

# THE JAPAN SCIENTISTS' ASSOCIATION

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## ***The innovation strategy collapses Japanese academic system***

The JSA academic system section held a symposium “The innovation strategy collapses Japanese academic system” on May 11, at Takushoku University, Tokyo. In 2015 June, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology delivered a notice on *total reform of system and operations* to each national university, which was criticized in many fields for underrating the humanities branch of studies. In October 9, 17 deans of humanities science issued a joint communique of protest against the note. In the field of science and technology, to which the government comparatively seems to give weight, we cannot concede that comfortable study environment sufficiently be set up. We have not had so harsh social criticism for circumferences at sites of science study and education as seen in the humanities. The practical status of such sites must be said to be unknown to ordinary people and even to researchers.

Dr. Osada, chief of the JSA committee of problems of engineers and scientists in private firms, pointed out that the government passes the failure of economic policy onto the decrease of research ability, affirming that from decreased number of research papers. Such imputation is the same one the wartime government had put the cause and responsibility of defeat to poor scientific technology so as to avert people's eyes from the truth of war. In second report, Mr. Nomura (committee member) explained some issues in academic society and university that the integrated innovation strategy (cabinet decision, June 2018) involves. Among those it must be pointed out as a basic problem in present governmental policy that basic research, though having being placed in position in science and technology policy, is completely ignored in the integrated innovation strategy. Third report by Prof. Kotaki (the JSA committee of problems of national or public endowed institution) explains the actual state of National Research and Development Corporation, where the research site is now subject to more serious inference under the strategy than in university.

It is our issue in the future to figure out the actual state of research site of science and technology, and make a complete logical criticism of the innovation strategy.

## ***The second symposium “Equal opportunity in higher education – right to be freely educated” held***

University Forum held the second symposium with the above title at Meiji University, Tokyo, on June 16, where 104 participants including university teachers, students, the youth, and citizens attended to discuss scholarship problem.

The government enacted the legislation on study support in university and so on. That abolishes reduction of and exemption from school fees and drastically curtails of support, entirely different from making free of charge. Tuition risen by poor budget of university and scholarship as loan caused the disparity in parents' conditions for young people to proceed to higher education, and they are increasingly groaning under repayment of a scholarship. Perverting such a social problem the Abe cabinet is going ahead with university reform. That threatens the equal opportunity, and the proper mission of university. The symposium had a purpose to clarify what is free higher education and what the Forum has to propose in future basing on presented reports.

Mr. Iwashige (attorney), who is nation widely developing relief work in scholarship problem, pointed out structural problem in difficulty of scholarship refund due to high tuition fee and employment collapse, and thus Japan Student Services Organization is the same as a finance company. He appealed that getting higher education should not be attributed to self-responsibility, and it is necessary to materialize a society to admit the right to say "Help!".

Ms. Iwasaki, chief of advocacy students group *Free Higher Education Project*, reported the results of an investigation of actual conditions on tuition and scholarship from more than 5,000 students. The results tell us their severe conditions, for instance, many students are so swamped with part-time work that they cannot study. On the basis of students' vivid reality, it is desirable for the government to make political judgement about no tuition fees.

Prof. Nakajima (Nagoya Univ.) criticized that the government thinks escape from poverty as self-responsibility problem, and that to support for students it is necessary to appraise their grades and eagerness. The professor indicated also that the government deems university as infrastructure in international competition, thus would not assist a student unless his/her university satisfied the reform requirement, which is nothing but an intervention of the state to education.

Prof. Watanabe (Kobe Univ.) said that present Government's policy relating to free education has a matter far from *the progress introduction of free education* advocated in Article 13 of International Covenants on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights. In addition, he introduced in detail how Korea reduced tuition fees though its tuition fees had been expensive as in Japan, finally stressing that free higher education should be grasped not from the side of management but from the viewpoint of academic freedom, development of learning, and future of the youth.

### ***ACTIVITIES OF RESEARCH COMMITTEES AND GROUPS***

***The JSA headquarters organizes a number of research committees and groups undertaken on a nationwide scale, which are encouraging the members across the country***

### **DIGITIZATION OF "NARRATIVES OF EXPOSURE EXPERIENCES" AND STUDY OF A-BOMB SICKNESS**

On March 22, Prof. Sawada (Prof. Emeritus, Nagoya Univ.), Dr. Masuda (ex-head of lab, Meteorological Research Institute), and Mr. Tanaka (representative, Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations) requested the inauguration of "the research committee on effects of radioactive fallouts

caused by the detonation of atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki 1945” to JSA headquarters, which has given official approval. The committee’s objective is to make a detailed inquiry concerning A-bomb sickness, such as hair removal, diarrhea, and bleeding from gums, and radioactive fallouts and “black rain”, so as to contribute to agreement with the government on extending the bomb site, considering A-bomb victims have lost cases in the courts for the reason of insufficient evidence in relation to effects of radioactive fallouts. We now fortunately have a handwriting book “Narratives of exposure experiences” that Health and Welfare Ministry in 1995 issued collecting 80,000 (Hiroshima 5,000, Nagasaki 30,000) private papers that *hibakusha* having Atomic Bomb Survivor’s Certificates wrote. Digitizing the book, we possibly have highly precise statistic data. Though digitizing is not easy, we are urging *the peace memorial service for atomic-bomb victims* via Mr. Tanaka to complete the job.

We expect that this study should work effectively for the relief of A-bomb victims as well as contribute to the study of nuclear experiment casualties. It is also a rewarding job. Next year is the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of detonation of A-bomb over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We must not allow the study of exposure to fade away but carry forward. It is anticipated that the young researchers would come after us.

### ***DISTRICTS’ AND BRANCHES’ ACTIVITIES***

***The JSA consists of 47 branches which are grouped into 9 districts, and they are independently and/or cooperatively carrying out their activities in addition to the headquarters’ ones***

#### **1) REGULAR SESSION “ISSUES OF INCINERATION DISPOSAL OF RADIATION-CONTAMINATED WASTE”**

JSA Miyagi branch

The latest activities of 'Nuclear plant issues PT,' established in Miyagi branch, was reported in the January regular session of the branch. The report details were as follows;

##### **1. Preparation of chart of transition of radiation dose rate**

Miyagi prefecture (and the state) has a plan to incinerate all the 36,000 tons of radiation-contaminated waste from agriculture and forestry (rice straws, pasture grasses, bed logs, etc.) arising from the accidents of Fukushima #1 nuclear plant at once. Such incineration in unison has not taken place so far, as 35 municipalities are opposing to the plan. However, 6 cities and 14 towns and villages have started pilot incineration at 4 sites.

Miyagi branch has been plotting a chart of transition of radiation dose rate based on the records of monitoring posts managed by Nuclear Regulation Authority since 2016. The chart indicated increase of radiation dose rate that seemed to be caused by the incineration at all the 40 posts. We have examined the results in 'Study session II *Yononakaken* (research group about the world)' several times, and have publicized in newsletters of the branch and the 22<sup>nd</sup> Comprehensive Scientific Study Convention. We have also accused the false of the Ministry of the Environment on removal of radioactive substances with a bug filter.

##### **2. Field study of Iwadeyama area of Osaki city**

The law suit trial demanding suspension of the budget for pilot incineration has started at the Sendai court. Tadayoshi Abe, the head of the plaintiffs, guided us for field study of the related facilities in Iwadeyama area of Osaki city, Miyagi prefecture. We visited three spots: premises of former Ikegami elementary school where contaminated soil is accumulated, the Tamatsukuri clean center where pilot incineration is ongoing, and storing place of straws which were contaminated with radioactive substances and accumulated right after the earthquake. The storing place is a private property and the straws were stored in a careless manner, only with covers. It may cause penetration to groundwater or contact with wild lives. We have noticed the state and the prefecture are not caring well. (Kiyonobu KUSANO)

## 2) MINI-SYMPOSIUM OF COMMITTEE OF PRIVATE INDUSTRIES SECTORS, MARCH 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2019 “LET US JOIN FORCES AND AIM AT COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT; BALANCED ACADEMIES VS CLAIM OF ‘LOWERED RESEARCH CAPABILITIES’”

The topic drew attention and the number of participants was as many as 20.

At the beginning, the reporter Yoshihiro Osada spoke on the reason of the topic. Requesting ‘university reforms’ by attributing lowered number of papers to researchers should be regarded as an ideological offence; we have to deal with such offence. We have to discuss well on what is the ‘academic capability of a state,’ whether it can be measured by number of papers, who made the current situation, and we have to deal with theory of ‘lowered research capabilities.’ It is obvious that the current crisis of academies was brought about from reduction of basic researches, selection & concentration, and growing disparity. We should join forces and aim at balanced academies. These were the summary of Osada's speech, and I felt importance to think with a wide perspective and cooperate.

Osada distributed detailed materials for discussion: 34 references, 15 papers by Osada, index, and pictures and figures. We do not have to see the slides for understanding. Osada has pointed out that, in order to find the right countermeasure, we have to capture the activities of research and development in private enterprises, which cover 70 % of R&D budgets and researchers. He presented 1) trends of R&D budget and number of researchers in enterprises, 2) organizations and scale of R&D in enterprises, and 3) management of R&D in enterprises, the current situation of academic-industrial cooperation, flow from basic research to application research and further to development research/innovation and its characteristics.

There are ‘death valleys’ between application research and development for products. There are also problems to stabilize the technologies after that. Roles of enterprises are large. It is wrong of the office of prime minister and enterprise to attribute lowered innovation capabilities to universities. Enterprises should undertake their responsibilities. I quite agree with the point-out of Osada that the policy of ‘selection & concentration’ and ‘growing disparity’ should be abolished. (Shiroh SAKAI)

## 3) SEMINAR AT THE JSA MIYAGI-BRANCH: “THINKING ABOUT THE PROBLEMS OF POLICY-RESPONSE TO THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT ACCIDENT THROUGH THE CAPABILITY APPROACH OF AMARTYA SEN”

The JSA Miyagi-branch invited Atuko Shigihara, a member of this branch, as lecturer to the Seminar in February, 2019. She explained her current study in easier terms to the participants in this seminar. She critically examined the Miyagi Prefecture's policy-response to the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant accident based on the theoretical approach of Amartya Sen, and gave some clues for thinking about the recovery problems of the East Japan Great Disaster from a new viewpoint.

In her lecture, she started the introduction of an Indian economist, Amartya Sen and explained his "legal rights" approach and "capability" approach against the hunger and poverty problems around the world. These approaches are related to the concept of "human security" and "human development" and lead to a new framework for analysis of the threatened human existence and rights, and freedom under the national security and economic development.

Viewing the administrative policy-response of East Japan Great Disaster and Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant accident with the Sen's approach, we can find out that the lack of the viewpoint of "human security" in their policy-response. For example, Miyagi Prefecture declared the safety without examination of radioactive contamination of agricultural products just after the nuclear accident and never responded to the residents' complaints about health conditions. We can also find out that Miyagi Prefecture has never sincerely responded to the threatened residents' "right to good health." "Recovery from the disaster" in Miyagi Prefecture has been fundamentally based on a preferred way of recovery policy by the upper government administrative decisions and the interests of capital, and far from the most crucial "human security" for the residents.

#### 4) KAGOSHIMA BRANCH REPORT ON THE 3RD CITIZENS SCIENCE FORUM ON WHALES - WITHDRAWAL FROM IWC AND WHALING PROBLEMS

The above Lecture Meeting was held on April 24, Wednesday, at the Faculty of Science, Kagoshima University, with Fuwa Shigeru, Prof. Emeritus and former Professor at Faculty of Fisheries of Kagoshima University as the invited lecturer. As "IWC withdrawal" became a hot topic at the end of last year, the meeting attracted as many as epoch-making 23 participants.

Fuwa presented the following interesting stories related to the three different writing forms of whale (Kujira in Japanese) ie., Kujira as a living thing, Kujira in relation to Japanese and 'Sun-Kujira', (in Kagoshima dialect) meaning 'driven to the corner'. Active exchanges followed the meeting.

(1) Marine ecosystems and whales and appropriate ways of catching: Whales should be used effectively and sustainably in ecosystems therefore certain management is required.

(2) Whale migration and whaling in Kagoshima: Whales migrate around seas of the world according to the season. In the process they appear also in waters near Japan. Whales such as those trapped on fixed nets were utilized at three locations including Minami-satsuma city during the period from the late Meiji to the Showa eras.

(3) Characteristics of use of Japanese way of whale use: While the Europeans and Americans used mainly whale oil while discarding other parts but the Japanese are characterized by complete use of all 100% of the whale parts. Therefore, bonds between humans and whales through life was strong and they had feeling of reverence.

(4) Withdrawal from IWC: In 1887 Japan began research whaling and used the scientific data in discussions but there was no progress at all. The confrontations continued between Japan who considers whale as a sustainably reusable resource and anti-whaling countries who contend that the whale is a symbol of wild animals that must be protected and conserved by any means. This led IWC to become dysfunctional and Japan withdrew from IWC in December, 2018.

(5) The future of Japan's whaling: Japan plans to catch whales in waters within 200mile limit from July, 2019 and is currently preparing for it. (Kagoshima Branch Secretary, Sonoo Takashi )

## 5) THE SCIENCE CAFE IN A SHOPPING STREET CELEBRATED 10 YEARS

JSA Osaka Branch

The Science Cafe in the Osaka's shopping street will be 10 years old in October 2019. In 2009, the shopping street near the Osaka branch office increased in number of vacant stores despite being in the city center. The situation is the same as a shopping street in a local city. In cooperation with the shopping street with a sense of crisis, the Osaka branch started the Kita Tenma Science Café (monthly event). The event was also aimed at promoting the shopping street, so the branch has held at the street with an arcade.

Initially, posters were placed on the shutters of empty stores and chairs were lined up in front of the stores to create a forum for discussion. Because the shopping street is located at a key place of transportation, people who saw the posting on the internet and from nearby prefectures gathered. Each time various themes were presented, and eager discussions were done. The shopping arcade is used as parasols and rain umbrellas, so many people pass even though there are many closed stores. There are many people who happen to encounter the Science Cafe and listen to or participate in discussions. Recently, vacant stores are being decreased, and it has become difficult to set up the venue, but it continues as a signage event in a shopping street. Local residents are also participating in the event, so regional disaster prevention and care for senior citizens will be themes

Enthusiastic discussions were made by various participants as neighborhood association officers, local government officials, and sometimes local members.

## 6) LECTURE MEETING OF IBARAKI BRANCH: REPORT OF UN DECADE OF “FAMILY FARMING 2019-2028” RESOLUTION AND JAPANESE FISHERY POLICY

JSA Ibaraki Branch

This Decade, the 10 years from 2019 is “The Decade of Family Farming” as defined by the United Nations, and it is required to promote measures related to family farming (including forestry and fishery) . How many of us are aware of this? It seems that there has been no opportunity even to contact the media. The speaker was NIHIRA Akira (Secretary-General of the JCFU Coastal Fisheries Liaison Council) who studied fish ecology when he was working at the Ibaraki Prefectural Fisheries Experiment Station, and was familiar with the dynamics of fishery resources such as bluefin tuna, squid, mackerel and sardines. Based also on his experience in the field at that time, he reported interesting findings on changes in fishery resources. He also talked about the reality of operations by a small number of business entities, such as those conducted in bluefin tuna fishing pulling up resources by the roots.

By the revision of the Fisheries Laws at this time (December, 2018), the tonnage limit on fishing boats of corporate capitals is to be lifted and members of Fisheries Adjustment Commissions are now appointed by the governor. The sea is now open to corporate fishing and this has made corporate fishing easier to operate. On the other hand, it has been revealed that the allocation of fish catches to individual coastal fishing boat is small making the operation difficult. Facing this move, although the fisheries cooperative has not been able to stand against the government, coastal fishermen from all over the country gathered at the JCFU National Coastal Fisherman's Association and have begun raising unprecedented voices against it. Whether it is agriculture or fishery, most (more than 90%) of them are family-run which usually do not deplete resources and are sustainable. It was a lecture that urged us to think about what we could do in pursuit of the sustainable agriculture, forestry and fishery and of the global ecosystem, and towards the "Decade of Family Farming" (Reported by Araki Masaaki)

## 7) IS THE DECREASE IN CATCH IN JAPAN OVERFISHED BY FISHERMEN? WHAT IS THE TRUTH ABOUT THE "REVISION" OF THE FISHERIES LAW?

JSA Kanagawa branch

A lecture was given by Mr. Hiroshi Nakano at the Kanagawa Branch Conference held on May 18, 2019. The Asahi Shimbun dated August 17, 2018 stated that "Japan's catch continues to decline while the world's catch is increasing." In addition, many mass media say that the drastic decrease in catch is due to Japan's resource management system and overfishing by fishers. The purpose of the lecture was to refute the revision of the fishery law, which makes easier for companies to operate. Are these mass media articles true?

(1) The contents of the drastic decrease in catches were as follows: 1. The catch of sardines was 4.5 million tons in 1984, and that was just under 30,000 tons in 2005, which was drastically reduced due to changes in the global marine environment. 2. The pelagic fishery has drastically reduced from 3.99 million tons in 1973 to 400,000 tons in 2017 due to the enforcement of 200 nautical miles system and resource protection. 3. Due to the loss of fisheries due to coastal development under the high economic growth policy and the deterioration of the environment, the clams catch that were close to 200,000 tons have drastically decreased to 7,000 tons, and shellfish, shrimps and flounder have drastically decreased. Furthermore, 4. Fishery practices have declined due to a decline in fisheries management due to sluggish fish prices due to neoliberal policies and soaring fuel costs, a decline in fishermen due to regional decline, and aging. The decrease in catch is not the result of overfishing by fishermen but is a result of changes in the marine environment and economic policies.

(2) The world's sea surface catches have been flat for the past 20 years, while the catches of developed countries such as the EU have been decreasing or leveling off. The rapid increase in catch is due to an increase in catch of Chinese seaweed and shrimp farming in developing countries, and Chinese clam fish in inland waters.

(3) Regarding the resource management system, the fishery white paper consistently states that the Japanese system is highly evaluated worldwide.

As mentioned above, articles on the fishery law of the mass media have many mistakes and are misleading readers. In addition, the Fisheries Research Center's Organization has been drastically altered with the revision of the Fisheries Law.

#### 8) LECTURE MEETING BY ASSOCIATION TO REQUIRE VERIFICATION OF THE DEGREE-GRANTING TO A MEDICAL OFFICER OF UNIT 731”

Kyoto Branch, JSA

On July 26 last year, “Association to require verification of the degree-granting to a medical officer of Unit 731 Stationed in Manchuria” asked Yamagiwa Juichi, President of Kyoto University, to verify the doctoral dissertation issued to Major Hirasawa Masayasu just before Japan’s defeat on suspicion of containing vivisection experiment data. To this request Vice President Noda Ryo, on February 8 this year, replied that they would not conduct any further investigation since they could not confirm that human experimentation was included. The Association worked out a series of project to protest against Kyoto University's unjust reply. As a first step, a lecture meeting titled “Research and Dissertation at 731 Bacterial Warfare Unit” was held on June 1st at Kyoto University campus with Matsumura Takao, Professor Emeritus of Keio University invited as the lecturer. Around 60 people participated. Please find the following summary of the meeting.

Though Unit 731 called themselves “the Kanto (Kwantung) Army Water Supply Department” it was actually an agency for research and production of bacterial weapons, and vivisection was practiced routinely. Those deemed to have resisted Japan’s colonial rule were arrested by the Kanto Military Police. 15-20% of them were sent to special prisons. More than 3,000 people were called ‘maruta(logs) and used for human experiments which no one survived. They concluded that the most effective bacterial weapon was the plague bacillus for humans and anthrax for animals.

Unit 731 developed the PX, or pest-infected fleas, for spraying. Hirasawa was a flea specialist who had confirmed through human experiment the effectiveness of infection via dog fleas and submitted a dissertation to Kyoto University. The on-campus procedure for granting a degree was completed within about two weeks after submission.

Hirasawa, however, was dead during that period in a plane crash. Even though it was in the confusion before and after the defeat, why in the world the University passed the thesis proven to be of human experiment in such a short period of time now that the applicant was dead? Trust in Kyoto University will be severely hurt if this question is left unchecked.

(Yamaguchi Shinji)