

**Speaker:** *Hiroshi Tsutomi*

**Presentation title:** Reconnecting desistance studies and classic criminological studies

Desistance studies have developed looking at the process of offenders gradually moving away from offending while classical criminological studies have discussed the criminogenic process of offenders. This difference has given rise to a gap between desistance theories and classical criminological theories. The gap is so serious because desistance studies lack the sound theoretical bases of criminology. I aim to fill this void by providing appropriate criminological theoretical bases for desistance studies. To begin with, I point out that the definition of desistance from crime means the exit from the wrong way of life to good life. That is, desistance studies is implicitly built on the consensus paradigm in which a single moral order constructs and supports the society. There is demarcation between good and bad, and the desistance from crime is a comeback from the dark to the bright society. However, I present an alternative view of desistance which is built on conflict paradigm which considers the society as an arena where various interest groups conflict each other to maximize their power. Actually, we need not base our desistance theories on the consensus model if we can closely examine the "desistance" process. I draw upon two papers describing the "desistance" processes in Japan to propose the more radical definition of desistance and the context which facilitates this process. Further, I argue this new definition is congruent with Merton's anomie theory and the symbolic interactionist theory which underlies differential association theory. I explicate how these two classical criminological theories relate to new theories of desistance to open up a new view of crime itself.