely come across depictions of dogs. And even when dogs do appear, they are never drawn in realistic proportions as they are in Western painting. This led me to think more about whether differences in the development of Western countries and Japan contributed to this result, or whether it was due to more fundamental differences between hunting peoples and agricultural peoples.

When I thought about this more deeply, I noticed that agricultural people tend to mostly work alone. Almost the only time they work in groups is when they are planting rice. On the other hand, hunting people work mostly as a team. In the hunting lifestyle, at certain times of the year, certain animals pass through certain places, and if the hunters do not work as a team, they would not be able to survive the winter. They would die from hunger due to food shortage. If you think about it, many Western sports that come from Northern Europe are team sports. Both soccer and rugby are

team sports in which each player's role is clear. On the other hand, most Japanese sports are undertaken alone or else one-on-one and there is a strong emphasis on harmony and coordination. Among hunting people, there is usually a person who takes a leadership role. Often this leader makes the decisions and his or her subordinates follow them. In Western countries, when a company is recruiting new employees, the company always tests candidates on their leadership qualities. It is generally considered that those lacking leadership qualities are inferior. I conclude that the differences between Japanese and Westerners stem largely from such differences in culture and in the process of social development.

Just now, I mentioned rice cultivation. At that time, I showed a figure. When one plants rice, if it takes a month for a person to plant an entire field moving from the left side to the right, it will be difficult to judge when the time is ripe to harvest at the various parts of the crop field. But if everybody plants a single paddy field of rice together, then they at least know that the correct harvesting time for all the rice will be the same.

I thought that the differences between how people in various countries treat cats and dogs have come about through culture and history. For this reason, 27 or 28 years ago, I concluded that the Japanese do not necessarily have to follow the Western style in their treatment of these pets.

For hunting people, it is important to know what kinds of animals are moving at what times, and it is necessary to formulate clear instructions about the roles and responsibilities of each member of the team. Also, working dogs are necessary. But in Japan, throughout the country's long history, people have rarely needed dogs in the course of their everyday lives. As an exception to this general statement, dogs were used by hunting communities in places such as Tohoku, and also by the Ainu in Hokkaido. I think much the same can also be said of the rest of Asia. A look at the different breeds of dog serves to illustrate this point. Currently, 389 dog breeds are approved by the FCI and almost all of these breeds originated in Europe.

By contrast, almost all native Japanese dogs are close relatives of the Shiba, which is hardly a special breed. These facts tend to support my theory.

Western people are very precise in their thinking, especially about the roles played by organizations and about responsibilities and instructions. They are generally much better at organizing things than we Japanese are.

In addition, over the past 30 years, perceptions toward animals have changed greatly in Japan, which means there has been a considerable shift in the relationships between people and dogs and cats. At the start of the 1980s, there were about 4.7 million dogs kept in Japan. At present, there are more than 10 million. So there has been an enormous increase in numbers over the past 25 years.

In the 1980s, the main reasons given by Japanese pet owners for buying pet food were price, taste and nutrition. Since then, their reasons for purchasing have changed greatly. This figure shows along the vertical axis how ordinary pet owners regard their relationship with their dog, for instance, as a family member, as a pet, or just an animal. In the old days, most dogs were kept outside, and many owners simply regarded them as animals. Some people did regard them as pets but very few thought of them as family members. However, according to a similar survey carried out recently, many dog owners now regard their dogs in the same way as they do their human family members. So nutrition has become a very important key driver for pet food purchasing. This is because the number of purebred small dogs kept as pets has increased significantly, and also because an overwhelming number of pet dogs are now kept inside the house.

In this conceptual diagram, small breeds are shown bottom right. This is an example from Australia. About 15 years ago, the average weight of dogs in Australia was about 25kg, but now it is down to 15kg. I think this is because, originally, the basic meaning of dogs in Western countries was as working animals. But as

culture has developed, the original role for dogs has mostly disappeared and the relationship between dog owner and dog has changed accordingly.

Also, 30 years ago, purebred dogs accounted for about 40% of pet dogs and the rest were mongrels. These days over 70% of pet dogs are purebred.

Let me tell you another interesting thing. Compared with pet owners in Western countries, Japanese pet owners try harder to maintain the health of their dogs and cats. On the average, Japanese pet owners take their animals to a veterinarian for a health examination 4.6 times per year. In the US, the corresponding figure is 2.1 times per year. These days, at least 91% of Japanese pet owners visit a vet at least once a year, whereas as recently as 30 years ago the rate was 45%. In the US, the number of owners who take their pet to the vet at least once a year is 81%. Accordingly, based on this data, we can say that compared with pet owners in other countries, Japanese owners tend to have the closest relationships with their dogs as family members.

This figure shows the results of two surveys that were conducted using the same methodology. The first was carried out 30 years ago and the second one two years ago. In these surveys, people were asked why they bought pet food and what was important when a dog became a member of the family. In 1982, the top reasons for buying pet food were that it seemed tasty and that it served its purpose in feeding pets. Today, however, 'peace of mind', 'safety', 'trustworthiness' and 'health' are the most important criteria, as you can see from this figure.

If we look at this on a country-by-country basis, the results are also very interesting. Our company conducted essentially the same survey in the UK, France and Germany. Although there were some slight differences in the questions asked, we can make a comparison with results obtained in the Japanese surveys. What the results reveal is that while in Japan, 'peace of mind' and 'safety' are considered the most important points, in Europe, the 'tastiness' is a very important reason for purchasing pet food. So it seems

that Japan's development process has been different compared to European countries. I feel that, to some extent, the ways in which people and dogs interact are different.

Next, I would like to speculate about the pet food industry in the future. As the number of single people increased and as the social advancement of women progressed in the West, the number of pet cats has increased significantly. Social advancement has gone hand-in-hand with later marriage, a reduced birth rate, smaller families and greater longevity. Also, internet-based communications in place of face-to-face meeting is contributing to a sense of increased alienation. Even within a single office, people are relying more and more on email for communication. When people speak face to face, their conversations tend to develop in various directions, but when exchanges are limited to email, one-way opinions and one-way responses are exchanged with little or no expansiveness. This has led people to become increasingly isolated socially.

Moreover, I am sure that many people are using Amazon and Rakuten on-line shopping to buy goods. These online retailers are so convenient that there is no longer any need to visit bricks and mortar shops. Technology will continue to progress and we will become even more out of touch with the natural world. Economic and social life is now going on 24 hours a day, and more and more people are living in high-rise apartment or condominium buildings. As a result of all these changes, human relations are becoming more and more diluted. The idea of close relations between near neighbors begins to sound like a very old-fashioned story, and people are suffering a sense of isolation. People these days are also tending to marry later, or to remain single, and to divorce in greater numbers than before. It would be wonderful if people could live together with others until the end of their days. But in many cases people have to live alone for long periods.

This sort of situation can act as a spur to animal companion activities. I have read several books about how to develop such activities, but relationships between animals and people have not yet been

systematically analyzed academically. Certainly, activities such as those conducted by the IAHAIO (International Association of Human Animal Interaction Organizations) have been ongoing for the past 30 years so far, but compared with human medicine I think the development of this field is 40 to 50 years behind the times.

So as to improve this situation, in future society, we need to raise recognition for the social importance of companion animals. Moreover, we need to promote the social acceptance of companion animals, as well as their training and vaccination. Indeed, we have to push these things forward rapidly from now on. We also have to promote the need for pet owners to take proper responsibility and adopt an appropriate manner. Otherwise, even when people are eager to live with companion animals, if this activity leads to social friction, not many people will affirm companion animal activities. I believe these things are important for us.

Major environmental changes may occur for short periods with increasing frequency in the future. As Charles Darwin argued in *On the Origin of Species*, it is not the most intelligent of the species that survive, nor is it the strongest. It is the one most able to adapt to changes in the environment. Today, with major changes occurring socially, people are suffering increasingly from isolation. Human relationships are becoming less and less substantial. In view of these various social phenomena, I believe that the importance of companion animals will continue to increase.

Thank you very much for listening.

ペットフードから学んだ異文化

石山恒

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【Slide 1】

機能と文化

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【Slide 5】

フラット化する世界： 安い労働市場と市場を求めて

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【Slide 2】

認識の違い（1987）

“Ishi when was the last time you saw a dog walking into a garden and eating vegetable”

“John when was the last time you saw a cat swimming in a pond and catching fish”

どこの国の犬も肉を最も好むが猫は必ずしもそうではない

- ドイツ： 80%
- 日本： 5%

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【Slide 6】

30年の間仕事で訪れたり居住した国々

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【Slide 3】

成功事例の移転とスピード

7

【Slide 7】

成功事例の移転

市場

7

【Slide 4】

成功事例の移転

- 差別化
- 約束
- 説得

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【Slide 8】

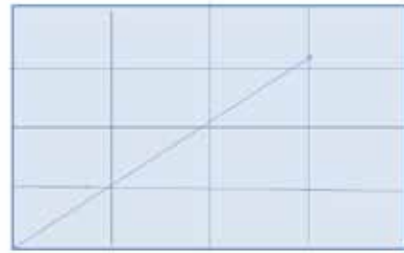
成功事例の移転

- 比較級の欠落
- 相対的 vs 絶対的
- 動的と静的表現
- 形容詞: より良い vs Good, Better, Best
より強い vs Strong, Stronger, Strongest
- 動詞: より好む vs Prefer

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【Slide 9】

稲作: 和と村八分



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【Slide 13】

成功事例の移転

なぜ

13

【Slide 10】

狩猟: 指揮と役割分担



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【Slide 14】

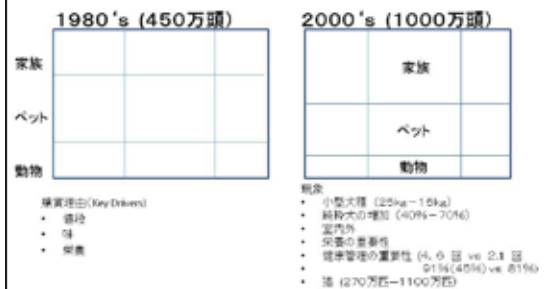
答えを求めて

- 本 (ペットの比較文化論: 加茂儀一“家畜文化史” — 法政大学出版局)
- 博物館 (大英博物館)
- 美術館

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【Slide 11】

認識の変化



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【Slide 15】

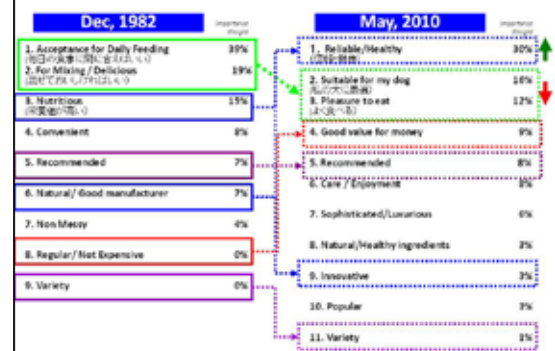
農耕と狩猟

- | | |
|-----------|-------------|
| 農耕 | 狩猟 |
| • 個人 | • チームワークと役割 |
| • 和と調整 | • リーダーシップ |

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【Slide 12】

購買理由の変化



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【Slide 16】

国別の購買理由

	Japan (2010)	UK (2004)	France (2005)	Germany (2005)
# of attribute	40	25	21	22
# of Drivers	11	7	5	5

	%		%		%
1 Suitable for my dog/Easy to eat	24	Enjoyment	29	Health	29
2 Reliable/Healthy	24	Safe	20	Quality / Expertise	20
3 Additive Free	19	Quality/Health	16	Appearance	16
4 Care/Enjoyment	16	Natural Appearance	16	Quality / Expertise	16
5 Economical	16	Pack	16	Texture	16
6 Special Care	16	Variety	16		

【Slide 17】



社会の変化

社会トレンド

- ・ 独身層の増加
- ・ 女性の社会進出
- ・ 猫の増加
- ・ 高齢
- ・ 少子化
- ・ 小家族化
- ・ 長寿
- ・ インターネット
- ・ コミュニケーション (face to face, 発展性減少)
- ・ 物販 (情報、社会インフラ)
- ・ 技術発展
- ・ 自然からの距離
- ・ 24時間
- ・ 高層住宅

起こりうる現象と課題

- ・ 人間関係の希薄化 (向こう三軒両隣り)
- ・ 孤独化 (単身、高齢)
- ・ コムパニオンの渴望
- ・ 学問的体系づけ
- ・ 社会認識
- ・ 環境整備
- ・ 法規制
- ・ 社会の受け入れ (種、予防注射)
- ・ 飼い主の責任とマナー

【Slide 18】

“It is not the strongest of species that survives, nor the most intelligent....It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.”

Charles Darwin

【Slide 19】

有難うございました

【Slide 20】