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Connecting with Local People

Regular Meeting Activities of Kitakyushu Group, Fukuoka Branch

The Kitakyushu area forms one economic and cultural area in the northeastern part of Fukuoka Prefecture, where large and small companies are located and there are many universities. The Kitakyushu branch has more than 20 members consisting of incumbent or retired researchers, engineers, doctors, and educators related to this area.

The main activity of the subcommittee is to hold regular meetings three or four times a year, and the members of the branch usually serve as speakers to explain and raise issues of social interest. Occasionally, non-member researchers are invited as lecturers. The following lists the topics of recent meetings.

[Y2017]

- ▶ Scientific and technical analysis of the status of North Korea's nuclear development-Miniaturization of booster-type fission weapons
- ▶ What is artificial intelligence?
- ▶ East Asian security and Japan's international cooperation
- ▶ Examination of Strategic Energy Plan of Japan

[Y2018]

- ▶ Is the environment of Kitakyushu okay? What can be seen from the PRTR Law
- ▶ Background and development of bashing of Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research
- ▶ Danger of "defoliants" approaching

[Y2019]

- ▶ Roles of gravity in human evolution and attitude, living behavior, and movement - Absence of physics education on health issues
- ▶ Reactor-grade plutonium and nuclear weapons - Based on the progress of nuclear weapons technology since the 1950s
- ▶ Is it a society controlled by artificial intelligence AI?

[Y2020]

- ▶ From climate change to the stage of climate crisis - Climate crisis and decarbonized/low-energy society

Regular meetings are open to non-members as well. Local Sayonara nuclear

activists participated in nuclear-related topics, and discussions were held with local environmental activists at regular meetings on environmental pollution.

In 2020, when we faced COVID-19, we have never held a regular meeting where we can discuss face-to-face. The final meeting on the above list was held online; participation from distant areas was enabled. For the time being, we have to continue the regular meetings in this way.

(NISHIGAKI, Satoshi, manager of the Kitakyushu branch)

[02-21-02(2)] JJS Vol.56, No.2 February (2021), p.54 (111)
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Living of the common people of Osaka seen from the Umeda graveyard

On November 28, 2020, the 143rd Kita Tenma Science Cafe was held online. The results of the excavation survey of the Umeda graveyard which was announced in the press release in August and attracted attention, were taken up. This is a local topic for the organizer of the Science Cafe, the Kita Tenma area.

This excavation survey is due to the redevelopment of the former freight station site north of Osaka Station, and the excavation site will not be backfilled, but will become a vacant lot and become a new commercial area.

Therefore, it was the first and last excavation survey.

MURATA Michihito (Kobe Women's University) introduced the origins of the town of Osaka during the Edo period. Umeda, which is now the center of Kita ward, is located on the northern outskirts of Osaka, and Umeda refers to the Umeda graveyard. In addition, OKAMURA Katsuyuki (Administrative agency of Osaka City Museums) introduced the results of the excavation survey. Analysis of the remains of 1,500 bodies is yet to be completed, and although there is not much difference in burial time, a large difference was found in the way of burial between the north and the south. In the south, each one was carefully buried in a coffin, while in the north, many remains were piled up and buried in one hole.

From the end of the Edo period to the beginning of the Meiji era, there were repeated outbreaks of infectious diseases. Even in Osaka, there are records that many people died every day and the cremation could not catch up. This discovery may be in

line with one of them, but it seems that it is still difficult to identify the exact time of burial.

The culture of burying the dead has also been confirmed in Neanderthals. Not only the tombs of the royal aristocrats, but also the common graveyards, it is the first-class archaeological material for measuring the evolution of the human mind. They are also valuable urban ruins for thinking about the future of urban civilization. It is a pity that it will be lost due to the redevelopment project, although many discoveries would have been expected in the future if it was properly preserved.

(NAGANO Yatsuhisa, Osaka Branch)

[03-21-01] JJS Vol.56, No.3 March (2021), p.53 (165)

The 23rd Comprehensive Scientific Study Convention showed the significance of JSA's existence

The 23rd Comprehensive Scientific Study Convention (CSSC: held every other year) was held from December 4th to 6th, 2020 (some subcommittees started on the 2nd). This time, the Tokyo branch was in charge, and preparations were made with the cooperation of neighboring branches. Along the way, due to the spread of the new coronavirus infection, the event was changed to be held on-line, but 522 people (including 213 non-members) were registered for participation. On behalf of the executive committee, I would like to thank everyone who participated.

In the special report, TAKENOBU Mieko (journalist) first clarified that the poverty problem is hindering the solution of gender problems, and then NAKAJIMA Teruyuki (Senior Advisor, National Institute for Environmental Studies Satellite Observation Center) presented the goals and challenges of science using the latest data on the issue of climate change. In the newly established cultural project, KOBAYASHI Midori (Professor Emeritus, Kunitachi College of Music) historically explained the issue of discrimination among female composers around the world, using beautiful images and music. At the emergency meeting, IHARA Satoshi, secretary general of JSA, reported the whole problem on refusal to appoint members of the Science Council of Japan by Prime Minister, SUGA Yoshihide. Subsequently each

branch of JSA addressed the issue during this period. OZAWA Ryuichi (Professor, The Jikei University School of Medicine), one of the concerned persons also clarified the essence of the problem from the perspective of the Constitution.

25 subcommittees have been established, and 126 people have made presentations on various themes such as corona issues, individual dignity, peace, destruction of nature, human-like society, science/technical issues, academic research systems, and culture/arts. More than 605 people participated in the subcommittees.

This CSSC was held in a difficult situation, where the corona pandemic is spreading, the neo-liberal policies of the governments of developed countries are exacerbating problems such as widening disparities and destruction of nature, and citizens around the world are suffering. It was pointed out that the Japanese government, which is characterized by anti-science such as historical revisionism, has passed on the responsibility to the citizens based on the theory of self-responsibility. With the main theme of "In Search of Dignity, Peace and Sustainable Society," we dealt with such urgent issues. Many projects put a scalpel of science into the problem and pointed out the direction of the solution.

On the management side, on the other hand, the executive committee aimed for a successful meeting of CSSC with the subtitle of the 23 universities as "Exploring the collaboration between scientists and citizens". The 213 non-member participants include many citizens, it may be said that to this aim could be achieved some extent and the 23rd CSSC could show the significance of JSA's existence to society.

This was the first time that the event was held on-line, but the executive committee made preparations to address the issues that came up one by one. Although there were some problems, there were advantages such as easy participation from all over the country, and many positive opinions were received in the comments of the participants. Although there are some problems such as difficulties in social gatherings and intimate exchanges, it is worth considering the combination of real and on-line even when planning and holding a post-corona. We would like to discuss these issues firmly at the general meeting scheduled for the end of January.

(SAKUMA Hidetoshi, Secretary General, the Executive Committee of CSSC)

The 15th Nationwide Symposium on Female Researchers and Engineers
"Japan with Gender Gap —The Present Status of Female Researchers"
JSA Female Researcher / Engineer Committee

On December 12, 2020, the 15th Nationwide Symposium on Female Researchers and Engineers, "Japan with Gender Gap—The Present Status of Female Researchers " was held on-line. There were a total of 90 participants, including the reporter and staffs. Prior to this symposium, lectures were given at Zoom on October 19th and November 24th, 2020, as pre-planning, with about 20 participants each. A total of 130 people participated in all. We thank the participants for joining.

In the part 1 of the preparatory meeting of October 19, ITO Setsu, representative secretary of JSA, was asked to talk about "Government proposal for formulating the fifth gender equality plan" for which public comments were just being accepted. In the part 2 held on November 24, MANABE Kazumi of the citizen's group "Let's talk about gender statistics in Okayama City" introduced a leaflet "Gender Statistics of Okayama City" which she compiled in 2017.

On December 12, the day of the symposium, OKANO Yayo (Doshisha University) gave a keynote speech entitled "Female Researchers and Caregiving". In modern public-private dualism, "care", which has been regarded as private and excluded from political issues is the central issue of today's society and stated that the society should be centered on how to share the responsibility for care. It was a wonderful eye-opening lecture for women who often struggle to balance care and work.

Three other reports were subsequently presented. Under the title of "A qualitative survey result on the actual situation of female researchers in an unstable employment situation — from a local perspective", HIROMORI Naoko (Aomori University of Health and Welfare and a member of the research team of the JSA Female Researcher/Engineer Committee) talked about her summary of the survey conducted by a research team of the Committee from the perspective of researchers living in rural areas. MOMOMURA Masafumi (Okayama University), under the title of "The Road to University Teacher — In the Case of a Literature Researcher —", talked about his own experience to become a university teacher after 10 years of unemployment while

providing long-term care. It was a valuable report from a male researcher. Chung Haeng-ja (Okayama University) gave a talk on compound discrimination from the standpoint of being a woman and a foreigner, entitled "About Diversity — Proposals from Minority Female Researchers in Japan and Overseas". Every report was true-to-life story, full of reality, and substantial that highlighted a number of social issues in the personal experience.

Although we first planned to have the symposium in Okayama, this time we decided to hold it on-line using Zoom Webinar as a countermeasure against COVID-19 epidemic. As a result, we were able to have participants not only from all over the country from Hokkaido to Okinawa. but also from overseas. I think it is noteworthy that we held two preparatory meetings in October and November. Despite the disadvantage of lacking personal contacts to deepen friendship, I think that on-line symposia that have less time constraints and can be attended from any place will become the standard in the future. In that sense I also think this symposium was a memorable first step.

(SASAKURA Mariko, Head of the Female Researcher/Engineer Committee.

[03-21-03(2)] JJS Vol.56, No.3 March (2021), p.55 (167)

***On-line meeting “No-war meeting, December 8” held in Tsukuba City
Ibaraki Branch***

In the Tsukuba area, an executive committee was organized mainly by the citizen groups and labor unions, to hold "Gathering for no-wars" on around December 8th, where people talk about their experiences during the war, protect peace, and exchange activities. In recent years, it has become difficult to listen to the story of actual war-experiences, so we held study sessions to think about peace on-line, instead. This time, we decided to take up the issue of refusal to appoint members of the Science Council of Japan (SCJ) and the issue of the University of Tsukuba's acquisition of funds for the Security Technology Research Promotion System, which was held on-line on December 9, 2020.

First, SASAKI Kei of the JSA Ibaraki University Subcommittee reviewed the

background of this problem during the first half of the lecture entitled "Problem of Refusal of Appointment of SCJ- Thinking Based on Prewar History -". This government's interventions promote the destruction, reorganization, and subordination of autonomous communities of scholars and researchers beyond universities and research institutes. " During the second half of the lecture, the lecturer introduced the history of power's repeated intervention in scholarship before the war.

Next, KOUROKI Katsuhisa of the JSA Ibaraki University Subcommittee reported on how the research theme of the University of Tsukuba was chosen for the 2019 Security Technology Research Promotion System Competitive Fund S Type under the title of "University of Tsukuba and Military Research". In December 2018, the University of Tsukuba announced its "Basic Policy on Military Research at the University of Tsukuba" and stated that "University of Tsukuba will not conduct any military research". The following year, however, in the fall, the university applied for the second term fund, and that application was selected. KOUROKI expressed his strong concern about the impact of the University of Tsukuba on military research among academics, as the president of the university is also the chairman of the Japan Association of National Universities, engaging in military research.

The peace movement has been often neglected even by the labor union, but this even provided us an opportunity to make us understand that the problem of this SCJ member nomination is deeply related to the peace process problem.

(KOTAKI Toyomi, Secretary General of Ibaraki Branch)

[04-21-01] JJS Vol.56, No.4 April (2021), p.53 (221)
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The Issue of Premier's Refusal of SCJ Designation and the Role of the JSA

The 23rd Comprehensive Scientific Study Convention (CSSC) of the Japan Scientists' Association (JSA) was held on December 6, 2020. At its emergency meeting against the Premier SUGA Yoshihide's refusal to designate six candidates of the Science Council of Japan (SCJ), the problems were summarized and the related activities, e.g. the statements from several JSA branches, were reported. OZAWA Ryuichi, one of the refused candidates, made a lecture. I want to describe the arguments

of the emergency meeting and to show my opinion about the expected role of today's JSA.

At first, IHARA Satoshi (JSA Secretary-General, Professor Emeritus of Tohoku University) made a keynote speech in which the core of this problem was pointed out. He explained which laws the refusal of designation violates concretely, what kinds of judgements have been made in the former designation processes, and so on.

It has been the official view of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC) that "the cases that Prime Minister will refuse the designation are not supposed." Considering it, this designation refusal not only breaks laws such as the Science Council of Japan Law, but also slights the spirit of the Constitution. It is likely to be seen that the SUGA administration cannot give a legitimate reason for its refusal and therefore repeats incoherent discussions one after another.

On the other hand, the SCJ is sometimes unfamiliar even for us although we are involved in academic researchers. It seems no wonder that many ordinary citizens have a sense of distance to the SCJ because they lack information what the SCJ really does. Some insist distortedly as if the very SCJ restricts "academic freedom" through the ban on military research.

As OZAWA Ryuichi explained at the emergency meeting, the SCJ has stated not to conduct military research during the post-war period regretting for the historical fact that science had been distorted by the war and the government. This time, the governmental authority intervened in the academic realm and used political pressure to the SCJ. I am afraid that it would frighten researchers, undermine academic freedom, and eventually deprive of citizen interests.

Meanwhile, 27 JSA branches issued statements to protest against the administrative refusal of SCJ designation. In the emergency meeting, the branches of Kanagawa, Shiga, Kyoto, Okayama, and of Fukuoka reported on the respective engagements related to this issue. It was mentioned that these engagements were so much attractive that some journalistic media such as newspapers and televisions reported.

We are involved in sciences. It is our today's duty to reconsider the SCJ's important role for academic development and to inform about its activities and significances to the general public plainly.

The skepticism to science and intellectuality under the SUGA administration has

been unchanged, regardless of whether in the COVID-19 countermeasures or in the issue of refusal of SCJ designation. Therefore, I think, the JSA's mission to "enlighten from a scientific standpoint to conquer public hardship and anti-intellectualism" becomes more important.

(KUZUYA Taikan, Tokyo Branch)

[04-21-02(1)] JJS Vol.56, No.4 April (2021), p.54 (222)

Open Lecture Meeting to think about the Intervention against SCJ Personnel

On December 21, 2020, the 9th study session of the Hachioji Science Forum (on-line, per Zoom) was held. There were 35 participants including general citizens and three lecturers. IHARA Satoshi (JSA Secretary-General, Professor Emeritus of Tohoku University) told about "Dispute about Anti-War Pledge: Especially related to the Science Council of Japan (SCJ)", MASUDA Yoshinobu (former SCJ member, former research director of the Meteorological Research Institute) spoke on "Founding History of SCJ and the Destructive Intention of the SCJ Designation Refusal", and ITO Setsu (JSA representative secretary, Professor Emeritus of Showa Women's University) gave a lecture titled "Analyze the Issue of SCJ Designation Refusal from the Viewpoint of Gender Equality".

IHARA and MASUDA explained the reason why academic freedom is important, reviewing carefully the prewar history during which Japan has proceeded to the militarism course. ITO referred to the history of the struggle of female researchers who have conquered several barriers step by step from the time when they were recognized neither as researchers nor as "human beings" just because they were women. Three speeches based on their own experiences were very informative and persuasive.

We have learned from the speeches of IHARA and MASUDA that the SCJ designation refusal has been brought about in very dangerous atmosphere of the transitional phase in which "postwar" Japan is about to retreat into "prewar" Japan. ITO's speech has shown that society was changed when researchers began to speak out not only in research but also in various places. Without it, history cannot be pushed forward.

Although such an argument is already known in various fields, someone regard it not as their own theme but as "academics'" one. But it is a theme which is closely related to peace and future. Academic freedom should be guaranteed because the development of sciences underlies the development of our society. The JSA membership should improve the ability to explain it through concrete examples of our everyday experiences. It seems to be our duty.

(OKUDA Sagako, Takao Group of Tokyo Branch)

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Page of JAS National Committees

Activities of the Nuclear Problems Research Committee

A lot of problems such as decommissioning of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant (NPP), its restart and high-level radioactive waste disposal site, etc. occur all over Japan. Members of the Nuclear Problems Research Committee tackle with these issues in respective areas of the country. Nevertheless, in the circumstance under COVID-19, our committee has been obliged to prevent face-to-face gatherings for a year. We have maintained mutual communication and information exchange per e-mail mainly.

We set up a subcommittee on "Requirements for Nuclear Phase-Out and Disposal of Nuclear Waste" in the 23rd Comprehensive Scientific Study Convention (CSSC) of the Japan Scientists' Association (JSA) held in December 2020 (on-line). 7 persons, including 5 members of our committee, posed 8 presentations. TOMITA Michio (Kyoto branch) reported that even if Japan decided nuclear phase-out it would not be able to abrogate the Japan-US nuclear energy cooperation agreement in practice when NPPs, reprocessing plant, nuclear fuel, etc. remained in Japan. His presentation was very noticeable. KUSANO Kiyonobu (Miyagi branch) simulated regional contamination of incinerated radioactive waste based on the Automated Meteorological Data Acquisition System (AMeDAS). KOBAYASHI Shozo (Niigata branch) told about the Niigata prefecture's verification result on the Fukushima Daiichi NPP

accident. HANASHIMA Susumu (Ibaraki branch) insisted that nuclear issues should be multi-dimensionally discussed, not just from one aspect. YAMAMOTO Fujio (Fukui branch) unveiled the NPP's safety myth from a historical viewpoint. IWAI Takashi (Ibaraki branch) required withdrawal from the plutonium-use including MOX-fuel because the nuclear fuel cycle project had already failed. YAMAMOTO Masahiko (Fukui branch) reported the danger of restarting the aging NPPs over 40 years. The number of participants in the subcommittee was 39 (maximum), which was a success.

The Nuclear Problems Research Committee issued its statement "Supporting the Osaka District Court's decision to revoke the permission to changing installation of the third and the fourth reactors of Oi NPP" on December 11, 2020, and issued a joint statement with the JSA executive committee "Protest against the hasty ocean release of disposed contamination water (from the Fukushima Daiichi NPP)" on December 24, 2020.

(IWAI Takashi, Chairman of the Nuclear Problem Research Committee)

[04-21-03(1)] JJS Vol.56, No.4 April (2021), p.55 (223)

University Forum 6th Symposium

"University Autonomy and Academic Freedom Now" held online

The "Study Council for the Realization of Strategic Management of National University Corporations" established under the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has the keywords of "autonomous contractual relationship" between the National Government and national university corporations, and "engagement with various stakeholders". In addition, it plans to radically rearrange the relationship between the National Government, national universities, and society.

One of the focal points is to entrust the President selection process to the President selection meeting method, which has already surfaced problems such as unclear procedures at some universities. In addition, there was an unprecedented case of personnel intervention by Prime Minister, SUGA Yoshihide at the Science Council of Japan, which is the "representative of the scientist community."

At the 6th symposium held on December 23, 2020, we focused on these movements and examined what was happening and what is the problem with university

autonomy and academic freedom.

Reporter, MATSUMOTO Shigeru (Hokkaido University) discussed the problems of university reform theory raised by the political and business world under the title of “Relationship between changing countries and universities - the meaning of ‘strategic management of national university corporations’”. We analyzed and discussed in detail the revision of the National University Corporation system, the proposal of governance from the academic side, and the establishment of the higher education financial system by public finance.

SATO Yoshiyuki (University of Tsukuba) gave a detailed report on the actual situation and problems of the President selection process that is actually occurring at the University of Tsukuba in "What was happening in the selection process for the President of the University of Tsukuba? -In the case of the University of Tsukuba".

KOMORIDA Akio (Kanagawa University) gave a detailed introduction to the activities of the Science Council of Japan (SCJ), how to perceive academic freedom, and personnel intervention, which produced a wide and deep ripple effect under the title of "Refusal of appointment of members of the SCJ - What is the problem?"

Many positive opinions were expressed. For example, such as to be a symposium specializing in the discussions at the SCJ or an academic societies, and to pay attentions to the relationship with the citizens. The maximum number of participants was 172, and the number of people who filled out the questionnaire was 30.

(IHARA Satoshi, Tokyo Branch)

[04-21-03(2)] JJS Vol.56, No.4 April (2021), p.55 (223)

Shizuoka Branch Symposium

"International situation after the US presidential election and Japan"

How will Biden's victory in the US presidential election and recent political and economic trends of the Chinese government affect future US-Japan relations, Japan-China relations, US-China relations, and the situation in Asia and the world? This symposium was planned to discuss and explore what kind of response should be taken, and was held on December 12, 2020 at the Shizuoka Gender Equality Center. It was also a sequel to the "Japan-Korea Problem" Symposium held in November 2019 with the participation of a wide range of local citizens, various groups, government and business people.

In the first half of the keynote speech by HAGIWARA Shinjiro, Professor Emeritus of Yokohama National University (American Economics), there are many

suggestions on how the United States will change the US-China relations and the US-Japan relations on behalf of the Biden administration. There was a wealth of indications. The following report by Professor SUWA Kazuyuki of the University of Shizuoka (Contemporary Chinese Politics/Sino-Japanese Relations) showed the perspective of the Chinese side, which made it possible to think more three-dimensionally about the future US-China relations and Sino-Japanese relations. In the latter half of the debate, in which Professor TORIHATA Yoichi (International Finance Theory) of Shizuoka University was added as a coordinator, nine questions and opinions were asked by the participants using the question notification form, and future Japan-US-Japan-China relations. And we deepened discussions from various perspectives on Japan's diplomacy and security in the new international situation.

This symposium was held in the conditions of the new COVID-19 infection spread in the Shizuoka Prefecture area. We took all possible measures at the venue, but it was expected that the number of participants would be small (actually about 40 people, less than half of last year). Therefore, by recording the pattern of the day and uploading the edited video to YouTube, we made it possible for people who could not participate on the day to watch this symposium. If you would like to watch it, please contact us by email at Shizuoka Branch (jsa.shizuoka@gmail.com). In 2021, we plan to hold a symposium like this one.

(MIZUTANI Youichi, Shizuoka Branch)

A Statement at the IOC President's Visit to Japan:

“impossible to hold the Tokyo 2020 Olympics in this summer forcibly”

JSA International Commission

The end of COVID-19 is still unforeseeable. In the final week of April, average daily infection amounted to around 5,000 in Japan. Medical institutions are overloaded with increasing patients in several regions. On April 23, the Japanese Administration issued a Declaration of State of Emergency in Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka and Hyogo prefecture (from April 25 to May 11). In Japan, the ratio of vaccinated residents is far lower than that of many other countries as of April 28th. It is unlikely that Japan, especially Tokyo, where not only the infections cannot be controlled yet but is drastically increasing, can provide international athletes and their team members with safe environment. Medical professionals are not confident whether they can treat

infected people as they are not being able to do so even for Japanese residents themselves.

The international commission of the Japan Scientists' Association (JSA) doubts that the Olympics scheduled for this summer will be held safely. When Mr. Thomas Bach, President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), visits Japan, the JSA international commission will state that:

- The Olympics is a festival of peace: Human lives and security must be maximally respected.
- The Olympics must not be a trigger of the worldwide pandemic.
- The Olympics should not waste medical resources and burden Japanese tax-payers too much.

Accurately considering the present situation, we argue that it is impossible to hold the Tokyo 2020 Olympics in this summer forcibly. We hope the IOC will make a rational judgement based on scientific evidences.

<i>Extended Abstract of "REVIEW", JJS Vol.56, No.3 March (2021), pp.32-38</i>

Lesson from Suttsu-Problem: A New Development of Siting Nuclear Waste Final Repository in Japan

ONO Hajime (JSA Fukui-branch, Professor of Kogakuin-University, Tokyo)

On August 13, 2020, the mayor of Suttsu-town, Hokkaido, expressed an intention to apply for the "literature inquiry", which constitutes the first step of multi-phased site selection process for nuclear waste final repository planed by the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy under the auspices of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). Deep geological disposal (DGD) facility is a typical NIMBYⁱ infrastructure. Such a nationwide problem of nuclear legacy should not be imposed on powerless local communities. To design future society after nuclear phase-out, the opponents of nuclear power plants (NPPs) must understand the problem of nuclear waste management more comprehensively. There are many to learn from the case of Suttsu-problem.

Intention of Scientific Features Map

In spite of the establishment of the Nuclear Waste Management Organization of Japan (NUMO) in 2000, no local communities were willing to locate final repositories, so the Japanese administration changed the policy and took the lead in searching suitable places. The Nationwide Map of Scientific Features relevant for Geological Disposal (Scientific Features Map) issued on July 28, 2017, was a product of such a situation. Relatedly, the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy, METI, released a pamphlet “Toward an adequate disposal of nuclear waste” on its website and stated: “(METI) will continue polite dialogues with publics and inhabitants all over Japan. Such activities promote mutual understanding. If some regions would accept investigations, we would proceed to implement the literature inquiryⁱⁱ.”

This document confesses the true intention of nuclear proponents straight. No region wishes to be a nuclear garbage dump. Nevertheless, some local communities have no other choices but to accept disliked infrastructures offered by the national government in exchange for compensation and regional development aids. “Scientific” evaluation of DGD locations is no purpose of the Scientific Features Map. Instead, the authority wants local communities to accept final repository investigations “voluntarily” even though they lack geologically suitable conditions. It is clear that the application of financially vulnerable small communities as Suttso-town is on a predetermined scenario.

Plural Investigations and Host-Communities’ “Right of Withdrawal”

Also in other countries, it is not easy to find locations for DGD facilities. In the USA, only Yucca Mountain, adjacent to the Nevada National Security Site, formerly the Nevada Test Site which had been used for above-ground and below-ground testing of nuclear weapons, was explored although the original plan was to narrow down plural investigated candidates to one. Yucca Mountain lies in an uninhabitable desert area, but in the sacred place for indigenous peoples. To regard it as periphery is a historically formed discrimination, which makes it easier to impose NIMBY facilities to minorities or disadvantaged groups. In spite of an attempt to revise the plan under Barack Obama’s Administration, the Yucca Mountain program was restarted in the period of Republican President Donald Trump. In France, a rural village Bure was

chosen as the only site for an underground research DGD laboratory.

In the United Kingdom, the regional consultative system integrating stakeholders such as potential host-communities has been established. When the Government issued its invitations, three local authorities around Sellafield, notorious for its serious radioactive contamination (i.e. Cumbria County Council, and the two lower level district councils of Allerdale and Copeland) participated in the West Cumbrian Managing Radioactive Waste Safely (MRWS) Partnership to discuss their “expression of interest”. This negotiation process was interrupted before they went forward to the next step “decision to participate” when Cumbria County Council exercised its “right of withdrawal” guaranteed in the White Paper of 2008. Some regard Finland as an advanced case of DGD on the principle of regional consultation and communal voluntarism. However, we should not ignore the fact that these host-communities are neighbouring the present NPPs. Radioactive substances tend to concentrate on so-called “nuclear oases”, i.e. places where nuclear industries are dominant.

After the fall of the DAD-approachⁱⁱⁱ, today’s public policy requires transparent and participatory consensus-building. Some criticize that “deliberative turn” of nuclear waste management is still halfway even in Western countries. But we can recognize here at least two standards in the site selection procedures.

Firstly, comparative investigation in plural locations is obligatory before a final repository is eventually determined. In the USA and in France, however, this promise has not been completed. In Germany, the federal government and the industry relaxed their hard-line attitude to construct a final repository in Gorleben, that paved a way to compromise with anti-nuclear movements (for a while). Secondly, it is important to stand for the voluntary willingness of local communities with guaranteed “right of withdrawal”. It is, however, a reason why the UK could not determine the candidate place for a final repository.

I suppose: It might be a little better if we were generous and open-minded to a frank discussion about the adaptability of the European standards of plural investigation and communal voluntarism to Japanese discourse framework arguing about final repository siting. Probably, some would be unpleasant to increase sacrifice targets. Other would be an opinion that nuclear opponents must not be involved in the argument on the premise that the DGD is an unchangeable orientation. But it seems short-sighted to condemn the local politician who is obliged to secure the communal financial sources

in exchange for risk potential. If powerless regions were isolated in our seriously divided society, nuclear proponents would have a free hand. It is important to respect voluntary willingness of communities in a real sense and to create an atmosphere in which use of “right of withdrawal” would not be bashed by majorities and urban inhabitants. We need a long-term strategic perspective.

Discourse for Burden-Distributive Fairness

Until now, profound discussion about the nuclear waste management has not been lively even among those researchers who are supportive to nuclear phase-out. Final repository must be located somewhere in the country. Therefore, this is a theme of “burden-distributive fairness”. If our civil society remains reluctant to struggle with this problem, it is no wonder that nuclear proponents who have steadily prepared behind the scenes are advantageous in the site selection process.

Suttsu-problem has unexpectedly revealed a blind spot of those who have criticized Japanese nuclear administration. To pose an alternative, conscious raising and learning process is indispensable rather for nuclear opponents.

□ In My Back Yard

ii https://www.enecho.meti.go.jp/about/special/johoteikyo/final_disposal.html

iii Authorities used to impose disliked infrastructure on powerless groups or regions through a decide–announce–defend (DAD) approach. This top-down decision-making caused social conflicts and protest actions. As demands for democracy intensified throughout the world, both government and industry have been forced to change their strategies.