

# **Asia Leadership Fellow Program**

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**2013 PROGRAM REPORT**

## **The Future of Asia, the World and Humanity after Development and Growth**

International House of Japan  
Japan Foundation

The Future of Asia, the World and Humanity after Development and Growth

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## Preface

In 1996, the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation jointly created the Asia Leadership Fellow Program (ALFP). The ALFP provides selected public intellectuals in the Asian region with the opportunity to reside for two months in Tokyo and to engage in collaborative exchange activities on common subjects pertinent to the region. Through such intellectual dialogue, the program seeks to create a close, personal, and professional network of public intellectuals in Asia who are deeply rooted in and committed to civil society beyond their own cultural, disciplinary, and geopolitical backgrounds.

Since its inception in 1996, the program has had nearly one hundred fellows, who have come from diverse professional backgrounds, including academia, journalism, publishing, law, education, the arts, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and nonprofit organizations (NPOs).

The general theme for the 2013 program was “The Future of Asia, the World and Humanity after Development and Growth.” From September 9 through October 25, 2013, seven fellows resided mainly at the International House of Japan in Roppongi, Tokyo, and participated in workshops, resource seminars, and field trips with scholars, journalists, and NGO/NPO leaders based in Japan. At the end of the program, three public seminars were held between October 21 and 23. At each seminar, the fellows presented their thoughts on the current situation of their countries and the issues they had been working on, along with what they had learned from their exchanges. This program report includes a summary of the presentations the fellows gave at the public seminars as well as of the resource seminars and other activities in which the fellows participated.

The ALFP organizers firmly believe that the critical voices of its fellows, which challenge the status quo, as well as their proposals for alternative solutions, will lead to the development of new norms and value orientations in the region.

International House of Japan  
Japan Foundation

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## ALFP 2013 Fellows

### **Nelia G. Balgoa (Philippines)**

Associate Professor, Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology



Dr. Balgoa is currently Associate Professor of the English Department and Assistant Dean of the School of Graduate Studies of Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) in Mindanao, Philippines. Her research interests include international migration studies, migration writing and Philippine women's writing. Trying to find a "third space" (a space where identity can be negotiated and conflict can be resolved) between local and global perspectives in her teaching and advocacy, Dr. Balgoa believes that Asian societies and cultures can be best studied and approached from non-Western perspectives. She has a number of publications in academic journals and has presented at international conferences. She has a doctoral degree in Area Studies from the Graduate School of Human Sciences, Osaka University, where she studied on a Japanese government (MEXT) scholarship.

### **Chin Oy Sim (Malaysia)**

Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Bar Council Malaysia



A lawyer by training, Ms. Chin is the Deputy Chief Executive Officer at Bar Council Malaysia, a bar association well-respected for its dynamism in upholding the rule of law and the cause of justice, prior to which she served as Executive Officer of its Human Rights Committee. Ms. Chin was previously engaged in advocacy work at Women's Aid Organisation, with specific emphasis on the impact of civil and Sharia laws on women in multi-ethnic and multi-religious Malaysia. She continues to be involved in social activism, especially pertaining to women's rights. Given her particular interest in the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Ms. Chin has served as a trainer and resource person for International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific, which focuses on using CEDAW as a tool for realizing women's human rights. She has also worked at the law firm of Davis Polk & Wardwell in New York and London, as well as at the UN Compensation Commission in Geneva.

## **He Runfeng (China [Hong Kong])**

Correspondent and Region Supervisor, China Central Television (Asia Pacific Bureau, Hong Kong)



Mr. He is a correspondent with the Asia Pacific Bureau of China Central Television (CCTV) mainly responsible for covering major global events, planning news coverage within the region and hosting his own commentary program, *Runfeng Observes*, which focuses on relations between China and other countries, including the United States, North Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Myanmar, and the Philippines. He joined CCTV in 2010 after six years of working as a correspondent and “Observer of International Issues” for Phoenix TV. Over the past years, Mr. He has covered numerous major international incidents and issues, including the Israel-Lebanon war in 2006, Pakistan’s anti-terrorist war in 2007, the civil war in northern Myanmar in 2009, the Libyan revolution and the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, the territorial disputes in the South China Sea between China and neighboring countries in 2012 and the tenth anniversary of the Iraq War in 2013. Born in mainland China in 1977, Mr. He moved to Hong Kong in 2002. He holds master’s degrees in International Relations and Communications.

## **Imata Katsuji (Japan)**

Senior Advisor, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation



Mr. Imata is Senior Advisor at CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, based in Johannesburg, South Africa. CIVICUS is a global alliance of civil society organizations working to strengthen citizen action to build a more just and equitable world. He was with CIVICUS’s senior management between 2008 and 2013, culminating in the Acting Secretary General position in 2012-13. Prior to joining CIVICUS, he worked at the GCAP (Global Call to Action against Poverty) global secretariat in 2007. Between 2000 and 2007, he was in Japan and worked for CSO Network Japan (for which he is presently the Board Chair). He gained his nonprofit management experience in the United States by founding Japan-US Community Education and Exchange (JUCEE) in Oakland, California in 1996 and serving as its Executive Director. He has an MPP (Master of Public Policy) degree from the University of California at Berkeley and an MA in Interdisciplinary Studies in Social Science from the University of Tokyo.

## **Lwin Lwin Mon (Myanmar)**

Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Yangon



Educated as an archaeological anthropologist at the University of Yangon, Dr. Lwin Lwin Mon holds a B.A., an M.A. and a Ph.D. in Anthropology and an M.A. and an MRes (Master of Research) in Archaeology. She has participated in departmental research on remote and rural ethnic minorities and community studies in Myanmar as a researcher and a team leader since the 1990s. For the past few years, she was involved in two projects, “The Gender Roles of Lisu Nationals” and “Social Value of Myanmar Lacquerware Art in the Bagan Area,” as a project leader. Her publications discuss various customs, beliefs and cultural value systems of Myanmar peoples. Currently, she is participating in the Korea-Myanmar International Project for Inclusive Local Community Development in Myanmar—a project jointly launched by the University of Yangon, Hanyang University and ReDI (Re-shaping Development Institute) with the support of KOICA (Korea International Cooperation Agency)—as a researcher.

## **Saba Naqvi (India)**

Political Editor, *Outlook Magazine*



Ms. Naqvi is the political editor of *Outlook*, one of India's leading newsmagazines. She writes about national politics, government, political parties, people's movements and identity mobilizations in India. She spent several years covering the emergence of the right-wing political party, the BJP, and its six-yearlong stint in government. Ms. Naqvi is currently editing a volume for Harper Collins about the ideology and actions of extremist groups that have resorted to violence in India. In 2012, Ms. Naqvi published a book titled *In Good Faith* (Rainlight Rupa) about India's composite and plural traditions, based on her travels across the country over two decades. The book has been widely reviewed and been a commercial success. Ms. Naqvi is also a regular commentator about national affairs on television news channels.

## **Zubair Torwali (Pakistan)**

Executive Director, Idara Baraye Taleem-o-Taraqi (IBT)



Mr. Torwali is the executive director of Idara Baraye Taleem-o-Taraqi (IBT) or the Institute for Education and Development, an organization that works for development and education in Bahrain, Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). As a human rights advocate and educationist, as well as a writer, columnist, researcher, teacher and revolutionary, he has been engaged in various activities, including the revival and preservation of the mother tongue as the basis for human existence, identity and devolvement. His commitment and passion to quality education is illustrated through the efforts he has made in his community and in Pakistan. Furthermore, his work and dedication to save the minority language Torwali in KP is a great achievement in adverse circumstances. This initiative reduces the chances of language/culture shift. His endeavors to improve culture, language and the learning environment of local schools are equally acknowledged. Recently, Mr. Torwali has been feted by Human Rights Watch for his commitment for the freedom of expression. He is also the recipient of second prize of the Anita Ghulam Ali Teacher's award-2010 for Teachers and Education in Emergencies.

\*Affiliation and titles are those at the time of participation in the program.

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## ALFP 2013 Schedule

- Sep 9 Orientation/Welcoming Reception
- Sep 10 Introduction Session  
Country Reports 1 (Nelia G. Balgoa & He Runfeng)
- Sep 11 Country Reports 2 (Lwin Lwin Mon, Zubair Torwali, Chin Oy Sim & Imata Katsuji)
- Sep 12 Country Report 3 (Saba Naqvi)  
Luncheon meeting with Akashi Yasushi, Chairman, International House of Japan
- Sep 13 Survival Japanese Lesson  
Seminar “The Abe Mystery: Who Is He and What Is He Doing?” by Fujiwara Kiichi, Professor, University of Tokyo
- Sep 17 Discussion-Paper Presentations
- Sep 18 Tour of Akihabara guided by David d’Heilly, Principle, 2dk Co.,Ltd.
- Sep 19 Seminar “Japan and the Overview of Its Social Movements” by Oguma Eiji. Professor, Keio University
- Sep 20 Seminar “Media Coverage of March 11” by Paul Blustein. former Tokyo Correspondent, *Washington Post*
- Sep 21 Discussion with Nitobe Kokusai Juku participants
- Sep 25 Follow-up discussion on DP Presentations 1  
Seminar “Forty Years of Japanese Feminism” by Ueno Chizuko, Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo
- Sep 26 Seminar “City of Nanto, Toyama Prefecture” by Imai Ryoji, Tourist Ambassador, Nanto City
- Sep 27 Seminar “Energy and Nuclear Energy Policy after March 11: Issues and Challenges” by Suzuki Tatsujiro, Vice Chairman, Japan Atomic Energy Commission  
Follow-up discussion on DP Presentations 2
- Sep 30 Follow-up discussion on DP Presentations 3  
Seminar “War on Terror in Afghanistan and Kashmir Dispute: Regional Perspective after the U.S. and NATO Exit in 2014” by Isezaki Kenji, Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies
- Oct 1 Seminar “Homeless Issues in Current Japan” by Sano Miku, Tokyo Office General Manager, The Big Issue Japan

- Oct 2 Seminar “The Role of Lawyers in Japan” by Ito Kazuko, Attorney / Secretary General,  
Human Rights Now
- Oct 3 Seminar “Japanese Culture Lost and Found” by Alex Kerr, Writer / Collector of Japanese Art  
Seminar “The March 11 Disaster and Response of Government, NGOs, NPOs, and People in  
Japan” by Ohashi Masaaki, Chairperson, Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation
- Oct 7-Oct 11 Field Trip to Hokuriku and Kansai
- Oct 15-Oct 16 Trip to Tohoku
- Oct 21 Public Seminar 1 (Naqvi)
- Oct 22 Public Seminar 2 (Balgoa, He & Imata)
- Oct 23 Public Seminar 3 (Lwin Lwin Mon & Chin)
- Oct 25 Evaluation Session
- Oct 26-Nov 8 Individual Activities Period

# **ALFP ACTIVITIES 2013**

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***Country Reports by the Fellows***

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## Reexamining the Philippines: Of Departures and Encounters

NELIA G. BALGOA

Nelia G. Balgoa first presented some facts and historical background of the Philippines. The Philippines is one of the largest archipelagos in the world. The first period of colonization was by the Spanish, which lasted for three centuries, to which the country owes its strong Roman Catholic following. In 1898, the United States purchased the Philippines from the Spanish with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. Then began the age of American imperialism, which had an impact on the education system and the use of the English language seen in the present-day Philippines. The Japanese then occupied the Philippines during World War II, until 1946 when it gained independence. Ironically, the Japanese occupation is called the “golden age of literature” for the Philippines, because writers were not allowed to write in English, and therefore wrote in their own languages. The Philippines’ colonial history has resulted in a nation of multi-ethnic groups with many distinct cultures.

Economically, the Philippines seems to be doing fairly well according to statistics. The Philippines is no longer the “sick man of Asia,” but in contrast, there are huge challenges to the trickling down of wealth in the growing economic pie. The country’s top leaders have ramped up spending on infrastructure, fuelling economic expansion, but on the other hand, there is still rampant poverty, inequality, and underemployment. To address these problems, the current development model is in need of fundamental reform. The World Bank forecasts a solid 6.2% growth of the gross domestic product for the next year, but poverty rates have remained almost the same since 2006 and in some parts of the conflict-prone southern island of Mindanao, poverty has actually increased.

The current economic paradigm in the Philippines is inextricably linked to Filipino international migration, which the government has developed as an economic policy. Remittances from migrants and overseas contractors amount to more than one quarter of the national budget and the government depends on these remittances. There are more than 10 million migrants, scattered all over the world, who keep the economy afloat. The effects of migration are strongly felt in all aspects of society. For example, one measure of success among students is being able to work as nurses or engineers in the Middle East, Canada, or the United States. Since there is demand for nurses in North America, many students study nursing with the goal of going abroad in mind, despite the fact that the Philippines also has a huge shortage of nurses.

International migration first began during U.S. colonial rule when Filipinos went to Hawaii to work on pineapple plantations in the 1920s. The second wave of migration was to the Middle East in the 1960s. The growth of the oil industry in the Middle East, along with unemployment and the decline of the economy in the Philippines, created a demand for workers, and international labor migration became official economic policy of the government. Since then, there has been participation of state agencies in

the recruitment of laborers to be sent to different countries and migration has become deeply entrenched in Filipino society. In 2000, almost one million Filipinos migrated to 160 countries. This has had effects on the family structure: for instance, one spouse going abroad, while the other stays in the Philippines to raise the children. The third wave of migration has seen a feminization of Filipino migration—nearly 72% of all newly hired contract workers from the Philippines were women in the year 2000. The four main flows of female migrants are to the Gulf States and Southeast Asia as maids, Japan as entertainers, and other industrialized countries as nurses, teachers, and domestic helpers.

The effects of international migration have resulted in transnationalism, questions of national identity, and participation in political activities of both the host country and the country of origin. Reliance on international migration as an economic policy also makes the Philippines vulnerable to the economic and social conditions of host countries. Currently, although many families have benefited from labor migration, the effects beyond family are less tangible, and although remittances have helped the country's economy, real development impacts have not been felt. The government still targets sending workers abroad, but even without government involvement, labor migration would still flourish thanks to social networks and the fact that Filipinos have become migration savvy. Perceptions of the international labor market have woven their way into the educational and work aspirations of Filipinos and the proliferation of nursing and other kinds of schools.

A separate issue that has affected the Philippines is the conflict in the southern island of Mindanao, in provinces with a mostly Muslim majority. The conflict is rooted in the claim that the area was not part of the Spanish colony and it was not converted to Catholicism, and therefore not part of the Philippines. There have been attempts at negotiation, and an autonomous region was created, but clashes of interests on land and identity issues have fuelled discontent and resulted in much human and social cost. There have been hundreds of thousands of deaths, displacement, and a rise in poverty—14 of the 20 poorest provinces in the Philippines are in Mindanao. Crimes against property, kidnap-for-ransom activities, and drug trafficking have been on the rise. The conflict has indirectly affected the economy in that it has hurt foreign investment, as well as crop production, reducing profitability of agriculture in the region. Balgoa noted however, that armed conflict only occurs in parts of Mindanao, and does not happen all over the large island.

Where is the Philippines headed now? The country has good economic prospects, and there is a young, vibrant population. On the other hand, the population is growing too rapidly, which is related to the Catholic Church's intervention on birth control. Corruption still persists, although it has decreased. One thing that the country does need, Balgoa concluded, is a stronger sense of cultural and national identity.

Chin Oy Sim began with some background information about Malaysia. There have been several colonial rulers of the country, but it is Britain's colonial rule, which was largely unbroken from 1786 to 1957, which has made the most impact, in particular on the education and judicial systems. Today, Malaysia's population is ethnically diverse, comprising Malay, Chinese, and Indian communities, as well as indigenous and other groups. The current Prime Minister is Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak and the ruling political party, called the *Barisan Nasional* (National Front), is a coalition of mainly the three largest race-based parties.

Malaysia is a constitutional monarchy and has a Federal Constitution, which is the supreme law of the country. One point to note is that the Constitution states, "Islam is the religion of the Federation." The interpretation of this provision, that is, whether it means Malaysia is an "Islamic" country or a "secular" country (and what each of those terms implies), has been very much disputed, especially in the last decade. In the country's legal structure, human rights treaties and United Nations (UN) conventions do not automatically become law. Some, but not all, aspects of UN treaties regarding the rights of the child, prohibition of discrimination against women, and rights of persons with disabilities, have been incorporated into domestic law.

Chin then took a close look at current human, civil, and political rights, and fundamental liberty issues, in Malaysia. The first liberty issue she discussed was the liberty of person, guaranteed in Article 5 of Malaysia's Federal Constitution, which states that no person shall be deprived of life or personal liberty except in accordance with the law. An example of a problematic area with respect to personal liberty lay in two preventive detention laws, which gave the police the right to arrest individuals on suspicion, for example of terrorism, without the need to charge them in court. In particular, the Internal Security Act (ISA) was notorious for allowing people to be kept in jail for up to ten or more years. Under the ISA, no court was allowed to review the Home Minister's decision to detain individuals. Lawyers challenged the decisions, but without much success. The ISA was abolished in 2012 and was replaced by the Security Offenses (Special Measures) Act, which was supposed to be an improvement, but the definition of what constitutes a "security offence" is extremely wide. However, some protective measures were put in place for the person arrested, as there is a shorter maximum detention period. On the other hand, it still allows detention of up to 28 days with no review by the courts, and access to a lawyer can be denied for up to 48 hours. The other law was the Emergency Ordinance (EO). It allowed preventive detention of criminals such as smugglers and passport forgers, without the need to produce concrete evidence against them. It was also repealed in 2012, but police are now blaming the rise in violent crime on the abolition of the EO. Using that as an excuse, there is a call for a reintroduction of some type of preventive detention legislation.

However, the police have not produced any meaningful evidence that the repeal of the law is a direct cause of the increase in violent crime. Civil society, including Bar Council Malaysia, actively objects to this legislation, because it goes against fundamental liberties. The death penalty is still in place in Malaysia, and for certain offenses, such as drugs-related crimes, it is a mandatory sentence, and the judge has no discretion to impose any other sentence. There have been statements by the government that the Cabinet may review the possibility of ending the mandatory death sentence in drugs cases.

The next fundamental liberty discussed was the freedom of assembly. Article 10 of the Federal Constitution provides that “all citizens have the right to assemble peaceably and without arms.” The Police Act of 1967 required a permit for any public assembly of more than three persons, but this was replaced by the Peaceful Assembly Act (PAA) in 2012. This Act has imposed more drastic restrictions in some ways. Organizers of demonstrations must apply for a permit at least ten days in advance of any planned assembly. Assemblies in motion, or “street demonstrations,” are prohibited. The Minister of Home Affairs is also supposed to designate places where people can assemble, but none have been designated as yet. In addition, no assembly within 50 meters of places such as hospitals, airports, and train stations is allowed. There have already been prosecutions for violations of this legislation, which Bar Council Malaysia believes to be selective, and not even-handed.

Freedom of expression is another fundamental liberty, which is guaranteed in Article 10 of the Federal Constitution. However, there have been several legislative measures used by the government to silence dissent, including on matters relating to Islam, about which the government is sensitive. The government claims that Malaysia is an Islamic state and it uses that assertion to constrain and suppress the space for dialogue, debate, and discussion about Islam, including the administration of the Shariah legal system. The Sedition Act, a legacy of the British colonial era, has often been used as a basis for arrests. In 2012, there was an announcement that it would be abolished and replaced by a National Harmony Act, but there have been no details thus far. News agencies need to get a permit under the Printing Presses and Publications Act to publish print newspapers. As a result, many newspapers are pro-government and/or practice self-censorship for fear their license will be revoked. In recent years, however, online news portals have increased in number and grown in popularity, as they have relatively more freedom and provide an alternative source of news. There are also draconian amendments to the Evidence Act, under which even the owner of a café that offered a free Wi-Fi facility could be presumed to have published an online publication originating from a computer using the Wi-Fi facility. What Chin draws from this is that the government is intent on tightening control over the expression of diverse viewpoints, which is leading to a closing of democratic space.

The freedom of belief was discussed extensively, but will be discussed in more depth in the public seminar. There are several cases that demonstrate restrictions on, or violations of, the right to freedom of belief, which are often justified on the basis that Malaysia is an “Islamic” country. One point that Chin noted is that many civil society groups believe that there is a significant minority of Muslims in Malaysia who are moderate and do not agree with the direction in which the nation is headed, but because of the measures to curb expression and silence dissent, very few Muslim voices speak out to say they do not agree. The few who do express their views have faced varying degrees of harassment, and when

incidents of such harassment make the news, others who may be thinking about speaking out are intimidated.

Despite the challenges summarized above, Malaysia is a wonderful, rewarding, and special place to live. However, it should not be viewed uncritically as a “model” country, as there have been many regressive developments, and much reform is needed to transform Malaysia into a true democracy.

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## Hong Kong

HE RUNFENG

He Runfeng began by showing glimpses of Hong Kong—skyscrapers, free markets, small apartments, malls—a small, crowded, and modern island city. Positive things about Hong Kong are that it has a free market, a high per capita gross domestic product, convenient transportation, a good social welfare system, an effective anti-corruption mechanism, and high life expectancy, etc. On the other hand, it is crowded and has limited space and a high cost of living.

Hong Kong is the perfect window through which to learn about mainland China. He first gave some historical context for this. Hong Kong was occupied by the British for about 150 years, until 1997 when Britain returned sovereignty to the mainland. From 1842 to 1949, when China suffered from Western allied military invasions as well as continuous civil wars, Hong Kong had little official connection to China, as it primarily served as one of Britain's overseas trading ports. From 1949, when the PRC was established, to 1997, there were three major waves of emigration from China to Hong Kong. The first one was in the 1950s, as a result of the Beijing authority's radical reforms and its anti-rightist movement; another from 1959 to 1961, during the Great Chinese Famine; and finally from 1977 to 1980, when the Cultural Revolution ended and the Chinese government started its Reform and Opening-up strategy. During this same period, trade between the mainland and Hong Kong gradually increased. In 1997, Hong Kong officially became part of China and was named "Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC)." Under the "one country, two systems" principle, Hong Kong has a totally different political system from mainland China and enjoys a high degree of autonomy, but it has no right to interfere in diplomacy or have its own military.

Although the connection between Hong Kong and the mainland has been strengthened to a great extent since 1997 and in particular, Hong Kong has become more reliant on the mainland economically, it is still difficult sometimes for capitalist Hong Kong to coexist with the socialist mainland. In 1997, when Hong Kong was returned to China, it seemed people in Hong Kong had a relatively strong national identity with China, but over time conflicts have arisen, and some latest surveys indicate that many people do not like to identify themselves as Chinese. There are several reasons for this. First, historic tragedies have fueled mistrust toward Beijing. For instance, during the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976, many scholars and elites were labeled as capitalists and revisionists, and were severely repressed. Also, many students were killed by the Chinese army in the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989. Other reasons for mistrust include the current lack of freedom of speech, suppression of civil rights activists, Beijing's strengthening of authority and intervention in Hong Kong affairs, and its reluctance to respond to democratic demands, in particular to allow universal suffrage. In addition, there has been a lot of negative news about the mainland, such as poor building construction, government corruption, scandals involving

tainted food products, and mainland travelers' uncouth manners. These incidents have further strengthened the public's disgust for mainland China. More importantly, as the number of mainland travelers, students, and immigrants has been dramatically increasing in recent years, more and more Hong Kong people have claimed that they are suffering from many new problems, such as rising prices, decreasing educational opportunities, and lack of medical resources. During the past 16 years (1997–2013), Hong Kong has experienced a relatively sluggish economy. This is in contrast to the economic miracle of the colonial period, and as a result, there is a feeling of depression and nostalgia for colonial times. It cannot be denied that the Chinese government made many mistakes in history and its current governance needs to be improved, but undoubtedly, it is too arbitrary to attribute all the problems to the Beijing authority. Unfortunately, now there is a trend in thinking that all of Hong Kong's problems are the result of its return to mainland China. Hong Kong society is becoming more irrational and hostile, and there is a tendency to amplify and distort the facts in order to match the tastes of the public, and a large number of people have joined anti-mainland groups.

Despite this complicated relationship, Hong Kong still plays a role in the democratization of China. Hong Kong has a history of accepting political refugees from China. For example, around 300 activists who participated in the Tiananmen Square protests fled to Hong Kong between 1989 and 1996. They were aided by organizations and most were later transferred to other countries. Since 1997, Hong Kong has continued to accept and protect civil rights activists and provide them with a platform to express their opinions publicly. Hong Kong also hosts anniversary commemorations for the Tiananmen Square incident every year on June 4. Today, it is not only one way for Hong Kong society to put pressure on the central government to face history, but also one of the only channels for mainland Chinese to know and remember what happened in 1989. Every June, there are thousands of mainland travelers who intentionally visit Hong Kong to participate the commemorations. In addition, booming social movements in Hong Kong civil society serve as a model for collective opposition on the mainland; the Hong Kong media and some political parties pay much attention to mass events and democratic activities in mainland China and keep putting pressure on the central government to treat the events with more flexibility and allow more space for freedom; and the rapid increase in interactions between Hong Kong and mainland China has also accelerated the spread of information, truth, and values.

However, there have been more and more limitations, and it may be too early to say if Hong Kong can continue playing a significant role in the political reform of mainland China. First, the continuously intensified conflicts mentioned above have gradually weakened Hong Kong society's will to help democratize mainland China. Second, as a local authority affiliated with the party-state, the Hong Kong government has to submit to Beijing, and has no power to reform the central government even if they would like to do so. Third, Hong Kong's increasing economic reliance on China has resulted in a pervasive silence and even loyalty to Beijing's authority in the economic community. Business tycoons, for example, must keep their distance from democratic activities and even put pressure on the local government to suppress democratic forces in order to satisfy the Beijing authority and gain more business opportunities on the mainland. Finally, in consideration of their basic demands for improving the economic situation and life conditions of people in the country, many of the grassroots organizations also

start to keep silent. Generally speaking, only some public intellectuals and social elites are still trying to change mainland China. With the increase in Chinese national power, it has been widely believed that Hong Kong would probably be “mainlandized,” rather than the mainland being changed positively by Hong Kong.

In brief, the relationship between mainland China and Hong Kong has become more complicated than ever. There has been a big question of the extent to which Hong Kong can have an influence on the political reforms and democratization of mainland China. Undoubtedly, however, the key factor to its future is mainland China itself and its willingness to allow political change.

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## Japan: Matured, Lost, and Found? Or Lost and Will be Lost Again?

IMATA KATSUJI

Imata Katsuji covered a lot of ground in his presentation. He began by giving some general facts about Japan. He then talked about the economy and the so-called lost decade, ethnicity, and religion. Japan's lost decade lasted for two decades, during which the Japanese economy stagnated since the peak of its gross domestic product growth (GDP) in 1994. Today (as of September 2013), Japan's economy is the third largest in the world, according to sources in 2012. It used to be second but was overtaken by China a few years ago. Imata then talked about facets of Japan's social fabric and raised an example of ethnic minorities and the foreign population in Japan. There are different ethnicities in Japan, including Okinawans and the Ainu. There is also a large population of Koreans, many of whom live in the Kansai area for historical reasons. There is also the Buraku population, people who are ethnically no different from other Japanese but who were put at the bottom of the social ladder during the time of the Japanese feudal system, and there is still stigma that remains today. All of this is to say that the claim that Japan is a homogeneous country without any minority problems is false.

The two major political parties in Japan are the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), but there are not many ideological differences between the two. The LDP has ruled Japan for most of the time between 1955 and today. Although the DPJ did win a landslide victory in 2009, they lost in the general elections in December 2012, because they were not able to effectively cope with the 2011 earthquake and nuclear disaster, among other things.

A proposal to amend Article 9 of the Japanese constitution, which renounces war, is now being pushed by the current LDP government led by Prime Minister Abe Shinzo. The argument is that Japan has a self-defense force that exists to protect Japan from an outside attack, but it cannot initiate an attack. However, the argument goes, Japan needs to become a "normal nation-state" in which the sovereign right to war is maintained. Collective defense, in which Japan can come to the aid of its military allies should they come under attack, is the concrete conceptual underpinning for the change. Another amendment to the constitution that the LDP is proposing is to Article 21, which guarantees freedom of speech and assembly. The proposed amendment states that these rights are guaranteed as long as they are not seen as intending to harm the public good.

A point to add about the economy is that Japan ranks first in terms of public debt as a percentage of GDP—214%. Japan is able to sustain this, because the debt is being paid by its own people, whose savings are enormous. Since the government will not likely be able to pay pensions to future generations, many people are saving up for that. In addition, there are many issues in the justice system. Japan has the

death penalty, and is said to have a high conviction rate, especially in serious crimes, which has led to several cases of people being wrongly convicted.

Many people do not see that there is poverty in Japan. By poverty, Imata means relative poverty, which is the percentage of the population whose disposable income is below one half of the country's median household income, according to the definition used by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). After the United States, Japan is the least equal among developed countries. In 2008, Japan's poverty rate was 14.9%, which is relatively high, and continues to rise. It is higher in households with children and single parents. It is higher among the elderly, and the disparity between men and women also increases with age.

As far as gender equality is concerned, the societal norm of the man working long hours to support his family while the woman stays at home to take care of the house still exists, although it is changing. In 1986, a law was passed to guarantee equal treatment of men and women in the workforce. Imata went on to say that the law changed but society has not kept up with that change. After the law was passed, women were expected to work as hard as men, working late hours, and they were still expected to take care of the house and children. After having children, most women had to quit or switch to a part-time job. Imata demonstrated this with the M-shaped career curve of women, which compares the arch of women's careers in Japan, Germany, Sweden, the United States, and South Korea. For Japan and Korea, the line indicating the number of women in the workforce goes up for ages 25 to 29, then goes down, then goes up a little later on in life. This pattern has not changed much in the past 30 years in Japan, but in Western countries, it is a straight curve.

Imata then gave some clarification about nonprofit organizations (NPOs) in Japan, which may play a slightly different role than in other countries. In 1998, a law that allowed small grassroots organizations to have status as legally validated NPOs was passed. Today there are as many as 40,000 NPOs that deal with problems of the elderly, disabled, homeless, and education, among other things. Because most of these NPOs lack sufficient private donations, many of them are partially or primarily funded by the government, so they become a sort of subsidiary of a government service provider. After the March 2011 earthquake, there was a boom in funds coming in for relief activities.

Some trends toward more natural living have been picking up in Japan recently. Examples are "U-turn" and "I-turn." U-turn refers to the phenomenon of young people from rural areas going off to university in metropolises, getting a job there, and then deciding to move back to the countryside. I-turn refers to people originally from urban areas who move to a rural area. Imata showed a picture of Mori Kaze no Gakko (the School of Forest and Wind) in Iwate Prefecture, part of the earthquake disaster stricken area. The building used to be an elementary school, but as in many rural areas, there are not enough children to have a school and it closed down. It was then bought by a man in collaboration with the local government and turned into a school where people from all over can go for a short stay to learn about composting, organic farming, and sustainable energy. There is also a movement for *chisan-chishō* (local production for local consumption), which is becoming more prevalent.

Imata also briefly covered the history of activism in Japan. The Asama Sanso incident in 1972 had a strong effect on how the Japanese public has viewed activists since then. During this incident,

student activists killed each other over ideological differences. Because of this, the public has generally seen activists as too radical to sympathize with and thus they were marginalized. Since the Fukushima nuclear power plant disaster, however, the elderly and families with children have participated in demonstrations, which is new for Japan.

Other countries' impression of Japan is that what has made it successful in the past is its strong group orientation. It was a factor of economic success after World War II, so Japan is seen as a role model in Asia. On the other hand, the importance of harmony also makes for a rigid society, where anything that will destroy social harmony is seen as bad or even radical. After the long "lost decades," can Japan come to terms with its past and present and start to demonstrate a viable, value-based path to the future? If not, it will be lost again. In this sense, Japan is standing at a crossroads.

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## My Country, Myanmar

LWIN LWIN MON

Lwin Lwin Mon first introduced facts, figures, and the history of Myanmar. Myanmar gained independence from Britain in 1948. Burmese is the official language, which is spoken by the Bamar ethnic group and other sub-ethnic groups. English is also spoken widely. The Union of Myanmar is made up of over 100 ethnic groups, the largest being the Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Chin, Bamar, Mon, Rakhine, and Shan. The population of the country is estimated to be 52.4 million according to figures in 2003 and the population growth rate is 1.84%. The country has a diverse climate, with a rainy season, as well as diversity of flora and fauna. The economy is largely based on agriculture, with rice being one of the most important crops. Textiles, wood products, construction materials, gems, metals, oil, and natural gas are also major sectors of the economy, and the country is abundant in natural resources which may attract foreign investment in the future.

Throughout Myanmar's history, there have been several different capital cities. Yangon is the most recent former capital of Myanmar and today the largest and the most important commercial center in the country. As of 2010, it had a population of about four million. It has many Buddhist temples and stupas, and the Shwedagon Golden Pagoda is a symbol of the city. Mandalay is the cultural old capital of Myanmar. It has many historical sites, cultural memorials, and Buddhist edifices. The ancient city of Bagan is also important, as it was a center for Theravada Buddhism. The newest capital city of Myanmar is Nay Pyi Taw, which was established in 2005.

The best-known figure in Myanmar today is Burmese pro-democracy leader and winner of the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize, Aung San Suu Kyi. Her father, General Aung San, was the founder of the Burmese army and is considered the father of Burma, because he led the movement for independence from British colonial rule. Aung San Suu Kyi, after returning to Myanmar from studies abroad in 1988, established a party opposing the military government, the National League for Democracy, but was jailed by the military for her activities and kept under arrest for 15 years. She was finally released in 2010 and since then has been able to travel in her country and abroad. Aung San Suu Kyi was able to win a seat in Myanmar's parliament in 2012, but the government still remains largely under military control under the guise of civilian rule. Aung San Suu Kyi, whose husband was from England, now aspires to run for president in upcoming elections, but under the current constitution, her marriage to a foreigner makes her ineligible. She is trying to have changes made to the constitution, but we do not know yet whether the military-led government will allow changes that will permit her to become president.

With the recent opening up of the country after years of isolation, the fate of Myanmar's cultural heritage and biodiversity remains to be seen. Achieving United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage status of some sites may help in their protection. There

is also controversy over a project to build a dam on the Irrawaddy River, the country's largest and most symbolic river. The dam, which is now partially under construction, is being built and financed by a Chinese company, and much of the electricity that the project will generate is planned to be exported to China. Opposition to the project stems from environmental concerns, the fact that the decision to start the project was made without consulting the public, and the displacement of indigenous people. The project has been suspended as a result of the overflowing criticism, but it has not been officially canceled.

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## The Democratic Paradox in India

SABA NAQVI

India is a healthy, functioning democracy in some ways, if elections are the criterion. In spite of this, there are also many things the country has not yet achieved—such as equality and social justice.

First, Saba Naqvi painted the backdrop of Indian politics. There are many linguistic and religious divisions within India. The two biggest religions are Islam and Hinduism, with the Muslim population being the third largest in the world. Within the Hindu religion, there is the caste system, and even though it has officially been abolished since India's independence in 1947, it is critical to understand the divisions created by the caste system in order to understand Indian society as well as people's electoral decisions. Roughly 17% of the population comes from the lowest caste. Another 7% are from indigenous tribal communities. India's constitution grants these historically disadvantaged people special reservations in education and jobs. Special reservations are basically affirmative action. Then there is a section of middle caste people who also get reservations, and then the higher castes who do not.

The constitution of India is a powerful document, empowering the people of the lower castes. The time when India gained independence from Britain was tumultuous. There was large-scale dislocation and violence which Mahatma Gandhi was unable to prevent. But at that time, Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of India, gave the founders of the country enough space to create a solid and democratic constitution with many safeguards. One of the founding fathers of the constitution, B. R. Ambedkar, who was an intellectual and a lawyer, came from the Dalit community, the lowest caste in the Hindu religion. In addition, because of the constitution's strength, India did not retreat into a military regime, as many post-colonial nations did. Even though India has a powerful military today, it does not interfere with government.

Over the years, there have been frequent elections in India and the technique of holding elections in India has improved. As far as fraud is concerned, it is difficult to commit these days, with electronic voting machines and other mechanisms, and overall it does not happen. People who try to manipulate the system keep losing elections, which is proof that democracy is working. On the other hand, India still has extremely high levels of poverty alongside some of the richest people in the world. The problem with the election game in India is that mobilization is increasingly based on creating sub identities, based on caste and community, and therefore there is much polarization. There is also the fact that Indian states are almost like smaller nations within the country. This creates a situation where community fault lines are always visited by politicians. Hindu-Muslim divisions have also led to violence.

In 1991, the Indian economy opened up, trade restrictions were lifted, and there was substantial growth of the middle class. The vocabulary of growth is ever present in the Indian media, but the problem is that most of the voters in India are very poor or marginalized and therefore do not benefit from urban

growth. Their concerns are very different from the middle class. There are still farmer suicides from indebtedness. Clearly, there is something wrong, and India's problems cannot be addressed by the idea of unbridled growth. Naqvi went on to say that there does not seem to be any evidence that promoting policies that support economic growth makes for good politics in the long run. The urban middle class support these ideas, but they are also not the most enthusiastic voters—it is the poor and disadvantaged who go to the polls, because from voting they get a sense of empowerment. Voter turnout is high in India in rural areas, especially compared to Western nations, ranging from 50% to 70%. Another point about growth is that there have been huge corruption scandals linked to resources, such as mining and the redistribution of land, which displaces indigenous people. For instance, in order to set up a factory anywhere in India, corporations must acquire land. And as more and more companies come to India, land has become important in politics. This has often led to mass protests, because people do not want to give up their land. One example Naqvi gave was in the state of West Bengal, where the Communist party had ruled for 30 years. Two years ago, when an Indian corporation wanted to set up a car manufacturing plant there, the ruling party tried to take the land by force. Consequently, the communist party in that state lost in the last elections. One of the reasons why they had held power for so long before was that they had been good at redistributing land.

It is difficult to uphold social justice in a country where such a high percentage of people are poor. In addition, the present dominant public discourse is that growth is good and social structure is bad. Although there are some prominent Nobel prize-winning economists who say that investment in the social sector would bring many benefits, arguments against it are winning in the media. The slowdown in the economy in recent years is one argument. Another is that there is so much corruption and leakage in the system that most of the money will not actually reach the people who need it. Yet, there are many politicians who do support investment in social programs. Naqvi went on to say that she is cynical about Indian politicians; the reason they support social programs is not because they are idealistic people, but because they think it will help them win elections. Her prediction is that the Indian National Congress party will lose many urban voters in the upcoming 2014 general elections because they are supporting two legislative bills—the food security bill and the land acquisition bill. The food security bill is expensive, and many people believe that it cannot be sustained. The land acquisition bill makes it difficult to acquire land without generating much compensation as well as building large pools of consent. Pro-growth supporters argue that investors will be reluctant to invest in India with such kinds of legislation.

To address the ALFP 2013 theme of the future of Asia beyond development and growth, Naqvi said that the idea of growth as it has been sold to a certain section of India is completely bogus for the rest of India. India must invest in social sector reforms and legislation that empowers people. India is fortunate that it has not become a dictatorship and is still a democracy. People have been able to benefit from the democratic government to move up the social ladder and to vote for particular individuals and parties who represent their interests. Now the question is how can India use its democratic system to create a society where people are on more equal footing?

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# The Islamic Republic of Pakistan

ZUBAIR TORWALI

Zubair Torwali first invited the fellows to describe what they know about Pakistan and what they have heard about the country in international news media. The responses were varied, but the general consensus was that what people hear about Pakistan is negative.

Pakistan means “land of the pure.” The green color on the national flag represents the Muslim population and the white part represents the non-Muslim population. It has a long border with Afghanistan on the west, a border with China to the north, and a long border with India on the east. The historically disputed territory of Kashmir is located in the most northeastern area, and the Pakistani controlled part is called Azad Kashmir. No international border exists between the two Kashmirs of Pakistan and India.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah is considered the founder of modern Pakistan, leading the movement to separate Pakistan from India when the British gave up control in 1947. Muhammad Iqbal, the national poet, Abdul Ghaffar Khan (known as Bacha Khan), and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, a cleric, also played a role. Jinnah and Iqbal, although they were secular in their private lives, used Islam as a political entity and believed that religion can be the foundation of a nation. Bacha Khan and Kalam Azad, on the other hand, were religious in their personal lives, but they were not of the same view and believed that there are other elements that can make a nation. From the very beginning, there was a debate about whether Pakistan should be a secular state or an Islamic state. As a result, Pakistan did not have a constitution until 1971. This was the same year that East Pakistan separated from West Pakistan and became Bangladesh, dealing a blow to the Pakistan ideology—the reason for the existence of Pakistan—and the debate about secularism versus Islamism became more intense.

There are many problems facing Pakistan today. There have been floods and earthquakes that have caused death and destruction of infrastructure and agriculture. This has had an effect on the economy. According to government figures, 37% of the population lives below the poverty line. There is the issue of the imbalance of power between the government and the military, which is the reason why many leaders have been put on trial or sent to jail. Religious extremism and terrorism are also huge problems for the country. Talibanization has actually been used as a policy by the government to put pressure on India and to keep strategic relations with Afghanistan. At the same time, Pakistan is also a victim of international politics. When Russia invaded Afghanistan in 1979, Pakistan joined a proxy war to fight against the Russians. The only way to get enough soldiers to fight in this war, however, was by reviving and reinventing the sentiment of jihad, which was carried out by the Pakistan military, in particular General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, and the United States Central Intelligence Agency. The situation in Pakistan today is the direct result of the Cold War.

Education is a major casualty of all these problems. Pakistan is ranked first in the world in the number of children not enrolled in primary or secondary school—about 6 million. The number of girls not enrolled is close to 4 million, and Pakistan also ranks first in this category. Pakistan spends only 1.8% of its total gross domestic product on education, and is ranked fifth in the category of least expenditure in the world. Free compulsory education for all children aged 5 to 16 should be provided according to the constitution, but the reality contradicts this.

After hearing all these negative things about Pakistan and the terrible state of affairs, is there anything positive happening in the country? Torwali says that there is a way forward for Pakistan. One necessary element is democracy, and recently there have been signs of hope for this. For over 33 years, Pakistan has been at war with itself. There are extremist forces, but there are also other forces within Pakistani society that have been opposing extremism for decades, and they have not yet given in. One example of this resilience is that in the last election in 2013, voter turnout was at a record high in Pakistan. A new government under Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, leader of the Pakistani Muslim League (N), was elected as a second phase in democratically elected governments. There is hope that this new government will deliver and that democracy will continue and help solve the problems that plague the country. One challenge to this are religious political parties, which take part in elections; however, their supporters have been decreasing. The current government is not in favor of any settlement with the Taliban or other terrorists, and they are consistently calling all-party conferences to come up with strategies to combat terrorism. Torwali hopes that soon the Pakistani army will come under the control of political forces and the army will go against the militant extremists.

Furthermore, the enmity between Pakistan and India must be dispelled, and Pakistan must give up its strategic policy in Afghanistan. In addition, there must be a revival of indigenous cultures. The religious extremism that exists in Pakistan today was brought by Arab countries. Its foundation is in Saudi Arabia. Torwali believes that if Pakistan relies on its own indigenous culture, there is hope for a peaceful nation and a pluralistic society.

## ***Seminars by Resource Persons***

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## The Abe Mystery: Who Is He and What Is He Doing?

**FUJIWARA KIICHI**

*Professor, University of Tokyo*

Japanese Prime Minister Abe Shinzo is not acting like himself. Professor Fujiwara Kiichi argued that the current Japanese administration is stable and will continue be so, as long as Abe does not behave like himself, which is extremely right-wing.

Professor Fujiwara then made some interesting comparisons between former Prime Minister Koizumi Junichiro and Abe. Although Koizumi took a conservative political stance on many issues during his administration, such as visiting the controversial Yasukuni Shrine, where Japanese war criminals are enshrined and therefore seen as a symbol of the Japanese government being unapologetic about World War II events, he has never been an ideologue. Koizumi was an extremely pragmatic politician who thought it prudent to take a hard line against China, and was very popular for it. Abe, on the other hand, is totally different and has always been a follower of extremely conservative ideology until he became Prime Minister. He was a member of Nippon Kaigi, which is an extreme nationalist group in the Japanese parliament. After becoming Prime Minister, however, Abe became a much more pragmatic politician. In his first administration in 2006, he did not visit the Yasukuni Shrine, and the first country he visited was China. In fact, he was greeted in Beijing as someone different from Koizumi. The irony is that Abe is known as someone who dislikes China very much, whereas Koizumi is not. Abe has also taken a far less ideological line compared to Koizumi during his current administration, which began in 2012. One example of this is his support of the Murayama Statement and the Kono Statement, statements of apology by the Japanese government for the damage and suffering it caused other Asian nations during World War II, and for the use of comfort women. Knowing this, one is inclined to think that Abe has a divided personality. To the surprise of many analysts and pundits, Abe has been extremely restrained, and his is also by far the most popular administration in Japan since the early days of former Prime Minister Hatoyama Yukio's Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) administration, which began in 2009.

Why is Abe so popular? Is it because Japan has become so ultraconservative that the public has bought into Abe's ideological positions? Professor Fujiwara does not think so. The support for Abe's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) government stems from two things: economic recovery and political stability. Each has to do with what took place in the country before he came to power. First, Japan is the only advanced industrial economy that has stagnated for two consecutive decades. Abe is now aggressively trying to stimulate the economy through changes in policy. Second, when the DPJ took over in 2009, people were hopeful with the change in government, but that hope disappeared quickly. There was mismanagement and fighting between the government and the bureaucracy. Nothing could be decided,

and, as a result, a political vacuum took over. Abe's election in 2012 was seen as a return to stability and normalcy.

Taking a closer look at the economy, there is no question that it is improving, but is this really a result of Abe's new policies? Professor Fujiwara argued that the recovery really started in 2012, before the policies were put into place. The question now is whether the recovery can be explained by normal economic business cycles or could it be more substantial? Some financial experts argue that there does seem to be a boom in the financial market which exceeds the expectation of theoretical business cycle models. Still, the middle class continues to exert conservative behavior in consumption. It is fair to say there is a bubble developing, but will this lead to real growth? As far as political stability, there will not be any new elections within the coming three years and the majority of the parliament will be held by the LDP. Three years from now there is a high possibility that there will be elections in both the Upper House and Lower House—a so-called double election. Politicians aspire for this, because whenever you have a double election, there is a high possibility that the incumbent will win. The reason why Japan has had so many prime ministers in the past is its divided government. The Upper House has much more power than the Lower House, and decisions made by the Lower House can easily be rejected by the Upper House. The situation the Japanese government is in today, with both houses in the hands of the same party, is rare. As a result, political stability in Japan is likely to continue. This could be a good thing, in that key decisions do not have to be politicized. On the other hand, it can be a bad thing when the majority party has a *carte blanche* to do anything they want regardless of opposition from civil society.

There are three important issues currently being debated by politicians. One is the revision of constitution. However, a change in the constitution requires a two-thirds majority in both the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, and it is not likely to happen soon because a member of the coalition supporting the LDP, the New Komeito Party, is strongly opposed. Another issue is nuclear energy. Since the Great East Japan Earthquake and the Fukushima nuclear disaster in March 2011, the use of nuclear energy in Japan has been a divisive subject. At present, as of September 2013, no nuclear reactors are active in Japan, but the ruling coalition strongly supports starting reactors again. Many people are not opposed to this, because the cost of electricity from other natural sources is much more expensive. On the other hand, there is a section of society that is willing to pay higher electricity bills if it means Japan is non-nuclear. The public, however, cannot vote on this issue and they have no say in the government's policy. It is likely that reactors will start again in the coming months, despite the fact that local views will not be reflected in that decision. Finally, foreign policy is a central issue. In the political sphere, the main debate is about the issue of collective defense. Collective defense means that if a member of an allied group is attacked by an outside party, other allies can assume that they are also being attacked and can join in retaliation. Peculiarly, Japan has already committed to collective security by signing the security treaty with the United States. Some people in Japan argue that collective defense is unconstitutional, but this is just one way to limit the extent of cooperation with the United States. According to Professor Fujiwara, in any alliance, the decision by any government to cooperate with another is a political decision and not a constitutional one.

Although it is unlikely that there would be a shoot-out war, Professor Fujiwara also discussed Japan's strained relationship with China in various scenarios that would lead to military conflict between China, Japan, and Japanese allies. There was also discussion about the peace movement, and the view that it is more of an excuse to keep Japan isolated and uninvolved in any conflicts.

In conclusion, Abe is behaving differently from the past, and this could be a good sign, but take away the façade and we see that there are some basic problems that cannot be challenged from civil society through electoral politics, and that is a real danger that Japan faces right now.

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## Japan and the Overview of Its Social Movements

**OGUMA EIJI**

*Professor, Keio University*

Professor Oguma Eiji began by showing a brief video of anti-nuclear protests in Tokyo, after which he discussed some historical viewpoints to consider while looking at social movements in Japan. The agencies that carry out social movements depend on social structures. A social movement is a representation of social structures and frameworks. Those who promote social movements have a certain amount of resources, such as time and wisdom, but they lack political access. In early modern society, students and intellectuals were the agents of social movements. But when it comes to industrialized countries in the late twentieth century, women and minorities have served as the agents. In the post-industrial twenty-first century, it is often the case that highly educated people with unstable employment become the agents of such social movements. Many of the anti-nuclear protestors seen in the video were highly educated people in their thirties whose employment situation is unstable.

When we think about the pro-democracy movement, the framework of the political regime in power often determines the framework of the anti-regime forces. For example, if the regime upholds capitalism, those against the regime advocate communism and vice versa. If the government pursues nationalism, antigovernment forces promote globalism. As we can see, pro-democracy movements can take on various forms. Therefore, it is important to understand the social structure and framework of Japan to understand Japanese social movements.

Professor Oguma discussed Japan from the perspective of its domestic structure and framework. The export industry comprises 17% of Japan's gross domestic product compared to South Korea's at approximately 55% and China's at around 40%. It is almost the same as the United States' at 12%. This is because like the United States, Japan has a huge domestic market and therefore it does not need to promote exports so much. Nonetheless, the export and domestic sectors are interdependent. After the 1970s, companies were forced to fire workers and streamline operations because of the oil crisis, which in turn bolstered the export industry. Domestic sectors however have been protected by the government. Small enterprises have been manufacturing parts and components for large exporters, which means local small-scale companies with low-wage workers have been supporting export industries. This has an effect on families outside metropolitan areas. Many of these low-wage workers in manufacturing are middle-aged women, while their husbands work for public works projects, usually construction. In this way, Tokyo and provinces are bound by a fragile alliance with the goal of gaining economic wealth and social stability. In other cases, the husband is often a high-wage-earning businessman, while the wife is a part-time worker in the manufacturing industry earning low wages. In other words, there is an industrialized country and developing country in one family. This, Professor Oguma states, is a social

contract that supports Japan as a nation of manufacturing—a social contract between the export industry, the central government, provinces, and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) that represents provinces.

Antagonism with the export industry often takes the form of anti-globalization and environmental protection movements, and sentiment against the government often emerges as support for deregulation, anti-public works, and market liberalization. In such social movements, we can see crossovers, as well as “reverse connections” (which Professor Oguma coined). In other words, we see unholy alliances happening—people who appear to have nothing in common coming together in support of an idea or movement. For example, pro-democracy intellectuals in China find connections with conservatives in the United States, because the Chinese government upholds communism and pro-democracy intellectuals in China support capitalism, which is then connected to conservatives in the United States. There are many interesting examples of reverse connections.

Professor Oguma then discussed the diplomatic framework of Japan. During the Cold War, Japan was in an advantageous position because it was the only democratic and industrialized country in Asia. As a result, Japan was able to export goods to the Western bloc (the United States and Europe), which was not possible for China. Because of the security treaty with the United States, Japan did not have to spend money on military forces or think about international strategy and therefore could focus on economic development. In addition, there are no organizations like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in East Asia. Instead, there are bilateral security treaties between the United States and South Korea, the United States and Taiwan, and the United States and Japan, with the United States at the center, which Professor Oguma refers to as “hub-and-spoke” treaties.

Kishi Nobusuke, grandfather of current Prime Minister Abe Shinzo, was Japan’s prime minister in 1960. In an opportunistic move, he engaged himself in revising the unpopular Mutual Security Treaty with the United States and was then hailed as a freedom fighter by the United States. In the summer of 2012, 200,000 people staged anti-nuclear demonstrations in front of the Japanese Diet building. In 1960, almost the same number of people gathered at the same place, in front of the Diet building, and protested against the U.S.-Japan security treaty when Kishi was prime minister. Professor Oguma took a look at this from the perspective of Japan’s industrial structure. In 2012, the percentage of workers in manufacturing had dropped from its high point in 1992 down to the same level as 1961. This means that the phenomenon of 200,000 people gathering in front of the Diet occurred at times when Japan had the same level of manufacturing in terms of working population. It could also be said that such large-scale demonstrations occurred at the beginning (1960) and end (2012) of Japan as a manufacturing economy.

Social contracts are now facing a crisis. After the Cold War, China joined the world market and Japan lost its privileged status in manufacturing. The social contract with the United States of not having to think about military forces and international strategy also ended with the end of the Cold War. The political situation of Southeast Asian countries has since stabilized, and Japan has shifted its exporting industries to China and Southeast Asia to escape taxes and high labor costs. As a result, many people have lost jobs. Fragile mutual alliances have collapsed in society as well as the family. Male workers’ wages have dropped and women must work more; however, the time men spend on household work has

remained unchanged for 10 years, which is a burden on women. This has resulted in women delaying marriage and deciding to have fewer children.

Of course, the 2012 anti-nuclear movement was triggered by the nuclear power plant accident in Fukushima, but it is also a reflection of unstable social contracts. Since 2012, there have been alliances between different sections of society promoting the anti-nuclear movement. Opinion polls show that 70–75% of the Japanese population would like to stop the use of nuclear power. However, non-LDP parties are divided into about 10 small parties, which makes it difficult for the voters to vote, and therefore about half of eligible voters do not go to polls. Although the LDP won the last elections, they garnered only 30% of votes because other parties were so divided. When they lost in 2009 to the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), some say it was because LDP ran out of budget for public works. The more public works they allocate in the provinces, the more votes they lose in urban areas.

It is said that these days younger generations do not pay much respect to local elderly leaders anymore. Some say it is a change in culture, while others say it is a change in the flow of money. The truth is it is not that young people heeded what their elders said because of culture 20 years ago. It is that when the lifelong employment system was functioning, rank-and-file employees listened to top management, but expendable contingent workers do not have the incentive to do so. Outside metropolises, you could benefit from those connections and get orders for public works, but that is not the case anymore.

With that, Japan may be moving into an age of new social contracts. The agents of change today are more diversified today than they were 40 years ago. Before it was almost unthinkable for families and children to participate in protests, but today they do. Although many believe that activism in the 1970s was too radical, at least the activists of that era had vision. Movements today are more sanitized and practical, without much ideology. Vision is a crucial element for a new social contract that might be able to bind people together and mobilize people's interest and action. However, one thing is true—one single ideology cannot rally many people. Professor Oguma will continue to study and research social movements to find out what the future holds.

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## Media Coverage of March 11

**PAUL BLUSTEIN**

*Former Tokyo Correspondent, Washington Post*

Which is better: a skeptical media that warns too much, or a passive media that does not warn enough? Mr. Paul Blustein began by posing this question, the same question that Eric Johnston, editor at the *Japan Times*, posed about the media coverage of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident and meltdown on March 11, 2011. At first, Mr. Blustein's response was that it would be better to err on the side that warns too much, since the press' job is to be skeptical. But in the aftermath of March 11, Mr. Blustein's perspective changed. Certainly, it is best if the media can hit the nail right on the head by giving people exactly the information they need, but that is very difficult, and so, especially in situations such as these, the "Japanese approach" or a "warning less" approach may be better. Mr. Blustein argued that the foreign media was guilty of negative and biased coverage, which was damaging to the credibility of the Japanese government and also harmful to the victims of the accident in Fukushima.

After the earthquake and tsunami on March 11, 2011, news that the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant had been badly damaged and that it was leaking radiation came out. Initially, the Japanese media reacted calmly by giving very factual and dry information about the crisis, also stating that there was no danger of being harmed by radiation outside the evacuation zone. The foreign media in comparison, including CNN, the BBC, and even the *New York Times*, criticized the Japanese media and were also extremely alarmist in their reporting, choosing to word their reporting in such a way that would lead people in Japan to believe that they were in danger. The Japanese media was accused of being too tame and too deferential to authorities, after which they did become more skeptical. Many people were worried about the effects of radiation and they were also worried about a worst-case scenario if the leak at the Fukushima Daiichi plant was not stopped. Some people took the opportunity to leave Tokyo with their families and many others left the country.

One incident was particularly damaging. After the accident occurred, the U.S. government sent some experts to Japan to assess the situation. On March 16, 2011, the wall of Reactor No. 4 at the plant was found to be damaged from an explosion, and it was assumed by some people from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), including the chairman at the time Gregory Jaczko, that the reactor was leaking water. If there was no water in the reactor to cool the fuel rods, there would be a nuclear meltdown and more radioactive particles would be released into the atmosphere. Based on this belief, Mr. Jaczko announced at a congressional hearing that Reactor No. 4 was dry, and he extended the evacuation zone for U.S. citizens to 50 miles from the plant, farther than the Japanese government's evacuation zone. This information contradicted what Japanese media reports and what representatives from Tokyo Electric Power Company, which owns the plant, were saying. They said that the plant was stable and that there

was still water in the reactor. In fact, although the outer wall had been destroyed, there was another inner wall of the reactor that was still intact, so it had never been dry. NRC officials found this out soon after their announcement of the reactor being dry, but they did not admit this until three months later because of the fear that it would damage their credibility. What the incident did do was cause frustration among the Japanese public, and it caused them to seriously doubt the Japanese media and the government.

It is still widely believed by the public that the Tokyo area just narrowly escaped a catastrophe, a scenario where everyone in the city and surrounding area would have had to evacuate if the leaks at the plant had not been contained and weather conditions, such as wind direction, had been different. In addition, the Japanese government supposedly knew about this “worst-case” scenario and withheld this knowledge from the public. The same information has also been reported in American newspapers. It is these kinds of stories that make headlines. However, it is less well known that immediately following the Fukushima Daiichi plant accident, a team of most highly qualified scientists from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, a U.S. government scientific research facility, flew to Japan to assess the situation. Based on the best scientific evidence from physicists, computer modelers, and health experts, even in the worst plausible scenario, any radiation that might have reached Tokyo would not have come anywhere near levels that would require a mass evacuation. The details of this were also published in an American journal, but no efforts were made to correct previous stories that talked of doomsday scenarios.

Japan’s unique *kisha kurabu* or exclusive clubs for member reporters who get information directly from authorities in the government, business, or other organizations were also criticized. The danger of these clubs is that journalists become dependent on authority for news and feel pressure not to criticize for fear of being cut off from sources. This is not a good situation to be in, but a point was made that the Japanese media is not uniquely subject to pressure from authority—it happens everywhere in the world. Nevertheless, it is the duty of the press to continue to resist authority and be skeptical.

In conclusion, false claims about the worst-case scenario show just how much the coverage of Fukushima can be distorted. This has influenced public opinion and helped spread unwarranted fears about Fukushima, increasing anxieties, in particular about food produced in the area. Shortly following the accident, the Japanese media gave people a better idea of the situation than the foreign media, based on the best scientific evidence. Although it is not good to understate disaster situations, the media should recognize that the adverse physiological effects of sensationalizing dangers are very significant. Stress and other related factors caused by an alarmist media may result in more serious public health problems in the end.

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## Forty Years of Japanese Feminism

**UENO CHIZUKO**

*Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo*

Professor Ueno Chizuko began by showing a video of a presentation she gave at the University of Chicago. In her presentation, she talked about the history of Japanese feminism over the last 40 years, what women have achieved, and what they have not achieved. Since the Great Tohoku Earthquake of March 2011, many people believe that Japan must change. Although the relief efforts were portrayed as very orderly and organized, Professor Ueno proclaims that women's needs, health, and mothers' concerns were ignored, and women's fears and anxieties were not heard in the male-dominated society of Japan. Can we say that the status of Japanese women has improved? The answer is ambivalent: both yes and no.

United Nations world rankings from 2011 show that Japan has the third highest gross domestic product and is ranked eighth in the human development index, yet, when it comes to the gender empowerment index, Japan is 58th, and the gender gap index is worse, at 98th, which goes down to 101st among 135 countries in 2012. These indices are based on women's participation in powerful positions, such as politics at both the national and local level. After Japan's most recent election in 2012, the number of women representatives in the Japanese Diet has actually decreased to nearly the lowest in the world. There are two female members out of 20 ministers in the Cabinet. This is a very frustrating situation as many feminists have struggled over the past 40 years without being able to make real change happen. As far as sexual harassment and domestic violence, women have in fact made significant gains, but in other fields, they have not been able to gain much.

Although the Equal Employment Opportunity Law was passed in 1985, the neoliberal economic policies of the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leaders in the 1990s have hurt women's ability to come into positions of power. During this time, the Japan Business Federation divided the Japanese workforce into three categories: (1) lifetime employment for promotion; (2) outsourced specialists; and (3) short-term flexible workers. There was a consensus among politicians, employers, bureaucrats, and labor unions that this scenario would be beneficial to keep their existing privilege of job security. These actors made women and the Japanese youth a form of disposable labor for the purpose of the survival of the Japanese economy in a globalized market. Deregulation of the economy, in essence, increased the number of irregular, part-time, contract, and dispatch workers who have no job security. In the early 1990s, one-third of all female workers were irregular. Ten years later, the number of irregular female workers increased to two-thirds, and they also became younger. Professor Ueno postulates that gender has served as a functional equivalent with race and ethnicity as in the United States and European countries, where migrant labor is available.

These days, young elite women in Japan are encouraged by their mothers to pursue careers, and many are choosing to go into law and medical professions, but as a result of their experience in how big corporations treat women, these mothers do not encourage their daughters to join large firms. Japan is now suffering from low birthrates and also a lack of available workers. Research shows that women with full-time employment are more likely to get married and have children than part-time workers. Professor Ueno's analysis of this is that if the Japanese government is serious enough about giving women more opportunities to have children, then the only solution is to provide full-time employment, job security, and more reasonable working hours.

The rise of conservatism and the neo-national political climate have also not helped the cause of women. The nonprofit organization Women's Action Network (WAN) conducted a survey of 14 different Japanese political parties. In the survey, the parties were asked what policy proposals out of 26, which are based on the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), they would agree to support. Some of the policy proposals include quotas for women in government and increase of their ratio among leaders in all areas, including politics and education, and effective pay equity. However, the results show that the LDP was not in favor of most of the policies, whereas a few small and powerless political parties favored policies supporting women. Though disappointing, the survey was useful in making judgments about which parties are more in favor of gender equality and which are not. Professor Ueno also discussed the backlash against women's empowerment in Japan, including the removal of feminist books from libraries and banning the use of the word "gender-free" in public education.

Although women in Japan have made slight gains in the past 40 years, there is much to be done and the feminist movement must keep on fighting. Perhaps if a common enemy could be found, such as against Japan's nuclear energy policy and the conservatives' constitutional reform proposals, alliances could be made with anti-nuclear and anti-constitutional reform movements to help further the cause of Japanese women. WAN is also fighting for women's rights in all possible ways.

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## Energy and Nuclear Energy Policy after March 11: Issues and Challenges

**SUZUKI TATSUJIRO**

*Vice Chairman, Japan Atomic Energy Commission*

The role of the Japan Atomic Energy Commission (JAEC), among other things, is to conduct planning, deliberation, and decision-making regarding research, development, and utilization of nuclear energy and make recommendations on nuclear energy policies to government officials as an advisory organ rather than an implementation agency. This is a huge task, and Mr. Suzuki Tatsujiro related it to the metaphor of a small tugboat pulling a giant ship. Mr. Suzuki gave a very frank appraisal of the current situation, issues, and challenges surrounding the production and use of nuclear power in Japan and its future, presenting the facts using data and graphs. The views he expressed during the seminar do not necessarily reflect those of JAEC or the Japanese government.

Mr. Suzuki personally reflected on the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident and meltdown caused by the March 2011 Great Tohoku Earthquake, stating that the social, political, and economic risks of nuclear safety are much larger than he had previously believed, and that assuring and restoring the life and welfare of the people affected by the accident is the commission's and government's most important priority. The fact that 150,000 people are still not living in their own homes and are worried about their health and future is heartbreaking. There are many important lessons to be learned from Fukushima, and there is a need for a paradigm shift.

It will take at least 40 years to clean up and decommission the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. The total liability (compensation) amount is estimated to be at least 6 trillion yen (US\$60 billion). In addition, Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) is currently struggling with a new problem—the leakage of contaminated water into the ocean. After the earthquake, engineers built tanks to store contaminated water. These tanks were built hastily, as a stopgap measure. Now there are leaks, but engineers cannot pinpoint exactly where the leaks are coming from. In a 2013 speech to the International Olympic Committee in an effort to win the bid to host the 2020 Olympics, Prime Minister Abe Shinzo announced that the situation was under control. Technically, there is a basis for this statement, as the area of contamination is restricted to 0.3 kilometers from the Daiichi plant, and it will not affect Tokyo. However, the water leaks, as well as water flowing from the mountains in the ground through the contaminated areas of the plant and out to sea remain a very serious problem.

Currently, all nuclear power plants in Japan have been shut down and cannot start operating again until their safety is confirmed by the newly established Nuclear Regulation Authority (NRA), which was created as an independent administrative body after March 11. A new energy and environmental policy was put forth by the government on September 14, 2012. The guidelines of the new strategy are as follows:

realize a society not dependent on nuclear power, enabling zero operation by the 2030s; strictly apply a 40-year limit on reactor operation and stop any plans to build new plants; compose a framework for green development policy; reform the electric power system; and implement actions against global warming. In 2013, however, the Abe administration made a statement about energy policy implying that although Japan will continue to reduce dependence on nuclear power, the policy of zero operation by 2030 has changed. If the 40-year life span on nuclear reactor operation is applied, some of the more newly built reactors can continue operating until around 2050. Therefore, if the policy of zero operation by 2030 is carried out, there will be economic losses.

One important aspect of the future of nuclear energy is restoring public trust in nuclear safety and energy policy. Results of a poll conducted by Professor Hirose Hirotada of Tokyo Woman's Christian University showed that people felt the central government was the most untrustworthy source of information. The poll also showed changes in public opinion about nuclear power. Compared to June 2011, more people in March 2013 believed that nuclear power production should immediately be stopped. A majority of people also believe that a nuclear accident on a similar scale of Fukushima Daiichi will happen again. The JAEC has established measures for public confidence-building, which include transparency, fairness, and public participation in the policy-making process. The government should collaborate with local governments and utilities, and establish a forum where people and stakeholders can share information to improve transparency.

There are major issues that remain to be solved, regardless of the future of nuclear energy. One is the storage of spent fuel. Spent fuel can be reprocessed into plutonium and recycled as fuel in nuclear reactors. However, because there are no operating nuclear plants, demand is low and there is a surplus of plutonium. This is a big concern from a nuclear nonproliferation standpoint, and potentially damaging for Japan's international reputation. Dry cask storage is another option and has been allowed at the Fukushima Daiichi site after March 11. It is a much safer way to store spent fuel as no electricity or water is needed.

Mr. Suzuki concluded by discussing current global nuclear energy development and global energy trends. Overall, world nuclear power production is in decline. In Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, nuclear power plants built 30–40 years ago will soon become too old, and they must be either shut down completely or replaced. Many countries are considering replacing nuclear power with other sources such as natural gas; alternative energy sources are also getting cheaper. On the other hand, many developing Asian countries remain committed to nuclear power in the wake of rising energy demand.

In the future, energy efficiency is crucial. It is also important to diversify the types of energy used, and different types of technologies are needed. During the summer of 2011 in Japan, peak energy consumption was cut by 20%. This indicates that people are capable of improving energy efficiency, and that cutting demand is much faster than building new nuclear power plants. Increased efficiency goes hand in hand with energy security, while at the same time mitigating climate change, and this could be key in the next 20 years. One drawback of Japan's stoppage of nuclear power production is that the country has been using more oil, gas, and coal to produce energy, which are polluting to the environment. Clean energy like

solar and wind power can potentially be produced, and there are plans to develop those energies, but the problem is that the energy from these sources is generally produced in faraway places but needs to be transferred to Tokyo and the Kanto region, where demand is highest. At the moment, there is not enough capacity or infrastructure for alternative energy transmission in place. It will be very costly to build this, but if the government is willing to take on such a challenge and the people are willing to push for it, it could be a viable option in the future.

What will happen with Japan's nuclear energy policy at this point—whether the nuclear option will be maintained or phased out—is still unknown. What is clear to Mr. Suzuki and many others, however, is that the basis of the government's policies should come from the standpoint of the victims of the Fukushima nuclear accident, who have suffered not only health, but social, political, and human life consequences.

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## War on Terror in Afghanistan and Kashmir Dispute: Regional Perspective after the U.S. and NATO Exit in 2014

**ISEZAKI KENJI**

*Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies*

The U.S. war in Afghanistan started in 2001 and is said to be the longest war in U.S. history. It is also the world's first experience with this type of war. In 2014, the United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members will exit Afghanistan. This year is a big year for many countries in the region—general elections will be held in India and also in Kashmir.

The history of Afghanistan is a history of civil war. There are several different ethnic groups in Afghanistan as well as the religious extremist groups al-Qaeda and the Taliban. After the terrorist attacks committed by al-Qaeda on September 11, 2001 in the United States, the U.S. government justified a war on Afghanistan because it was hosting leaders of al-Qaeda and refused to remove them by force. After air bombing mainly by the U.S. military and ground warfare fought by the Afghan Northern Alliance, al-Qaeda and the Taliban were pushed out of Afghanistan into Pakistan. Consequently, the Bush administration at that time declared that the United States had won the war, and from then on the process of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and the setting up of an interim government began. Professor Isezaki Kenji was the Special Representative of the Japanese government for DDR in Afghanistan. In the span of two and a half years, through the process of careful negotiations, disarmament of warlords' armies of all heavy weapons including tanks was accomplished. Using a blueprint for nation-building, the U.S. military and NATO tried to establish rule of law and a legitimate civilian-led government by creating a unified police force and a single military. Only after creating social order can there be rule of law. All of the tribal warlords had to be disarmed, owing to the fact that they would become regional leaders, and therefore politicians, before general elections could be held. The 2004 elections in Afghanistan were hailed as a success, as the first free democratic elections, with high voter turnout and high participation of women. Hamid Karzai, the current President, was elected President of the new permanent Afghan government, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. However, this story does not turn out to be successful in the end. While the warlords, most of whom had been part of the Northern Alliance fighting against the Taliban, gave up their heavy weapons and thus their military power, the Afghan National Army and Police Force were supposed to have been built up quickly. There was pressure from the Bush administration to speed up disarmament because it wanted to hold Afghanistan's general elections before the U.S. presidential elections that year. They wanted to show the American public a success story of the first peaceful and democratic presidential elections in Afghanistan. In the end, the Afghan Police Force turned out to be very weak and corrupt. The hasty, mass production of an Afghan police force done solely for the purpose of the U.S. election campaign, hand in hand with the rapid

disarmament of the tribal military forces, created a power vacuum that would allow the Taliban to return. This is one of the main reasons, the triggering cause one might say, why the war against the Taliban is being lost in Afghanistan today.

Presently, there are two military operations going on in Afghanistan—Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). Both of them are commanded by NATO; however, the legal basis for each organization's military operations is different. OEF is also the umbrella organization for the Maritime Interception Operations (MIO), operating in the Indian Ocean, to which Japan has sent its Self-Defense Forces (SDF) in order to give oil to mainly Pakistani ships. Ironically, Japan's participation as a non-NATO member brings up the debate about collective defense and whether this is allowed by Article 9 of the Japanese constitution, which renounces war. Legally, Japan could have sent ground troops to aid ISAF because it was mandated by the United Nations as an assistance force, but it is much more dangerous than participating in MIO and therefore what Japan chose was the least dangerous and cheapest way to help the United States.

Professor Isezaki discussed current warfare and how it is related to regional security in Kashmir and Afghanistan. There are two ways that the insurgents in Afghanistan are fighting the war today. One is terrorist attacks and suicide bombings, and the other is conventional warfare, happening mainly on the border of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Looking at the situation and seeing that different insurgent groups are operating in three different areas of the country, the U.S. and NATO forces have realized that the war in Afghanistan cannot be sustained politically or financially. Although the war is being lost, President Barack Obama wanted to create a success story that would justify the U.S. exit. This involved increasing the amount of troops on the ground as well as targeting successful Afghan presidential elections in 2009. It turned out that the second election had less than half the voter turnout of the first in 2004, because the public was afraid to go out and vote. After this, people started to admit openly that there would be no military victory. Nonetheless, NATO allied forces want to leave Afghanistan with some measure of success, so another plan was hatched to attempt to create a good, well-behaved Afghan security force, by increasing their number, which is estimated to be around 200,000 soldiers today and is expected to increase in 2015. In 2001, the Northern Alliance had only 50,000 soldiers and was able to defeat the Taliban. Today that would be impossible, since the Taliban has four times more militants. The major problem with such a huge military is that it is unsustainable for a country like Afghanistan without international assistance. In addition, there is still an "enemy within" and it is now difficult to distinguish Taliban from the rest of the population.

Is reconciliation with the Taliban possible or even practical? Professor Isezaki summarized the many lessons learned from the war in Afghanistan and what should not be done in the future. This includes trying to negotiate from a weaker position and the strategy of "divide and exit," among others. The fate of Afghanistan still remains an open question. Is "Talibanization" inevitable? The only thing left to do is to show a strong will and desire to negotiate and reconcile by modifying United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1267, which is essentially a sanction list of terrorists. The most current efforts at reconciliation are talks between the Taliban and the High Peace Council, a body created by

President Karzai in 2010 to seek peace with the Taliban. Another question is what kind of presence the United States will have in Afghanistan after the official exit in 2014, when most of NATO's troops will pull out. There are some contentious issues that need to be worked out before this, such as the use of drones and the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), allowing the United States to keep soldiers in Afghanistan. If an American soldier commits a crime, which law will prosecute them?

The Kashmir dispute is another area in which Professor Isezaki has a lot of experience. What is the link between Kashmir and Afghanistan? For one, pro-Pakistan Kashmiri Islamic fundamentalists claim that Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), otherwise known as the Pakistani Taliban, are their brothers. With elections coming up in India and Kashmir in 2014, there is a possibility that elections might be declared illegal in Kashmir. Another point Professor Isezaki made was that Kashmir is not divided by just two countries—China also controls the northern area, and Pakistan sees China as a friendly and stable partner. Pakistan is now a corridor for China's access to the Indian Ocean. As Kashmir is set in the middle of three nuclear states, nuclear deterrence is working to prevent conventional warfare in that area. However, if Talibanization reaches Kashmir, a much worse nightmare may come to pass, and this depends on next year's elections.

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## Homeless Issues in Current Japan

**SANO MIKU**

*Tokyo Office General Manager, The Big Issue Japan*

In Japan, homelessness is often unseen or invisible. However, the reality is that it is a serious problem that needs to be addressed by society. The year 2002 was the first year that the Japanese government officially recognized homelessness as a serious social problem in Japan. The *Big Issue* was originally created in the United Kingdom, and was first launched in Japan in 2003 as a business response to this problem. It is the first high-quality magazine of its kind to be published in Japan. Ms. Sano Miku began the seminar by discussing the mechanism through which homeless people sell copies of the *Big Issue* magazine. First, a homeless person comes to the Big Issue office and purchases a number of magazines for 140 yen.<sup>1</sup> They then sell them for 300 yen<sup>2</sup> on the street. A person does not need any identification to participate, but they must meet the condition of being homeless and they must follow a code of conduct, which is written on the first page inside the magazine. Many homeless people do not have any money to buy the magazines initially, so the first 10 copies are provided for free. After that, vendors are supposed to be able to sell the magazine using their own initiative, but most of them are primarily older men in their 50s who previously worked in jobs such as construction and do not have any business experience. The Big Issue provides some support and introduces vendors to different places where they can sell copies. The vendors can choose their own schedule and the number of copies of the magazine to take with them. This is an important process as it allows them to be able to feel more connected to society and build confidence when they can carry out the process on their own. As of 2012, there have been 1,451 cumulative registered members, and of those 163 have successfully gone on to get another job and find an apartment.

The *Big Issue* magazine covers a wide variety of topics, such as art, entertainment, interviews of famous people and books, as well as economic and social issues, without becoming too serious or intellectual. It has a readership of about 40,000 people, two-thirds of which are women, and one-third men. According to surveys conducted by the Big Issue, 60% say they read almost all the articles and 63% say they buy every issue. Besides its publishing arm, the Big Issue also started a nonprofit organization (NPO) in 2007 to help homeless people rebuild their lives by providing assistance in finding permanent housing, conducting research, and making recommendations to the government. The Big Issue NPO, unlike the publishing company, is funded by grants and donations.

The definition of homeless in Japan is someone who lives outdoors, either in a park, by a river, at a station, or on the street, and who does not have a home address. Based on this definition, the estimated number of the homeless as of January 2013 was 8,265 according to the Ministry of Health, Labour and

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<sup>1</sup> The price of each copy of the *Big Issue* magazine is 170 yen as of April 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Homeless people sell each copy of the *Big Issue* magazine for 350 yen as of April 2015.

Welfare. Back in 2003, when the government first acknowledged the problem, there were as many as 25,296 homeless. The decline in the number of the homeless over the past 10 years is a result of government programs and support, such as homeless shelters and employment placement services. However, these numbers do not tell all. The government has categorized the homeless into four groups according to the length of time spent living outdoors—those living without a home from 1 to 3 years, from 3 to 5 years, from 5 to 10 years, and 10 or more years. In 2003, the biggest category was people who had been homeless for 1–3 years, at 25%, while in 2013, the largest category was of people who were homeless for 10 or more years, at 26%. Ms. Sano emphasized that although the total number of the homeless has declined, the number of the homeless who have not been able to turn their lives around and who continue to live on the street has grown. This population is also getting older. According to other organizations in Japan that support the homeless, 60% have either a physical or mental disability and therefore it seems that it is in particular people with disabilities who are living on the street.

Ms. Sano stated that as far as the Big Issue is concerned, they do not see that the issue of homelessness has improved significantly. As the government's survey shows, the number of the homeless (about 25,000 people) who had been living outdoors—and therefore been visible—may have declined, yet the number of younger homeless people, those in their 20s and 30s, has increased greatly in the past 10 years, especially since the financial crisis of 2008. Ms. Sano stressed that what makes this a major problem is that these young homeless people are invisible, due to the narrow definition of homeless in Japan, as many of them have day-labor jobs and manage to find some shelter most nights at Internet cafés or temporary shelters. And as long as they are invisible, people do not see this phenomenon of young people becoming homeless as a problem, and as long as it is not recognized as a problem, support will not be provided for them. Thus, we need to ensure that those invisible homeless people become visible, and that is what the NPO side of the Big Issue has been working on, said Ms. Sano.

Homelessness is very much linked to lack of support networks, and based on the findings of the interviews the Big Issue conducted with their 50 young vendors, one of the reasons that people become homeless in Japan is that those who grew up without parents or who had parents but lived in poverty or on welfare cannot rely on going back to their parents if something bad happens to them. Most of them also have a low level of education. In addition, many people who do not have a home do not qualify for government assistance, and even if they did have a job before, they may not be able to get unemployment insurance. Ms. Sano stated that one of the important things is to make sure that their existence becomes clear in society. Also, the definition of homeless in Japan needs to be broadened so that those who are in unstable conditions in terms of homes and habitations can receive appropriate support.

The social stigma of being homeless is another problem and there is a widespread belief that the homeless are in that situation because they are unmotivated. The Big Issue is striving to make the problem more visible in Japanese society and provide a way in which homeless people can succeed in bringing themselves out of their situation. It takes a lot of bravery to stand on the street and admit to everyone passing by that you are homeless. For many people, it is eye-opening to see the vendors on the street selling the *Big Issue* and, on top of that, it is even more eye-opening to see people buying copies of the

magazine and supporting them. The Big Issue calls its vendors their business partners and treats them as such, not only because if they sell more they will make more money, but the more they sell the more visible and established they become in their areas. Through their hard work, they can show society that they are not lazy. When people are given opportunities, they tend to find solutions, and they can show organizations like the Big Issue how to help others.

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## The Role of Lawyers in Japan

**ITO KAZUKO**

*Attorney/Secretary General, Human Rights Now*

Ms. Ito Kazuko began by introducing the structure and functions of the Japan Federation of Bar Associations (JFBA). It is compulsory for all lawyers in Japan to be a member of their local, prefectural bar association, as well as JFBA, in order to practice law. Under the Attorney Act, a regulatory law that defines the mission of a lawyer in Japan, a lawyer's most fundamental role is to protect human rights and ensure social justice. The bar association has its own body for the regulation of lawyers in terms of ethics and has the power to disbar any lawyer who goes against its regulations. Ms. Ito emphasized that although recently more Japanese women want to become lawyers and the reformation of the law school system has made this easier, gender inequality still exists, and therefore continuous efforts are being made to promote the active participation of women in the decision-making processes of JFBA.

The extensive activities of JFBA include judicial reform, gender equality, and defending human rights. One of the main activities of the organization's human rights committee has been to protect the rights of death row inmates whose treatment and conditions fall well below par according to United Nations human rights standards. The committee is also working to impose a moratorium on the death penalty in Japan. One of the main human rights problems of the Japanese criminal justice system is the high number of wrongfully convicted people. JFBA is also working to help overturn wrongful convictions. Public interest litigation is also important for achieving social justice. Japan experienced rapid development of industry in the 1960s and 1970s, which caused contamination of the environment. Companies often deposited toxic waste and metal into rivers and oceans without any regulation, which resulted in many people becoming mysteriously ill. One of the most famous cases is of the Minamata disease, caused by mercury, officially recognized in areas of Kumamoto and Niigata. At first, people in these areas did not understand what was happening to them, and many of the victims were stigmatized and discriminated against. Lawyers played a role in convincing victims that they should stand up for their basic human rights and bring a court case against the companies (although some were against litigation), which in turn helped bring media attention and raise awareness on the issue, and has largely resulted in compensation for the victims who were part of the litigation. Currently JFBA is working to support victims of the March 11, 2011, Great East Japan Earthquake and the nuclear power plant disaster in Fukushima. There were many human rights violations after the accident regarding health, especially for women, but the issue of litigation against the nuclear plant's owner Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) remains complicated. Other human rights activities of lawyers in Japan include advocacy and policy proposals, after determining that a certain law violates human rights.

It is recognized that the Japanese criminal justice system is very much in need of reform in terms of the rights of the defendant. The conviction rate of 99% is astonishingly high. Once a person is arrested and prosecuted, he or she has almost no chance of being acquitted. After arrest, a suspect can be detained for 23 days and interrogated by police in a locked room without the presence of a lawyer. Many people who are arrested are subjected to psychological or, in rare cases, physical torture. The main reasons for wrongful convictions in Japan are forced confessions during custodial interrogation and the withholding of evidence by the prosecutor. Ms. Ito described a specific case that she has been working on for many years, of a man who confessed to a crime in 1961 but reversed his confession in court, claiming it was false and that he had succumbed to pressure during his interrogation. The court excessively relied on the first confession statement, and he is still on death row. The introduction of DNA testing in the year 2000 has helped many people overturn their convictions, and since then the Ministry of Justice has acknowledged that wrongful conviction does in fact exist and broad judicial reform is necessary. In 2009, the government implemented citizen participation in criminal cases through the *saiban-in* (lay judge) system, which is distinctly different from a jury. With this system three professional judges and six ordinary citizens hear a trial and decide upon a verdict as well as sentencing. The Ministry of Justice is also establishing other criteria for reform, such as the videotaping of interrogations; however, the current Japanese administration is not willing to carry out further reforms at the moment.

Ms. Ito also touched upon the activities of the Japanese nongovernmental organization (NGO) Human Rights Now (HRN), which is based in Tokyo. It was established in order to fill a void in Asia—there are organizations in the West such as Human Rights Watch in New York and Amnesty International in London, but until 2006, there were none in Asia. The main activities of HRN now are fact-finding, advocacy, and capacity-building. In 2007, the organization carried out a fact-finding mission at the request of an NGO in the Philippines on the issue of extrajudicial killings of over 100 human rights defenders, who had been assassinated by the military police. After conducting interviews with the victims' families and holding a press conference on the findings, HRN called upon the Filipino government to stop all killings and investigate all violations made by the police and military. At that time Japan was also a major donor of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and was about to make a new ODA agreement with the Philippines, so HRN called upon the Japanese government to suspend all projects unless human rights violations were terminated. Since then, executions and extrajudicial killings have decreased.

In terms of capacity-building, HRN established the Peace Law Academy in 2007 for promoting human rights in Myanmar. Until recently, it had been difficult to carry out education projects inside Myanmar, so this school was established on the Thai side of the Thai-Myanmar border. The human rights situation for ethnic minorities in particular is serious, and minorities are not aware of their rights or democracy. Through the school's programs, motivated Burmese youth activists, who, it is believed, will become the most powerful members of Burmese society, are taught by Burmese lawyers and are encouraged to create networks and carry out their own fact-finding missions once they return to Myanmar. HRN is also working in Japan to close the gap between international human rights standards and Japanese practice. Since the 2011 nuclear disaster in Fukushima, they have carried out many investigations along

with a UN Special Rapporteur on human rights. Their research found that conditions at evacuation centers were very bad for women, and there have been serious violations to the right to health. Even if the Japanese government does not take any action based on the HRN and UN recommendations, at least other groups, such as medical associations, are paying attention and can make policy recommendations to the government, which might have some influence. Ms. Ito said that she will keep fighting on this issue.

Some human rights organizations, such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, have been criticized for being top-down organizations with direction from above, and for being biased against non-Western nations. As a human rights organization based in Asia, HRN hopes to promote universal human rights by strongly supporting grassroots activities.

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## Japanese Culture Lost and Found

ALEX KERR

Writer / Collector of Japanese Art

Mr. Alex Kerr started by explaining that tourism has been a failed industry in Japan because the people, and namely the government, did not view it as important until very recently. As far as economic growth was concerned, only the manufacturing industry had any value for the country. This may have been the case in the past and in the rest of the world until the 1980s, but now tourism has become the biggest industry in the world—bigger than cars, oil, and IT. Although Japan has started to concentrate more on tourism in the last five or six years, since former Prime Minister Koizumi started *kanko rikkoku* (building up the country on tourism) policy, it still ranks 30th in the world in this industry. A very critical issue for Japan is depopulation, and although big cities such as Tokyo and Osaka are doing well and are even growing, smaller cities and towns are facing a demographic collapse. In Europe and in many other places, where small towns have seen a declining population, tourism has worked as a solution. Japan has just not gotten around to it.

Concerning city planning, construction, and tourism in Japan, Mr. Kerr discussed the problem of the technology of scenery—how to make things beautiful and keep them that way. The problem in Japan has been that aesthetics have not factored in with economic development. This widespread belief that beauty is too romantic to think about when constructing new things is, strangely, a developing-country problem. In today's world, however, beauty also means money. Places that still remain beautiful will survive and those that did something nasty to their environment will die. In rural Japan, it has now become a matter of life and death. In Japan, things such as signage and the management of telephone wires are unmanaged chaos, although recently there have been some steps to control how and where people put up signs. In 2004 the government passed the *keikan-ho* (Landscape Law), and since then there have been some areas that have succeeded in removing signs that blemish scenery. Another problem, which is something that Mr. Kerr is working on, is the long-held government policy of attempting to help rural areas by pouring money into infrastructure, such as building roads and bridges and construction along seashores. Hardly anyone goes to many of these places now. This was not a big issue in the 1960s, but now the problem is that this mentality has been turned on to autopilot. The need for more roads and dams has long since evaporated, yet hundreds of billions of dollars are still being invested every year on public works projects. In addition, there is no civic involvement or profit-loss studies—the idea is simply to awe people by the sheer scale of the construction. In Germany, the challenge to engineers in building new construction is how to do it with the least environmental impact. In Japan, the idea has been that the more impact there is, the better it is, and this is seen by the abundance of concrete everywhere and the patchwork look of many rural areas. Mr. Kerr showed many photos representing this phenomenon.

There have been huge economic, environmental, and cultural disasters as a result of the destructive development of the countryside. One example is the indiscriminate planting of cedar trees in the 1950s. Natural forest was destroyed and replaced by monoculture cedar, which resulted in runoff and loss of animal habitat. The type of cedar planted in Japan is also a low-grade type of wood; it has only limited use as structural building material. Modern architects have also contributed to the destruction. Mr. Kerr also talked about the various bureaucratic slogans that the government has used to name public works projects in attempts to draw more tourists to places. However, what people really look for as tourists is not really the famous monuments, but what Mr. Kerr calls the “appeal of nothing special.” What people really want is to take in the air, sights, and sounds of the streets, and the atmosphere of a place.

Nevertheless, within this context of damage, neglect, and government policies on autopilot, it is still important to be reminded that some wonderful and majestic places do still exist in Japan. Mr. Kerr introduced some of these places, in particular Iya, on the island of Shikoku, about which he told his personal story of discovery. In 1973, he bought land on which a 300-year-old thatch-roofed house in the Iya Valley was standing. The house was given to him for free, since the owners deemed it to be worthless. It is located on a steep mountainside where it is impossible to have rice paddies, so the culture of the area predates rice. By that time, the Iya Valley was already suffering from population loss. After a decade, Mr. Kerr and a group of friends succeeded in re-thatching the house, which he named Chiiori, as well as making other repairs. To the local government’s surprise, the house began receiving thousands of foreign visitors, despite the one-hour hike up a hillside, and it also got a Michelin star. People went there because they wanted to experience something real. Mr. Kerr explained that Chiiori pointed him in another direction, and he started more projects in other areas renovating old houses and buildings so that travelers could come and stay in them, which has been very successful. The point of doing this is not to preserve the houses as they were in the past, but to bring them back to life and into the modern age. While valuing the original structure and materials, some modern interventions are also necessary.

What does all this accomplish? The fact that Chiiori and houses in other places are popular, among not only foreigners but also Japanese people, shows that there is a pent-up demand for this brand of sustainable tourism, which incorporates tradition and preservation of the natural environment. It draws young people to these areas, and even new businesses that open up because of the increase in visitors. It also helps to preserve culture, since there are many local foods and traditions that would die out if people did not come to see and try them. Finally, one of the most important things is that it weans people in the countryside off of the construction industry. They no longer have to depend on building a new road to bring in more money. It is not only about bringing in more tourists either—it is a way to recycle the countryside. Mr. Kerr gave an example of what is happening in small towns outside of London, where most of the old, thatched-roofed houses there are occupied by newcomers, such as bankers, or people who work from home. The same thing is starting to happen in a local area in Kyushu, where an *akiya banku* (abandoned house bank) was created. People who own these houses sign up with the town and offer them to anyone who wants to move there. This has been successful in bringing in artists and other young people.

It is important to keep in mind that true modernization is the ability to take a traditional society, keep the valuable aspects of the culture and the natural environment, and keep it in harmony with totally new technology. A challenge going forward for Japan is that this new tourist industry, and the money set aside for it by the government, might mean another construction boom of highways to access these places, because bureaucrats are still stuck in the mind-set that that is the way to do things. In fact, statistics show that the more remote places, away from highways, have been more successful because tourists want to feel like they have actually gone somewhere. What is needed are people with vision, who are not just going to focus on the immediate demand. Will there be a change in mentality? The nuclear power plant accident in Fukushima following the Great Tohoku Earthquake of March 2011 being the most conspicuous example of a public works project gone wrong, there is some hope that within five to ten years Japan will see a shift. There is evidence that a growing number of young people want to shape their future and change the status quo.

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# The March 11 Disaster and the Response of Government, NGOs, NPOs, and People in Japan

**OHASHI MASAOKI**

*Chairperson, Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC)*

Professor Ohashi Masaaki has a vast amount of experience working for nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) as well as coordinating with nonprofit organizations (NPOs) in Japan. There are over 40,000 registered NPOs in Japan; however, they do not have a central network, whereas NGOs in Japan, most of which are legally registered as NPOs, have JANIC and other networks. In Japan, the two are uniquely distinct; NGOs mainly work for global issues focusing on development, poverty reduction, environmental issues, human rights, gender, refugees, emergency relief, etc., and NPOs mainly focus on domestic issues. Professor Ohashi talked about the history of both in Japan. In the 1990s, there was an increase in the establishment of NGOs, perhaps because the Japanese government started to give them some financial support. JANIC is the largest NGO network, with over 97 members out of roughly 500 NGOs. Its three pillars are as follows: research and advocacy on global issues and overseas development aid policies; promotion of understanding of NGOs and cooperation with other sectors; and capacity-building and the strengthening of social responsibility.

Professor Ohashi gave a general overview and presented facts about the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 2011 in preparation for the fellows' field trip to areas affected by the earthquake in the Tohoku (northeastern) region. At a magnitude of 9.0  $M_w$ , it was the fifth most powerful earthquake to date. The tsunami caused by the earthquake brought the total number of dead and missing to about 16,000 people. Immediately after the earthquake, about 470,000 people fled or relocated. As of September 9, 2013, there are still about 286,000 evacuees, and more than half of them are from Fukushima, where the Daiichi nuclear power plant accident happened. An age and gender breakdown of deaths shows that the majority of people who died on the March 11 were over 60 years old or disabled. In addition, it is important to note that the size and magnitude of an earthquake does not necessarily correspond with the number of deaths. The 2010 earthquake in Haiti had a magnitude of 7.0, but over 300,000 people died. This shows that the levels of preparedness and development really do matter. Professor Ohashi showed many photographs of the earthquake and tsunami disaster-stricken areas.

Immediately after the earthquake, emergency evacuation centers were set up mostly in school gymnasiums, where evacuees had to stay up to four months, after which they moved to temporary housing. Two and a half years later, most of the evacuees are still living in such simple housing. Building new houses for them is a long process, because depending on local governments, new residential areas must be constructed at least 30 meters above sea level based on locally acceptable plans. Finding a flat area to do this is difficult. In addition, local governments must buy numerous plots in coastal areas from the victims

first, and then they must buy new land from the government to build their houses on. Otherwise, they will shift to newly constructed apartments in the new areas by local governments. Most elderly people have decided to stay on, but many young people have moved away, so the earthquake has accelerated the population loss of Fukushima and other affected areas.

Professor Ohashi briefly talked about the Japanese government's response to the disaster, which is related to the NGO response. Because of the scale of the disaster, the central government coordinated the response with local social welfare councils, which opened Disaster Volunteer Centers (DVCs) to send volunteers for helping affected residents in each municipality. As a result of the 1995 Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake and the lack of coordination among volunteer groups, which did more harm than good, this was the first time that municipal governments set up these DVCs in order to accept external volunteers.

Many NGOs responded within 72 hours or so. They helped with the distribution of emergency goods, mostly nonfood items, while the government and Self-Defense Forces (SDF) responded with food. There were also many NPOs that helped, but NGOs were able to respond fairly quickly, despite the fact that their normal mission is to help the destitute in other countries. This was possible because they had expertise in humanitarian aid and had appropriate financial resources at hand. There are several reasons for this, but it is partly because JANIC has an agreement with its members that money from donations for emergency disaster recovery can only be used for that purpose, so many NGOs have certain amount of leftover money that can be used in emergencies such as the March 11. That is why NGOs could act faster than NPOs, which are, in general, smaller and have more limited staff than NGOs. The NGO activities that followed the March 11 incident included legal counsel, cleaning, child care, photograph restoration, helping people shift to temporary housing, cash for work programs, and so on.

There are some areas in which Japanese NGOs face challenges in preparing for future disasters such as March 11. First, NGOs need to create a much bigger reserve fund. They also need to train staff up to international standards for humanitarian assistance. On the other hand, NPOs have been able to build up knowledge- and experience-sharing activities after the Hanshin Earthquake in 1995, when there were many problems and mistakes made. After March 11, there were times when NGOs and NPOs came into conflict with each other, but it is important to understand and recognize the differences so that the two groups can overcome problems and collaborate in the future. There also needs to be more coordination among organizations and networks across other sectors such as private companies, the SDF, and local governments. Professor Ohashi also hopes that there will be official recognition of NGO access to government warehouses for the purpose of distribution of goods in emergencies.

The nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant is still ongoing, and Professor Ohashi gave an overview of the current status of the affected areas. One major issue is the government-set limit of the amount of acceptable radiation exposure for citizens, which is now up to 20 millisieverts (mSv) per year. Before the accident, it was 1 mSv, which is also the international standard. The real risks of low-level yet long-term exposure to radiation are still unknown, so it is better to minimize it as much as possible. Citizens of Fukushima are very frustrated by the government's decisions about radiation-controlled areas.

Japan, as well as China and Korea, are all exporting nuclear power stations and their technology to other Asian nations, such as Bangladesh and India. Japan itself takes many preventive measures with its own power stations, but it could not prevent an accident like Fukushima from occurring. It is possible that the next nuclear disaster will happen in one of the fellows' countries, so it is important to learn from the experiences and problems Japan is facing now. Currently, there is no international organization officially dealing with the problems of man-made disasters. There are immediate responses by the United States and international organizations, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) looks after technical issues, but there is nothing that deals with industrial-caused disasters such as the recent garment factory collapse in Savar of Bangladesh, or the food contamination problems in China. In conclusion, since most companies are becoming multinational, and they are the ones causing many of the problems, international society needs to establish professional organizations to monitor these kinds of disasters and take care of victims in order to reduce their impact.

## ***Field Trips***

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## Field Trip to Hokuriku and Kansai

October 7–11, 2013

From October 7 to 11, the Fellows went as a group on a five-day trip to Toyama and the Kansai area, organized around their suggestions and common interests. The purpose of this field trip was to supplement the lectures and seminars that the Fellows attended throughout the two-month program and to provide them with an opportunity to learn more about Japan's history and culture. The Fellows visited various places and met people who have impacted Japan's historical and social communities.

### DAY 1: NANTO CITY, TOYAMA PREFECTURE (OCTOBER 7)

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After having a bento lunch made with local foods, Mr. Kawamori Junichi of the Eco-village Promotion Section gave a briefing on the framework of developing Nanto as an eco-village. The Eco-village Promotion Section was created in April 2013 to promote Nanto's eco-village concept. Mr. Kawamori explained that other countries have initiatives to create eco-villages that include self-sufficiency and sustainability—both aspects that are not unique to the Nanto eco-village project. What distinguishes Nanto is that they are aiming to promote the city's history, culture, traditional folk songs, and crafts within the community as well as maintaining symbiosis with nature.

There are several reasons why the eco-village concept became an attractive idea for Nanto. After the failure of Lehman Brothers (known as the *Lehman shock* in Japan) in 2008 and the decline of the Japanese economy, people began to realize that in Japan's postwar consumerist society, people have forgotten about what is most important. In addition, after the disaster of March 11, 2011, there was much human suffering, and people came to realize that electricity and natural resources are precious. There has also been a decline in human relationships over the past decades, and the suicide rate of 30,000 per year is a telling sign. People have come to ask themselves, "What kind of life is this?" The idea behind the Nanto eco-village concept is one that promotes community and a way of life where children can feel secure and where there is food and energy self-sufficiency.

Mr. Kawamori went into detail about Nanto's mission policies as follows: building sustainable clean energies, tying agriculture with tourism, nursing and welfare enhancements, education for children that promotes pride in their community, and solving the challenges of social entrepreneurs. Nanto would also like to attract more young people. There is a hope that young people have a nostalgic feeling for the countryside somewhere in their hearts and that this different way of life will appeal to them. The village also plans to set up a *konkatsu* (marriage support) department to help young people find spouses in the area. Nanto also ranks highly as a comfortable place to live. The completion of the Hokuriku bullet train in 2015 will hopefully attract more visitors to Nanto and surrounding areas.

After the presentation, the Fellows and members of the Eco-village Promotion Section went to visit an eco-village-planned site. There was a stop at the site where wood chips and natural fertilizer is processed.

The next stop was the district of Johana, where the group stopped briefly at the Zentokuji temple and walked through the streets to the Matsui silk-weaving factory. Ms. Matsui Noriko gave a tour. The factory has a 400-year-old history, and at present, it is the only silk-weaving company in Johana that is operational every day, but because of a flood in 2008, only half of the factory is operational. It has survived due to the fact that the company does not deal in kimono, but only in textiles and interiors. The silk itself used to be produced in Japan with silkworms, but now it is too expensive to produce in Japan, and the silk threads are imported from China and Brazil. The Fellows were able to walk through the factory floor past whirring silk-weaving machines. Next, at the Johana Hikiyama Hall, Mr. Ohara Yoshimoto explained the significance of the Hikiyama Festival and its decorative, historical floats adorned with lanterns. He also introduced the history of a lacquering technique called *makie*, a technique that has been passed down through the generations of his family.

Finally, at the P.A. (Progressive Animation) Works animation studio, Mr. Kikuchi Nobuhiro, Executive Managing Director, gave a briefing on the company and an initiative as part of Nanto's tourism strategy called area-limited anime. Drawing and digital photography takes place at the head office, while production and direction takes place in Tokyo. The anime television series of P.A. Works are broadcast on national TV, but the stories take place in localities in Toyama Prefecture, where Nanto is located, and the surrounding areas of Ishikawa and Fukui. One such anime series set against the backdrop of a small *onsen* (hot spring) town of Nishigishi, just outside of Kanazawa, called *Hanasaku Iroha*, became extremely popular, and fans began visiting the actual locations of the scenes in the anime. In the story, there was a festival, and after seeing the drama of the festival played out in *Hanasaku Iroha*, fans requested that a real festival be held based on the anime. P.A. Works is now involved in planning the festival every year to help fans reproduce what they saw in the anime, and tens of thousands of people attend every year. In addition, P.A. Works produces something called area-limited anime, entitled *Koitabi*. Sightseeing spots in Nanto and surrounding areas are used as a backdrop for interconnected stories, which can only be viewed when people come to Nanto, either on a cell phone, smart phone, or on a computer. The locations are quite far away from each other but are part of a single story integrated seamlessly into one world. This has undeniably gotten anime addicts excited about Nanto and they have spread their enthusiasm by communicating with each other through social networking sites. After the discussion with Mr. Kikuchi, the Fellows took a tour of the animation studio and were able to see illustrators working on their drawings.

## **DAY 2: NANTO CITY, TOYAMA PREFECTURE (OCTOBER 8)**\_\_\_\_\_

The second day began with a seminar entitled “The Spiritual Culture and Virtue of Nanto” at Daitokuji temple by the temple master, Mr. Ota Hiroshi. At the entrance to the temple, there is a large wooden gate. It was originally the gate of a farmhouse in Saitama Prefecture and was set to be destroyed when plans of road construction were drawn out. Mr. Ota had the gate moved to Toyama and set up in front of Daitokuji temple.

The wooden gate is a building in and of itself and houses a treasure trove of 500-year-old scrolls painted with the figure of Buddha, and folk crafts from Japan and all over the world. In the upstairs portion of the gate, among the displays, was a portrait of Yanagi Soetsu, a leader of the folk craft movement in mid-1920s and 1930s. He promoted the idea of the selfless beauty of everyday objects and works of art found in common people's houses. Nowadays, people in Japan feel that they no longer need these things, but Mr. Ota believes that they are useful, so he collects them.

Inside the temple grounds was an area for practicing *kyudo*, traditional Japanese archery, and the Fellows got to try their hand at holding a bow. According to Mr. Ota, a *kyudo* bow is not designed for battle. It is exceptionally long, about 2 meters in length, and is asymmetric—the bottom part comprises only one third of the bow. These bows have actually been used to fight in the past, for instance, against the invasion of Kublai Khan, but they did not fare well against the Chinese bows whose arrows flew twice as fast. There is a saying that one must pull the arrow with a pure heart; otherwise, it will not fly straight.

Inside the temple, Mr. Ota showed a video about the history of Nanto and its connection to the town of Minamisoma, one of the hardest hit towns by the tsunami caused by the March 11 earthquake. In 1783, a famine occurred in the Nanto region and thousands of people died. The Soma-Nakamura clan decided to leave and move to the area of Fukushima now called Minamisoma. Two hundred years after the famine, disaster struck again, and the tsunami destroyed the homes and temples of the people who had settled there from Nanto. Since then, groups of people from Nanto have traveled to Fukushima to volunteer, and Minamisoma and Nanto City have joined hands to address the issues that face them. The video concluded with the reflection that disasters are important teachings to remember one's ancestors. Finally, Mr. Ota explained the Japanese concept of *dotoku*, which means virtue arising from the land, or the teaching of the people of the land.

In the afternoon, the Fellows took a tour of the historic village of Gokayama, which became a World Heritage site in 1995. The style of the peaked, thatched-roof houses is called *gassho-zukuri*, which resembles two hands pressed together in prayer. The steepness of the roofs makes it easier to shovel off the snow that accumulates during the long winters, and these houses are made entirely of wood and logs joined together with thick ropes of straw—no nails or other metal are used. In the olden days, people would keep silkworm nurseries in the attic and make niter for gunpowder. *Gassho-zukuri* homes were built to be functional workplaces throughout the year. After visiting some homes in the Ainokura area of Gokayama, the Fellows moved to the Gokayama Washi-no-Sato (Washi Paper studio) to experience making traditional handmade paper called *washi*.

The evening brought the Fellows to the home of Mr. Minoguchi Kiyoshi, Head of his organic farm Chisouken LLC, where there was a discussion with local farmers and business persons on the themes of sustainable society and Nanto City's approach toward this. Mr. Minoguchi presented the information about his system of making organic fertilizer and pesticide, companion planting, recycling, green energy, and how his farm is involved with the community. He hosts organic *miso* paste-making classes, *mochitsuki*, which is a rice-pounding event where rice cakes are made, and *dotoku* cooking classes. The night ended with a

delightful dinner of home-cooked rice and vegetables harvested on that day along with some local fish and *sake*.

### **DAY 3: SEMINAR ON THE KOREAN RESIDENTS IN JAPAN (OCTOBER 9)**

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The Fellows traveled to Osaka and met Professor Lee Soo Im at the Umeda campus of Ryukoku University where she gave a lecture on Korean residents in Japan. Professor Lee was an ALFP Fellow in 2008. She began by saying that to understand what being a foreigner, or “someone from the outside,” means we have to go back to the constitution. The Japanese constitution was created after World War II by the Americans during the occupation. Originally, as it was written in English, the constitution said that the rights of all natural people in Japan had to be protected. In Japanese, “all natural people” was translated to *shizen-jin*. As a result, under this constitution, all ethnic Koreans in Japan at that time became Japanese citizens. After the Korean War broke out, however, the American army became busy and needed to concentrate its efforts on Korea, and so the San Francisco Peace Treaty was signed in 1952 ending the American occupation and giving autonomy back to Japan. Because of what was going on in Korea, some people in the Japanese government were wary of the ethnic Koreans in Japan and wanted them to leave. A small group of government officials, without going through the Japanese diet, sent out a letter to all Koreans that said, “you will be liberated,” and thus their Japanese citizenship was removed. These officials in the government changed the wording of the constitution from “all natural people” and replaced it with “only Japanese.” This in fact violated international law, because a colonizer does not have the right to decide the citizenship of the colonized. This was the beginning of the plight of foreign residents in Japan.

Japan has always valued homogeneity over multiculturalism and has neglected to see the virtues of multiculturalism until it began to suffer a labor shortage in the 1990s. In the late 80s and 90s, Japan began allowing “backdoor” illegal workers from the Middle East who were given visa waivers to work in jobs involving what are known as the 3 Ks in Japanese—*kitanai* (dirty), *kiken* (dangerous), and *kitsui* (demanding). “Side-door” immigrants who were mostly Japanese-Brazilians were also allowed in. All immigrants were tightly regulated and could be sent back any time. When people in Tokyo complained about Iranians socializing in parks, the government reacted by cutting down on the number of workers it allowed in as well as by deporting many of them. Now, about 100,000 immigrants from Iran remain in Japan. Until recently, the majority of foreigners in Japan were ethnic Koreans, known as *zainichi*. The decline is due to the increase in immigrants of other nationalities to Japan, and the fact that many *Zainichi* Koreans have gone through the naturalization process, which, as Professor Lee went on to say, has been a long, hard-won battle.

Korea was officially colonized by Japan in 1910. At this time, most of the Koreans who came to Japan were the sons of elite families who wanted to be educated in Japan. However, from 1935 to 1940, Japan needed more workers leading up to and during World War II and they were brought against their will; this includes laborers and comfort women. After the war, many Koreans decided to go back to the motherland, but those who were born in Japan and had settled in the country felt compelled to stay a little

longer. About 600,000 remained at that time. In 1965, Japan and South Korea acknowledged each other and began to pacify their relationship. However, this put Koreans in a situation where they had to decide whether they would affiliate themselves with North Korea or South Korea. At that time, North Korea's economic situation seemed a lot better than the South's, and many educated Koreans were attracted to socialist ideas. The Zainichi Koreans who chose to ally with North Korea still remain stateless today and do not have passports. An even bigger tragedy that came from this is that a group of agencies, including Chongryon (The General Association of Korean Residents in Japan), a group that North Korean-oriented people still belong to today, the Japanese Red Cross, and the Japanese government, united together to bring a group of willing Koreans back to the motherland of North Korea. These people believed that they would be able to come back to Japan if they wanted to. About 100,000 were sent to North Korea via Niigata by boat. When the people on the boat saw their destination city, which was completely dark at night (no neon lights), they realized they had been cheated. At the port, many of them refused to get off the ship, but were sent to prison camps and died. The few that survived were heavily discriminated against in North Korea.

Professor Lee's family luckily chose South Korea. Professor Lee told the Fellows her very interesting personal story of being a Zainichi Korean and her struggle to obtain Japanese citizenship. In school, most Zainichi Korean children used Japanese pass-names to blend in and to avoid being bullied and discriminated against. In Professor Lee's case, she was no different. It was at university when she first attempted to get Japanese citizenship, the reason being that she found it extremely difficult to get a job. This began a long and humiliating struggle. When Professor Lee went to the immigration office, the official told her that she could not apply or get an application because she was a woman and not working, so her father should decide and apply for naturalization for her. Her father refused to do this out of pride, so she gave up and went to the United States to study. She got married, started a family, and decided to come back to Japan to raise her child close to her parents. Again, Professor Lee went to the immigration office to apply for Japanese citizenship and was faced with resistance. This time however, she was armed with a pen, paper, and tape recorder. She was able to get an application form but had to prepare many documents, and each time she would put in the application, officials would come back saying that there was some mistake. Professor Lee did not give up, and eventually after a three-year struggle, calling and going back to the immigration office, she got Japanese citizenship. More recently, Professor Lee's father decided that he wanted to become Japanese so that he could experience being able to vote. This time, the process was slightly easier (albeit the family hired lawyers), which shows that there is some underlying change in the immigration system of Japan.

Professor Lee also discussed the kinds of discrimination that Zainichi Koreans have faced over the years, from people of humble backgrounds to high-profile politicians in Japan. She also pointed out the successes of Korean entrepreneurs, using examples from the kimono industry and pachinko. Considering the small percentage of the Zainichi Korean population in Japan compared to the overall population, the number of successful Korean entrepreneurs is very high. This shows the quintessential spirit of survival that Koreans have had.

## **DAY 4: ASHIYA GAKUEN JUNIOR & SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL AND TAKATORI COMMUNITY CENTER, HYOGO PREFECTURE (OCTOBER 10)** \_\_\_\_\_

The morning was spent at the Ashiya Gakuen Junior and Senior High School, which was coordinated by ALFP 2004 Fellow, Professor Kusago Takayoshi. The Fellows met with the principal, vice principal, and English teacher, Ms. Iwami Mika. The school was founded in April 2003 to meet the needs of the diverse and multicultural communities of the area. The government of Hyogo realized that there were many foreign students in the prefecture and that many of these students had difficulty passing high school entrance exams. The school is unique in that it is a publicly funded international school. Each year, the school enrolls 80 new students who must fall into three categories: foreign children, returnees (Japanese children who have lived abroad for one year or longer and who have returned to Japan), and children who have a strong desire to enter the school with the aim of living or studying abroad in the future. Many foreign children and returnees have problems in regular schools, either with language or being bullied, and this school provides a safe, multicultural environment where students feel free to talk about their unique experiences and backgrounds. There is also support by foreign language translators for students whose Japanese is not up to the level needed to participate in classes. It also provides tutorials, Japanese language instruction, and catch-up classes in math. In addition to the required curriculum set by the Japanese government, the school has periods of integrated study where students can learn new languages from their peers and can become leaders in their specialized subjects. One drawback to being a public school is that the budget is controlled by the government, and the allocation of funds is strict. The school cannot teach advanced courses like private schools can.

After learning about the basic policies and curriculum and taking a tour of the school, the Fellows sat in a classroom and interacted with a group of high school students. There were several returnees who had lived in places such as the United States, Ecuador, Malaysia, and Australia. They discussed their lives as students in Japan, and the Fellows exchanged the knowledge with students about their respective countries' educational systems as well as current affairs.

In the afternoon, the Fellows attended a briefing at the Takatori Community Center by Mr. Murakami Keitaro. The Takatori Community Center (TCC) is a nonprofit organization center and community radio station that houses a network of nine different organizations. Each of these individual NPOs and NGOs are independent from each other, but the TCC operates as a single network. Mr. Murakami talked about the history of the TCC and how it was formed. The current building stands on the site of a Catholic church that was destroyed on January 17, 1995, when the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake struck Kobe and surrounding areas. When the Father of the church saw how much the earthquake had destroyed the area, he wanted to do something to reconstruct the community. Volunteers poured in from everywhere, and he gave them the space where the church had stood to use as a place to organize goods and house the volunteers, and soon after it was registered as a volunteer facility. At that time, there were 80,000 foreign residents affected by the earthquake and of those 30,000 had to deal with a language barrier. The two biggest volunteer groups were made up of ethnic Koreans and Vietnamese. Many people did not know where they could go for help or get shelter, so Korean and Vietnamese groups came together to broadcast radio

programs in their native languages. The radio station FMYY was established, and although it did not have a community broadcasting license, authorities took a flexible attitude during that time.

In 2003, the radio station was reorganized and reconstructed to promote multiculturalism within the community and to provide multilingual disaster information and information useful for daily life. At the TCC, one of the main goals is something called *machizukuri*, or building a community with respect for diversity, breaking down barriers and being sensitive to minorities. There are many activities that promote these things and radio programs in Portuguese, Korean, English, and Okinawan languages among many others. The groups which make up the TCC include organizations that provide services and activities for children, community development, persons with disabilities, women's empowerment, Vietnamese, and IT support.

## **DAY 5: AIRIN DISTRICT, OSAKA PREFECTURE (OCTOBER 11)** \_\_\_\_\_

In the morning, the Fellows visited the Airin district in Kamagasaki, Osaka, with Mr. Yamada Minoru, Chairman of the NPO Kamagasaki Shien Kiko. Kamagasaki is an area where many victims of World War II went after the war and set up temporary shanty housing, after which it became a recruitment site for day laborers in the 1960s. In 1961, the government mandated the widening of streets and the reconstruction of buildings. Many of the cheap lodgings became multistoried buildings. Japan experienced rapid economic growth in the 1960s, and a great number of farmworkers and workers from mining areas moved to Kamagasaki. Most of the jobs available were in construction, manufacturing, and transportation. Leading up to the 1970 World's Fair in Osaka, day laborers came from Tottori, Shimane, and all over the country. By the 1980s, the Airin district had become the biggest base for day laborers in the country, and the economic cycle put pressure on the Japanese parliament to allow the continued use of these "disposable" workers, who were essentially behind the development of the country and the Japanese economy. Kamagasaki had other problems though—gangster activity, drugs, and gangsters' collusion with the police. In 1990, riots erupted in protest against these activities, and also as a general protest. Many people were angry at the fact that the rest of Japan was living it up in luxury in the bubble economy. After the late 1980s, the bubble burst and, along with the aging population of Kamagasaki, more workers began to arrive from other countries and the area became a part of the international labor market. The area of Kamagasaki today is in decline, and the number of day laborers has gone down from its peak at about 10,000 per day to about 1,400 per day.

Mr. Yamada took the Fellows to the site of the Airin recruitment center, a large open building constructed in the 1970s. Here, people can look for work advertised in an upstairs employment securement office. People who do not find work can rest in the building during the day, but it closes at 6:00 p.m. and everyone must be out by then. Since many of these workers do not have permanent homes, it is difficult to find shelter when they do not have any work. Mr. Yamada also runs a night shelter. If workers get a numbered ticket from the labor center before 5:20 p.m., they can go to the shelter and stay for free. According to police reports, an average of 1,200 people used to sleep on the street at night in the Kamagasaki area. Nowadays, about 400 people take advantage of the night shelter and about 130 people sleep on the streets. Kamagasaki Shien Kiko is constructing a new shelter that will house about 600 people.

The NPO also provides work support, such as the use of cell phones, bikes, and clothes and ties for interviews. There is also recycling work, and another activity Shien Kiko is involved in is restoring old bicycles and selling or renting them out. The tour concluded at a restaurant where the Fellows asked questions of Mr. Yamada and heard more about his life story.

The last stop on the field trip was at the headquarters of the Breaker Project, a small shop-like building not far from the Kamagasaki area in Osaka. The director, Ms. Amenomori Nov, gave a presentation. The Breaker Project started in 2003, and its goal is to connect art to people in their daily lives. The idea is to transmit the message that art is not just some kind of superior entity that can only be found in galleries or museums, but that it is also a part of the real world. The activities of the Breaker Project are rooted in the community. Ms. Amenomori described some of the ways her organization gains access into the community, by using empty spaces, houses, and shopping malls as venues, or using leftover hangers from the dry cleaners to make art, for example. The Breaker Project also hosts workshops. The organization also collects used, unwanted knitwear to be unraveled. People can volunteer to come to the Breaker Project headquarters to unravel the yarn, and while doing this they talk about their own lives and discuss their personal histories, which is another way of connecting people within the community.

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## Field Trip to Tohoku

October 15–16, 2013

From October 15 to 16, the Fellows toured the Tohoku region and visited areas affected by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. They visited Nihonmatsu in Fukushima Prefecture where they talked with organic farmers, Ishinomaki in Miyagi prefecture, which was devastated by the tsunami, and Kesenuma, a port city located in the northeast of Miyagi. Their aim was to understand the endeavors of farmers dealing with the Fukushima nuclear power plant disaster, radiation monitoring, and organic farming and to understand the challenges facing communities recovering from the tsunami.

### **DAY 1: NIHONMATSU, FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE (OCTOBER 15)**\_\_\_\_\_

The first stop of the Tohoku tour was at the Towa Michino Eki (roadside station) in Nihonmatsu, which is not only a rest area alongside the highway, but also an organic farmers' market featuring local specialties. It is run by a nonprofit organization, Yuki no Sato, under a government contract that works to promote community development. At the market, the Fellows talked with Mr. Ebisawa, who explained how radioactivity is monitored and the labeling system for organic produce grown in the area. From the beginning, Yuki no Sato focused on promoting high-quality organic produce, and five self-imposed commitments have been upheld, which include organic inspection of products, a minimum of 50% use of organic fertilizer (although most use 90%), the documentation of cultivation history, a low rate of nitrate ion residue, and the use of natural growing processes. All produce has a label that certifies the produce as organic based on these criteria. After the nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi plant, a sixth criterion was added, that of the monitoring of radiation levels of all produce and rice grown in the area. Since April 2012, the government-set allowable amount of radiation detected is 100 becquerels; however, Yuki no Sato has a limit of 50 becquerels to account for any margin of error. Most of the produce, however, has shown measurements of around 10 becquerels, which is the same amount found in produce from Hokkaido. One would think that vegetables and fruits grown in Towa, being only 45 kilometers from the Fukushima Daiichi plant, would have higher levels of radiation, but farmers there have been practicing methods that prevent radioactive cesium from being absorbed by plants. Mr. Ebisawa showed the Fellows the radiation monitoring equipment housed in a measurement chamber at the roadside station. This equipment was donated shortly after the disaster and was initially used to test food in order to reassure farmers in the area so that they can give the vegetables and rice grown in their own fields to their children and grandchildren. Before getting the measurement equipment, many people avoided eating homegrown produce out of concern for radiation contamination and bought it from the supermarket instead. This created divisions within families and among members of the community. Currently, the market has three testing machines—one from Belarus and two made in Japan. A sample of every type of produce from each field is tested. It takes 30 minutes to run a test on a sample of 1 liter, so 20 samples can be tested in a day. Although the Japanese government does its own testing, with the exception of rice, it only tests one

sample of each product type from each municipality. This was not enough to reassure the people of Towa, which is why they got their own machines.

Fellows then moved to a stall with Mr. Sugeno Seiji, Head of the Fukushima Organic Agriculture Network (FOAN). Before the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011, the FOAN was established to help develop organic farming in whole of Fukushima Prefecture with the collaboration of famers, researchers, consumers, and engineers. At the stall, which was selling mulberry products, Mr. Sugeno explained that mulberry trees were once predominant in the area and were grown for silk production. A type of silkworm that feasts solely on mulberry tree leaves was cultivated, and silk had once been a thriving industry in the area, but after Japan began importing cheaper silk from China, it was no longer viable. In order to revive the village forest, an agricultural network was established to bring back the mulberry landscape and to support the cultivation of organic mulberry trees. Research shows that mulberries have a variety of health benefits, such as the ability to reduce blood sugar and provide many essential vitamins and minerals. At the stall, mulberry tea, powder, liquor, and jam were for sale.

The Fellows continued their discussion about the revival of the local economy and radiation monitoring with Mr. Sugeno and Mr. Muto over lunch at Muto's Inn. Mr. Muto, the owner of the Inn and also the Vice Chairman of Yuki no Sato, spoke about the NPO's creation and its current activities. Yuki no Sato was established eight years ago by seven volunteers, including Mr. Sugeno, who wanted to revitalize the community in response to the aging population crisis. Population decline has had a huge economic impact on rural regions, and the founders of Yuki no Sato wanted to do something about it. They first attempted to attract the textile industry, but because of globalization, the manufacturing industry is more focused on countries where they can get cheap labor, so that idea failed. After that, they decided to concentrate on the strengths of Towa, one of which is its village forest. Revitalization could only happen if they stuck to their own ways of doing things. The founders started the development of manure as a product to create high-quality soil and built a manure center, eventually producing organic vegetables not only for their community, but to sell to outside areas also. Today, Yuki no Sato has 260 members and has a JPY 200 million production value. Even after the earthquake, the NPO did not lose its bearings. It is now acting as a window into the community and is collaborating with professors from local universities studying the effects and impact of radiation.

On another note, Mr. Muto said that the rate of the aging population will not change regardless of the aforementioned revitalization activities, so Yuki no Sato is also trying to encourage young people who intend to become farmers to move to Towa in order to further the goals of environmental protection and economic prosperity. Mr. Muto is also the Chairman of the Green Tourism group, which bridges the activities of Yuki no Sato with groups in Tokyo. He was the first person to open a restaurant and farm inn. Now there are 14 such inns in Towa, and in 2013, over 1,000 people came to stay in them. Another 1,000 have come just to tour the farms of the area. People from all walks of life have come to experience the countryside and farm life, including ambassadors, foreign students, and representatives from the United Nations University. This increase in visitors is undoubtedly due to the fact that people would like to support the area after it was affected by the March 2011 disaster.

Mr. Sugeno then took the reigns to discuss in more detail the effects of the nuclear disaster and radiation on the community in Towa. Mr. Muto's Inn is only 48 kilometers from Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant and about a 20-minute drive from the mandatory evacuation area. The air radiation measurement devices that they currently use are linked to a car's GPS, so it measures the level of radiation every second while driving. The outside level of radiation is about 0.23 microsieverts; indoors, it is much less. However, in the mountainside, it can go beyond 0.5 microsieverts. When converted to one year, that would be about 1 millisievert, the limit of exposure set by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)—the Japanese government's allowable limit is higher. The reason radiation is higher in the mountains is that nothing is being done to clean up the radiation. After two and a half years, detailed studies have not been conducted on the radioactivity of mountains and rivers, which in Mr. Sugeno's view should be the responsibility of Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO) or the government. This is why he has been working with academic researchers from various universities. Dead leaves that were on the ground when the nuclear disaster occurred are now starting to grow fungi, and these fungi are just now starting to absorb cesium. It is also impossible to eat mountain vegetables or bamboo shoots from the area. On the other hand, because of farmers' innovative cultivation methods, increased radiation in crops is almost undetectable. They have found that when there is high content of organic matter in the soil, cesium does not get transferred to the plants. They have also been practicing deep plowing with tractors, overturning the soil, rather than removing the topsoil and disposing it somewhere, which would be too costly and problematic. Deep plowing and adding organic matter and manure have proven to be most effective in controlling radiation.

All of the rice sold in Japan from Fukushima Prefecture is scanned for radiation before being sent to the market. Of all the bags of rice scanned in 2012, 99.8% were at 25 becquerels or less of radioactive cesium per kilogram. Only 71 bags, or 0.0007%, exceeded the safety limit.<sup>1</sup> Yet, Fukushima rice is still sold at a much cheaper price in Tokyo than the rice from other places. One argument by the supermarkets for this is that farmers from Fukushima can get compensation. However, farmers only get compensated for their losses, which they have to report by filing to the government. In order to help stop the prices of Fukushima products from collapsing, Mr. Sugeno and Mr. Muto believe it is important to promote the Green Tourism farm visits so that people can get to know each other, and perhaps consumers will become less wary. In Towa, farmers continue to test their own produce, and so far, except for the three months directly following the disaster, they have not tested and found anything above the safety level. They still continue their vigorous testing in order to reassure consumers and cannot rule out the possibility that groundwater coming from the mountains might increase radiation levels. On the other hand, fruit-bearing trees have higher levels of radiation for various reasons. The bark that was exposed to the fallout two and a half years ago is now growing inside the trees and could eventually be transposed to the fruit. Dried fruits, such as plum, have to be tested both fresh and dry, because when the moisture is taken out, radiation becomes more concentrated. These are the problems that farmers and the community must face. Ironically, Japanese people have become so hypersensitive about radiation that they are forgetting

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<sup>1</sup> [http://fukushimaontheglobe.com/the\\_earthquake\\_and\\_the\\_nuclear\\_accident/3075.html](http://fukushimaontheglobe.com/the_earthquake_and_the_nuclear_accident/3075.html)

about the harmful effects of pesticides and other chemicals. After lunch, the Fellows went to Mr. Sugeno's fields to test some rice paddies.

## **DAY 2: ISHINOMAKI AND KESENNUMA, MIYAGI PREFECTURE (OCTOBER 16)**

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The day started with a lecture by Mr. Takeuchi Hiroyuki, Director Writer, at *Ishinomaki Hibi Shimbun* (Ishinomaki Hibi Newspaper). The 2011 earthquake truly brought home the seriousness of natural disasters. In Ishinomaki, 4,000 people died as a direct result of the tsunami or from injuries or sickness that they incurred afterward. The summer of 2013 was especially difficult for the elderly, and their deaths have increased, as well as the number of suicides. At the time of the earthquake, which occurred at 2:46 p.m. and lasted for approximately 3 minutes, after which the tsunami came, no one expected or predicted that it would be the last day of their lives. People were thinking about their day, what they would have for dinner that night, and children were thinking about playing after school. Mr. Takeuchi feels that these people's deaths are in vain if one commits suicide after having survived the disaster, but the fact remains that even after so much time has passed, many people are still anxious, worried, feel despair, and lack vision for the future. The challenge now, which will become even greater in the coming days, months, and years, is to figure out how to help and support those people who have lost their bearings.

The Ishinomaki Hibi Newspaper's building stands about 1 kilometer inland from the coast. On March 11, the tsunami surged on the road just outside the building where Mr. Takeuchi, the President, and another staff member remained after the rest of the staff went to higher ground. From the window, he saw people and cars being swept away. He saw one man in his car banging on the windshield and another man with his upper body sticking out through his sunroof, staring out at what was happening, looking very calm and composed. The newspaper's building flooded to about 20 cm, and one of the rotary presses that was placed a little lower into the floor got submerged. The other printing press did not get wet, but they lost all power and electricity. Fortunately, the building did not collapse, but even today, there is still some damage and distortion of the building, and when it rains, there are leaks in the ceiling. The building needs repairs, and although the reconstruction effort is under way, there is a shortage of building materials and labor. Many of the houses in the area had *kawara* roof tiles, a kind of traditional brick roofing, but many roofs remain broken with only a tarp covering. One man who applied to get his roof repaired with these tiles was told he was number 300 on the waiting list. It takes about a week to fix one roof, so this means he will have to wait five years.

Getting back to his story, Mr. Takeuchi described the scene after the tsunami. The newspaper's building was safe, but all around, the plants, trees, and houses were destroyed, and bodies were lying here and there. Because they were journalists, Hibi Newspaper's reporters had to take pictures and report on the damage, but in the back of his mind, Mr. Takeuchi was incredulous, not believing that the disaster had come to this, describing it as a scene from hell. All one could do was pray for the deceased and hit back with a vengeance, not against nature itself, but against the circumstances. That vengeful energy, Mr. Takeuchi said, is needed to go forward; otherwise, you will be crushed. So, Mr. Takeuchi and the others at

Hibi Newspaper decided that they must report, but with no power and the rotary press being out of commission, how could they do this? The day after the disaster, they had a meeting with the President of the newspaper. It was decided that since 2011 was the newspaper's 99th anniversary, they did not want it to be on record that there was a year where they were not able to publish a newspaper before their 100th anniversary. Being reminded of the newspaper's history, they concluded that all they needed was paper and pen to report. The roll paper on the second rotary press had not been damaged, so the journalists cut pieces of paper from it and wrote their reports by hand, distributing them to five evacuation centers and one convenience store to be posted on the wall. One reporter had in fact been engulfed by the tsunami after heading to the coast to take pictures. He ended up holding on to some debris and then coming across an unoccupied boat that he climbed aboard. He was rescued the next day by helicopter and was hospitalized for some time, but he also came back with stories. For six days after the earthquake, reporters continued in this way, though they could only write out a small portion of what they had collected. When the power came back on March 19, the reporters from Hibi Newspaper were able to print 2,000 copies of the daily and distributed the newspaper more widely and to more evacuation centers. People wanted to know where they could get food, water, basic supplies, and medical attention, so for a while, lifeline-related information took up a lot of space in the newspaper. From the third day of the handwritten newspapers, they tried to give priority to positive stories, and by continuing to put out reports, Ishinomaki Hibi Newspaper played a part in the restoration of Ishinomaki.

As far as the reconstruction efforts go, to the outside, it seems like things are going very slowly. Mr. Takeuchi would like the rebuilding process to speed up, but on the other hand, he made a point that the vastness of the area that was damaged must be considered. Three prefectures in Tohoku were affected—Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima. Neighboring prefectures were also affected. The amount of money and building materials needed for reconstruction is unbelievable. To give the Fellows an idea of the scale, Mr. Takeuchi pointed out that in Ishinomaki alone, which has a population of 150,000, an amount of JPY 800 billion has already been allocated by the government, but that is still not enough. Most of this money is going to be spent on infrastructure improvement, such as embankments. Through collecting stories each day after the disaster, Mr. Takeuchi has come to feel that a speedy reconstruction may not necessarily be the foremost important thing. Restoration is about prioritizing, and the first priority is to stabilize the people who were affected and to get them back on their feet by helping them rebuild their homes and find stable jobs. Many people lost their jobs after March 11, and although there is a high demand for jobs in construction and contract jobs in government offices, people would much rather have more stable employment. Another reason that reconstruction seems so slow and that the government is not using the budget effectively is that the process of negotiating with the people and letting them have their say takes time. Many people do not want to move back to where they lived before and want to rebuild homes in safer areas. The government must negotiate with individual households to buy up land and find a new place for them to start again. Many people from Ishinomaki feel frustrated when they hear that the reconstruction of their area is going too slowly, because they are doing what they can, but they feel they are being rushed. The efforts that are currently under way are not visible to the outside.

Two and a half years after the disaster, there still seems to be a lot of unease in the community. Initially, Mr. Takeuchi thought that as time passed, people would be able to pull themselves together and become stronger, but instability and insecurity have made people more annoyed. There is a saying in Japanese that good words are vitamins for the heart, and so the job now of Ishinomaki Hibi Newspaper is to try to deliver positive messages to the people.

The last stop of the Tohoku trip was at Usufuku Honten, where the Fellows heard a lecture by Mr. Usui Sotaro, President of the company. Usufuku Honten is a fishing company based in Kesenuma City in Miyagi Prefecture, which was severely damaged by the earthquake and tsunami, and subsequent fires caused by spilt fuel from the town's fishing fleet. Mr. Usui is the fifth generation owner of Usufuku Honten, which began its business as a fish wholesaler, but during his father's time, the company began deep sea longline tuna fishing. Mr. Usui owns seven longline fishing vessels, three of them that sail in the waters of Japan and Bali, three from the main port of South Africa, and one in the Canary Islands. Longline fishing consists of a 150 kilometer main line with thousands of baited branch lines tied to it cast every day. In the past, ships stayed at sea for 10 months, but because of recent falling prices, ships stay out between 13 to 15 months to make up the difference. The market for tuna caught by Usufuku Honten's ships is 100% Japanese.

In order to deter overfishing, the number of long-liners on the ocean and the number of fish caught is currently restricted worldwide by multinational organizations. In addition, all tuna caught by Japanese companies is strictly labeled. The quotas for Southern Blue fin tuna and other types of fish continue to be a hot button issue, though, and countries continue to accuse each other of going over the limits. Japan is the biggest consumer of tuna in the world, and 90% of the catches by other countries, such as Australia and China, are sold to Japan. There is the widespread perception that because of this mass consumption in Japan, tuna will soon disappear from the oceans. Mr. Usui said that although Japan is the biggest consumer, cutting down on this consumption should start from the source. He insisted that Japan is complying with the regulations and wishes to be an exemplary model for other countries, and the fact that they have been in the fishing industry for over 100 years and want to continue for many more is an incentive to be sustainable.

Mr. Usui discussed his experience after the earthquake and the challenges facing Kesenuma in its aftermath. His company's original building, office, and warehouse along with his own house and cars were all destroyed by the tsunami. Fortunately, all of the long-liner vessels were off shore at the time. His family and employees of the company were safe, but some of the family members of employees were lost. Mr. Usui said that there are three important things he learned from the disaster. One is the importance of energy. The day after March 11, there was no electricity or running water, and for about two weeks, people used candles in the dark, but they mostly went to bed at sunset and got up at sunrise. Food is also very important. On the first day in the evacuation center, everyone got one ball of rice. On the second day, people decided to make porridge, so the rice balls that had been distributed were collected and added to a pot of boiling water with some vegetables. Mr. Usui commented that he lost 15 kg during that time but

gained back 18 kg. The third thing he learned from the disaster is the importance of human connections. Japan has become a very economy-driven society, and people do not take time to say hello or to communicate with each other anymore. Building up networks is very important, and in times of disaster, people must rely on each other.

The economy of Kesennuma has been slow to recover after the earthquake, and Mr. Usui shared his opinions on this subject. The long-standing and problematic policy of the government investing in public works projects and construction is being repeated in this coastal city. The government is planning to build a sea wall of concrete extending all along the coastline as a measure to protect against future tsunamis, and Mr. Usui is against this. The first problem is that the height of the wall will not be as high as the tsunami was on March 11, so if another earthquake of the same scale happens, the wall will not be effective. Second, it will destroy the beautiful scenery and coastline of Kesennuma. Mr. Usui thinks that the city should be rebuilt so that tourists can enjoy fresh seafood at restaurants by the ocean while enjoying a nice view. Rather than waste people's tax money on building a wall, it should be spent on more useful developments. One of the biggest industries in any country is food, and it would be better for the government to get back to basics and invest in the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industries. Another reason for the slow recovery is the cozy relationship that local construction companies have with municipal governments. Many large construction companies in Japan and even China offered to help rebuild the area, but the government refused to make any contracts with them, preferring smaller scale local contractors. This is beneficial for the local companies because it will give them enough work to last 30 years. If the contracts were given to outside companies, the work could be completed in five years.

Mr. Usui would like to help rebuild his community and spends a large chunk of his time volunteering. Through his activities, he communicates with outsiders about Kesennuma and often pays visits to Tokyo and overseas. He has plans to build a marine theme park, where people can not only look at fish in aquariums, but also learn more about the fishing industry and experience what it is like to live on a fishing vessel in a realistic setting.

During the rest of the visit with Mr. Usui, the Fellows were able to hear more about the technicalities of deep sea tuna fishing, how fish are auctioned at Tsukiji fish market, and how the fish are preserved and selected by buyers.

## ***Public Seminars***

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## The Loud Chaos of Indian Politics

SABA NAQVI

Indian politics is like a game of chess. You have to know the players and their values, and unless you understand each party's history and how they are able to form coalitions with other parties, it is nearly impossible to comprehend. Even if you do, it is very complicated and hard to predict who will end up winning regional and national elections.

This is how Saba Naqvi described Indian politics. Throughout India's democratic history, representation has changed drastically. Constitutional reservation—the setting aside of a certain percentage of government jobs and slots in educational institutions for members of historically disadvantaged castes and groups of people—has allowed many members of the Dalit and other lower caste communities to rise to positions of power. This is a great achievement for social change, but there is also controversy surrounding this kind of affirmative action. In addition, with the existence of strong caste-based and regional parties, it is almost impossible for a single political party to rule India. The result is coalition governments, which makes the process of decision making very slow.

Another point is that India's growing economy is now a huge market for investment. Foreign investors are often confused and want to be reassured that the state of affairs in India is stable, but to outsiders, Indian politics seem chaotic and confusing. Many people in India question whether foreign investment is even desired. Even if the government would like to encourage it, many local governments will not allow it. A major problem with the Indian government today is that many regional parties try to win seats in order to get into the parliament, but once they win they use their leverage to pass favorable laws for their own states or get leadership in ministries that are considered “lucrative”—for instance the licensing of airways.

A general election will take place in India in May of 2014. Leading up to this, there has been much speculation by political pundits and journalists about the various outcomes. In the age of coalitions, conventional wisdom would have it that India needs someone who is non-controversial. However, the chief minister of the state of Gujarat, Narendra Modi, has emerged as a potential candidate for prime minister, despite his controversial background. He is a member of the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party), translated as the Indian People's Party, which is the main opposition to the ruling Indian National Congress Party (INC). Soon after his coming to office, there were riots against Muslims in Gujarat in 2002, during which over 2000 Muslims were killed. Modi has been criticized for not doing enough to stop the violence, and even inciting it. He is also seen by many as anti-minority. This is significant because of India's religious diversity, where Muslims make up to 30 to 40 percent of the population. Nevertheless, Modi has become popular in the business community and a section of the middle class as a pro-growth, pro-development leader. Compared to other states, infrastructure has been built up significantly and the state's economy has grown rapidly. As a

result, his popularity ratings have gone up, and he is well liked by many foreign countries' governments, including Japan. Naqvi explained that in the upcoming national election, it has been presumed that Modi will not be able to get backing from regional parties who have mainly Muslim vote banks, even if he were to perform well in the general election. However, the possibility of Modi becoming prime minister should not be entirely ruled out, should there be a collapse of the INC.

How can India solve the current political crises of weak national vision and loss of central authority? Naqvi asks, "Where do we search for the idea of India?" The answer is to start thinking differently about how India should be governed. Perhaps having a national vision and value is not as important as once thought. Nationalism is in fact dangerous, because it excludes others. The role of the government should be to bring social justice and equality. What India needs is to become a confederation of nation-states instead of a nation with many states. Research shows that the bases of national political parties are shrinking. Therefore, India should create legal and political structures that help channel regional forces into positive energy, with a shift from a strong center to federalism, which involves a healthy partnership between the center and the states. People and politicians in India need to reboot their minds; otherwise, the apparent chaos will become too overwhelming.

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## Migration and Transnationalism: Filipino Migrants in Japan

NELIA G. BALGOA

Transnationalism is a direct result of globalization. It is a social movement grown out of the increased interconnectivity between people and the loosening of boundaries between countries. Traditionally, migration was perceived as a directed movement with points of departure and arrival. Migrants were also viewed as people who leave and cut their ties with their countries of origin and then settle and assimilate in their host countries. With increased global transportation and telecommunication technologies, more and more migrants are now moving back and forth and have developed strong transnational ties not only to their host countries, but also to their countries of origin, and in the process, the boundaries between social and geographic space have been blurred. From transnationalism, there are transnational communities, which might be migrant populations living in a country other than their country of origin, but still maintain ties with their home country. This phenomenon illustrates the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. An essential element is the multiplicity of involvement that members of these communities sustain in both their home and host societies.

One example that Nelia G. Balgoa observed during this Asia Leadership Fellow Program is the Filipino community in Yokohama. Yokohama is the sister city of Manila and it celebrated the Philippine Festival, Barrio Fiesta, in Yamashita Park from September 28 to 29 this year. It was an instance where people gathered together and tried to capture “Filipino-ness” while in Japan. Balgoa showed some photos of cultural representation, such as food, religious icons, and women clad in indigenous costumes from the festival. The mayor of Manila, Joseph Estrada, also came to Japan to officially commemorate the festival. In his speech, he recognized the efforts of migrants bringing in remittances to the Philippines, which account for more than 25% of the national budget of the country. What is special about this is that migrants have been able to participate in the political process of their country by staging protests, calling for a one-day stoppage of remittances through social media, which manifestly demanded the attention of the government.

Data shows that Filipino migrants make up the third largest foreign community in Japan along with Brazilians. In 2006, Filipino-Japanese marriages were the most frequent international marriages in Japan. There is also a predominant number of female migrants as compared to male Filipino migrants, usually on a performing arts, musician, entertainer, or domestic worker visa, which accounts for the feminization of Filipino migration to Japan. At the macro level, this feminized flow of migration to Japan has been studied from the perspective of push and pull factors that motivate Filipino women to migrate, such as the high rate of unemployment and unstable economy in the Philippines in the past decades. On the other hand, the declining birthrate and the rejection by Japanese women of traditional roles as wives

and mothers has opened up the Japanese reproductive market to Filipino women. Japan accounts for the largest share of women deployed to work in the entertainment industry. The micro level approach to the study of migration focuses on the personal experiences and decision making of Filipino women migrants. Earlier studies say that these women were forced to migrate in search of a better economic life, and were vulnerable to exploitation; later studies reveal that they migrated because of their own free will, and used it as an opportunity to pursue their own personal goals.

After coming to Japan, Filipino women would at first engage in assimilation strategies in order to fit into Japanese society by refusing to maintain their cultural identity and trying to interact with other cultures as much as possible, especially wives who live in rural areas. This assimilation strategy, however, according to more recent studies, ignores the capacity of a people to develop their own meaningful identity and denies the possibility of having multiple identities. Therefore, the changing image of Filipino migrants in Japan, due to their desire to participate in their home country's society, discredits the notion of assimilation when migrants began creating their own personal and cultural spaces. They tried to achieve a level of integration that enables them to keep their identity while at the same time interacting with Japanese society. Assimilation is very strong in rural areas, because there are no other Filipino migrants there, but when they meet other Filipino migrants, they go beyond assimilation and engage in transnationalism. Transnational activities go beyond traditional activities such as sending remittances back home to their families and there are several other transnational activities between Japan and the Philippines in which migrants engage. One is building of networks, which serve as conduits of information and support, and also facilitates the continued flow of migration, such as old-timers introducing newcomers to jobs. Religious ties are also important, as the Filipino identity is deeply rooted in religion and the Catholic Church is very influential.

What are the significant implications of transnationalism? First, it enables negotiation of identity of migrants and allows them to develop multiple identities. This is where Balgoa's concept of third spaces comes in. When people migrate, they do not simply plunge into assimilation. In dealing with different cultures and multiple identities, there is bound to be tension and conflict. This conflict must be isolated and analyzed—the third space allows this negotiation of identities of migrants. Second, it diminishes the importance of national borders. Multiple identities can be very strong in children of international marriages and notions of what is Japanese or what Filipino can be ever-changing. Therefore, these transnational spaces need to be studied as a potential area of how Filipino migration to Japan, in particular, may be viewed and explored in the future.

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## Can Social Media Democratize China? The Case of Sina Weibo

HE RUNFENG

Social media have become a part of our daily lives. In many places, social media are not only a communication channel, but a platform used to tell the truth, fight against authority, and strive for freedom and democracy. In the fields of sociology, political science, and even in journalism, when people talk about social media they focus on their significance in democratization rather than the benefits of communication. Recent events in Iran and the Arab Spring in the Middle East seem to strongly indicate that people can utilize social media to mobilize the public, to stage demonstrations, and even to topple regimes. Therefore, it is believed that using social media is an effective way to promote democracy, particularly in authoritarian countries, including China, Myanmar, or even North Korea. On the other hand, achieving democracy is not that easy—it is a contingent outcome of long-term conflicts among different social forces. It never depends on one single variable and it never happens suddenly. China is well known for its strict media management policies. Can social media function in democratization anytime and anywhere?

This topic is quite popular in academic fields now, and one can find a lot of literature about social media in China, but the problem is that it is very difficult for writers and researchers to talk to censors and propaganda officials, so many studies only focus on the technological angle rather than a more comprehensive angle. Many studies tend to use traditional frameworks that develop from the traditional media era, so new characteristics of social media and changes in Chinese society are not taken into account. He Runfeng's goal in this research is to give a more comprehensive analysis and provide a more systematic classification of media managing strategies put into effect by the Chinese government. This research could be used to help public intellectuals become aware of the extent to which social media can be used to push democratization in China and other countries.

He raised four basic research questions. The first was how popular and powerful are social media in China currently? About 95% of Internet users in China are registered on social media, 80% of social media users have more than one account, and generally speaking, Internet users spend 40% of their time online using social media. There are several different kinds of Chinese social media, such as Weibo, which is like a hybrid of Twitter and Facebook. However, Weibo is different from these in that it is not the name of a company; it is an application, and any company can launch its own Weibo business. Among the different Weibo operators, Sina Weibo, which started up in 2009, is the most influential. As of October 2013, there are 503 million registered accounts and 46.2 million active users. One hundred million messages are posted on Sina Weibo each day. If the user is a famous or influential social figure, including business and political figures or pop stars, then they become “verified” users or VIPs, and the icon “V” will appear in the account name. The more followers one gets, the higher the status. If a user gets more

than 100,000 followers, they are labeled a “Big V” by the media, and more than 1 million followers gets a user “Super Big V” status. We cannot equate many of the Big Vs or Super Big Vs on Sina Weibo to opinion leaders, because many of them are entertainers or pop idols and so they are excluded from many studies. Real opinion leaders are media professionals, scholars, writers, and business people. It is not difficult to see how social media, especially Weibo, have been one of the most popular channels in China to communicate with others, and Big Vs can lead the public sphere to a certain extent. But can Weibo bring democracy to China, and if yes, then how and to what extent? He gave an example of how public anger fuelled an investigation of a government official who was then tried and convicted in court for corruption and given a 14-year prison sentence. After a serious traffic accident, someone had taken a picture of him standing at the scene of the accident with a big smile on his face and uploaded it to Weibo. People were outraged at the fact he could be smiling after something so serious had happened. Pictures of him wearing different kinds of luxury watches, costing several thousand U.S. dollars, were posted on Sina Weibo, which triggered suspicion about where he was getting so much money. Weibo users continued to search for evidence online and they found photos of him wearing different kinds of luxury glasses as well. These findings and the public anger against him pushed the central government to conduct an investigation, which then led to the official’s conviction.

A basic function of Weibo is that it has allowed users to air grievances at low risk and to unite others to put pressure on the government. However, because of the Chinese government’s tight control, people have run up against difficulties organizing demonstrations and expressing their anger and opinions directly. On the other hand, it does have the potential to allow users to share information in the public sphere and promote the maturity of civil society. Social media have brought much change to China, and people can do things that they were never permitted to do in the traditional media era. It is not a superficial or quantitative change; it is a fundamental change from “no” to “yes.” It is believed that democratization can happen, because the Chinese government is allowing this space for people to let off steam. However, this does not mean that the government will give up its media managing, which is sometimes considered key for the government to maintain its grip on power.

He gave some examples of how the Chinese government controls and manages social media, and individual cases of crackdowns on Big Vs. He also discussed the government’s media managing strategies. The first type is permission control, which means restricting access to Western-like social media including Twitter and Facebook. There are also strict legal constraints for Chinese social media like Weibo. A second strategy is direct censorship, where the government uses its own power and technological resources. A third type of social media management is indirect censorship, which involves advanced and automated blocking systems and the yielding of no search results for sensitive information. Another strategy is containment. One example is the hiring of online commentators to post pro-government comments in order to balance negative voices and divert the public’s attention. Another example is the use of “Internet opinion analysts” employed by different institutions to gather and analyze public opinion and compile reports for decision-makers. This job has been officially included in the list of professions recorded by the government. The findings of the analysts could actually have some positive effect by

helping the government to learn more about the public voice and perhaps help resolve problems. There is also the encouragement of local governments and officials to register their own Weibo accounts, which could weaken Big V or liberals' voices online. In 2013, the government also demanded that traditional media promote their own Weibo businesses—another containment strategy. The last type of social media managing strategy is the strengthening of pressure against liberal opinion leaders in different ways. In many cases, opinion leaders have been persuaded by the government to keep silent. The government passed a law in September 2013 that states that anyone spreading slanderous messages, misinformation, or rumors online through social media could face a jail sentence of up to three years if the message is forwarded more than 500 times or read by others more than 5,000 times.

In conclusion, although the Chinese government has been allowing an unprecedented amount of space on Weibo for freedom of expression, strict media managing policies still exist. Maintaining stability is of top priority for the government, therefore management will become stricter if online liberals are seen as too active or dangerous and the ruling authority is threatened. Results of research done by Gary King of Harvard University show that most of the posts on Weibo criticizing the government are left alone, while posts that are mobilizing are deleted. Based on this analysis, the main target of social media management in China is the content of mobilizing posts. Chinese economic success has resulted in the development of stronger eagerness for freedom and democracy, but simultaneously this eagerness has resulted in stronger resistance by conservatives and the government. What Weibo Big Vs have experienced so far indicates that the government will deepen its control in the public sphere and on social media. Weibo could be the perfect tool for spreading propaganda, as well as a high-tech method for the government to control and monitor public opinion. Compared to its citizens who use Weibo, the government still has more resources and power, which are the basic elements needed for negotiation. Social media can bring some democratization to China but will be difficult to use as a tool to create sweeping democratization. Besides social media, more variables need to be studied, such as political reforms, economic changes, technological developments in the media, and international influence. The question of whether social media can democratize China remains unanswered.

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## Vision and Strategy for an Alternative Growth Model

IMATA KATSUJI

The dominant narrative in today's world is a pro-growth narrative. It is strong in industrialized countries, but even stronger in developing countries, and this discourse is also prevalent in many Asian countries today. Developing countries often make the claim that it is now "their turn" to develop and prosper. The dream of becoming rich is also very strong. The pro-growth narrative is one that is pro-business, promotes economic prosperity under strong, decisive political leadership, and favors economic development over democracy. This creates tensions and stalemates in international debate on sustainable development and fuels the dichotomy of economic development and growth on one hand and democracy and human rights on the other. Throughout the Asia Leadership Fellow Program (ALFP) 2013, the idea of alternative ways of approaching growth and development came up frequently. The alternative growth model does not have an official name as of yet, but it includes democracy *and* development, respect for human rights, social justice, and equality. As to the question of whether there are any specific Asian values that can be the basis for this alternative development model, for now the answer is no, probably not. Human rights and social justice are universal values and should be applicable everywhere. Drawing on his experience working in South Africa, Imata Katsuji said that a typical response by some African governments to the promotion of human rights by civil society organizations (CSOs) was that they are Western values and they should not be imposed on African cultures.

How can we tip the balance between the dominant pro-growth narrative and the alternative? What are the ingredients for change? For one, there needs to be vision. How can the vision of social justice and human rights become compelling enough to override the pro-growth narrative? Imata's response to this question is to start with "anger." Anger is the fuel that provides energy to take action. Looking at the problems of growing inequality, the global financial crisis and its aftermath, and the blatant tax evasion of the rich, Imata asked, how can we not be angry? To highlight just how much inequality is growing throughout the world, Imata presented analysis from the Credit Suisse Research Institute, whose findings show that the richest 1% of the world's population now own almost half of the world's wealth. Figures also show that in the last 20 years, the share of national income going to the most affluent 1% of Americans has doubled. In China, the richest 10% are now taking home nearly 60% of the nation's income, putting Chinese inequality levels almost on par with those of South Africa, which is one of the most unequal countries on earth. Inequality in South Africa, where Imata spent five years, is significantly worse now than at the end of Apartheid. To put things into perspective, a visual representation on how much money has been spent on different areas of the economy, called the "Billion Dollar Gram," was used to illustrate some examples of disproportionate levels of spending. It shows that as of 2009, the total cost of the financial crisis to the U.S. government was \$2.8 trillion, and the money spent on the Iraq war was

estimated to be \$3 trillion, as opposed to “only” \$100 billion in foreign aid given by the world’s major donors. With the kind of money used to save the financial industry, the world could have been saved at least 28 times.

Imata offered up a list of some strategies to help tip the scales in favor of alternative growth. How do we make this change happen? First of all, we need to express our anger and solidarity, create communities and networks, and communicate through different channels. One way to mobilize action could be the use of social media, but this idea should still be expanded upon.

Second is to build a theoretical foundation for the alternative narrative. Political books like *Multitude* and *Commonwealth* by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, which propose human solutions to a broken economic system, have a fan base in Japan as well as other countries. *Development as Freedom* by Amartya Sen is another well-read text. Using these we need to delve more into establishing a more commonly understood theoretical foundation for the alternative narrative.

A third strategy is to acquire a perspective to look at events and to strategize. In the development community, for example, the rights-based approach to development can be used. With this approach, you need to identify actors as “duty-bearers” and “rights-holders,” and the idea is to create a collective influence in order to make the duty-bearers accountable. Usually the relationship is between the state and citizens, but a relationship on the micro level, such as between a mother and child, can also be looked at. We need to work on observing these relationships between two parties in different settings in order to make sure the duty-bearers are held accountable.

Strategizing means avoiding a “grand design,” which may have been a mistake that CSOs have made in the past. Instead, strategizing means consultation, working things out, and understanding the process of how to make things happen—these are extremely important. The key is participation, especially of the marginalized and powerless.

A fourth strategy is identifying leverage and push points for political influencing, and using tools effectively, such as legal instruments, people’s voices, and international norms and standards. Some people say that doing this is not very effective, as in the case with global governance and the United Nations, which may not have any real power especially in the realm of security and economic issues. This may be true, but CSOs can still use this as a way to continuously put pressure on governments, set standards and norms, and hold them accountable in terms of the promises that they make. There need to be more repercussions when governments do not follow through with their promises. It is also important to learn to understand how change happens, the theory of change and scaling, which is how to turn a small impact into a larger one, as well as complexity theory and best practices.

Finally, after going through all these ideas and points of entry, one of the most important items is to tell a story. Tell a story, tell more stories, and tell many more stories. During ALFP 2013, fellows went on field trips and heard many stories of struggles. Two that stood out for Imata were the visit to Kamagasaki in Osaka, where they learned about the history and situation of day laborers in Japan from a local leader, and the trip to Fukushima where fellows learned about the struggles of organic farmers after the March 2011 nuclear disaster. The challenge is communicating these stories more widely—not just for

the consumption of knowledge, but to make them a source of collective action, which can be combined with a sense of anger, to ultimately drive forward a vision and strategy for alternative growth.

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## Myanmar Ethnic Communities' Conflicts and Democracy

LWIN LWIN MON

Lwin Lwin Mon focused on the history of ethnic conflict in Myanmar, current conflicts today, and the country's struggle for democracy. Conflict between ethnic communities is rooted in the way Britain carried out its colonial rule in Myanmar—the infamous “divide-and-rule” strategy. This set different ethnic groups on very separate paths in terms of future economic and political development, and as a result, there were many violent communal clashes at the time when the country was fighting for independence. While Myanmar's (Burma's) national liberation movement was being led by General Aung San, the Karen, Kachin, and Muslim groups stayed loyal to the British. In addition, in the writing of the constitution several ethnic minority groups were overlooked. The rapid exit of the British and General Aung San's assassination in 1947 also meant that many issues were left unresolved. President U Nu, a Burman, became president under the new federal constitution in 1948, but many parties were unhappy with the government. There have been many civil wars since then.

In 1962, General U Ne Win seized power in a military coup and brought an end to a short era of multi-ethnic parliamentary democracy. A popular movement of ethnic minority leaders called the “Federal Seminar” was gaining momentum in the cities, and Shan and Kachin insurgent forces gathered strength. After the coup d'état, many political leaders and activists, including U Nu and Burma's first president, Sao Shwe Thaik, were put in jail without trial. General Ne Win ran an all-out counterinsurgency campaign in the countryside while at the same time trying to establish a centralized, one-party system of government, radiating out from Rangoon (Yangon) into the ethnic minority states. As a result, human rights were violated. The enforced conscription of civilian laborers and forcible relocations were first systematized under General Ne Win. In 1988, a student-led democracy uprising was crushed on September 18 by U Ne Win military loyalists, and the new State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) was created. Political repression continued and thousands of civilians and pro-democracy activists from every ethnic background were arrested. In April 1992, the first SLORC chairman, General Saw Maung, was replaced by General Than Shwe. Although many still remain in jail, over 2,000 political prisoners have since been released and the cease-fire process with armed ethnic minority groups has accelerated. By late 1994, over 15 insurgent groups had agreed to cease-fires or were in direct talks with the government. In 2010, Myanmar became a unitary presidential democratic republic through elections sanctioned by the military government leaders.

After the 1988 uprising, Aung San Suu Kyi came to Myanmar (Burma) and became an opposition leader and chairperson of the National League for Democracy (NLD). In the 1990 general election, the NLD won 59% of the national votes and 81% (392 of 485) of the seats in the parliament; however, the military government did not recognize the election. Aung San Suu Kyi remained under house arrest in

Myanmar for almost 15 out of 21 years from July 20, 1989 until her most recent release on November 13, 2010. She is now one of the world's most prominent political prisoners. She was elected to the lower house of parliament in 2012 and in June 2013, she announced at the World Economic Forum that she plans to run for presidency in Myanmar's 2015 elections. However, in order for her to become president, changes need to be made to the constitution.

Meanwhile, ethnic conflict continues in Myanmar. There are many economic, social, political, and religious issues related to the conflicts. Lwin Lwin Mon discussed the particular case of the state of Kachin at length, describing the history of the conflict and the current state of affairs. Aside from the major towns and railway corridor, Kachin State has been virtually independent from the country since the mid-1960s to 1994, with an economy based on smuggling, jade trade with China, and narcotics. After a Myanmar army offensive in 1994 seized jade mines from the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), the Kachin Independence Army signed a peace agreement with the government of Myanmar on February 24, 1994 that resulted in an end to large-scale fighting, which lasted until June 2011. Since then the conflict has reignited, and in February 2013 the nongovernmental organization (NGO) Kachin Women's Association Thailand reported that the fighting had created over 100,000 refugees and that 364 villages had been wholly or partially abandoned since 2011. Lwin Lwin Mon discussed the many coping strategies for ethnic conflicts from an anthropological point of view.

Nowadays, one important challenge for Myanmar is "nation building" amidst diverse ethnic groups, languages, value systems, worldviews, and identities. Lwin Lwin Mon suggested that the rehabilitation of the rich anthropological heritage of Myanmar is critical for nation building and creating a national identity. Ethnic communities still face problems of poverty and inequality, landlessness, health and nutrition, education, water and sanitation, and unemployment. Peace is the essential starting point on the road to development, democracy, and human rights, but on its own, it will not solve the long-standing problems of Myanmar's ethnic communities. A growing number of inter-governmental agencies, multinational companies, and NGOs are already operating in Myanmar, and at the same time, the new government is seeking to increase international investment, assistance, and cooperation. It is openly inviting NGOs on a tentative basis to work in some of the war-torn areas. The solution to Myanmar's many problems will not come overnight, but there is hope that a careful process of dialogue that includes all concerned parties can create peace and reconciliation.

Throughout this process, the recognition and maintenance of universal standards of human rights remains the key factor for true democracy. Most people in Myanmar have hope and interest in the upcoming 2015 elections and they believe that if Aung San Suu Kyi is elected as the new president, human rights and true democracy can be achieved in the near future.

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## Conflicts of Freedom of Belief: Malaysia

CHIN OY SIM

The Freedom of Belief, guaranteed in Article 11 of the Malaysian constitution, states that every person has the right to profess and practice his or her religion and to propagate it. The outstanding exception to this is proselytizing to Muslims. No one can preach their own religion to Muslims. National unity is of prime importance for the country, but despite this, there are many challenging and controversial issues—faith is an area of contestation, which can sometimes result in conflict.

One example of this is the use of the word “Allah” by non-Muslims who speak Malay, who want to use that word to refer to their own “God,” especially Christians. Its use in Malay Christian bibles is not allowed by the government. The high court of appeals has ruled this unconstitutional, but it has remained unresolved in the court of appeals for over three years.

In recent years, there has also been a conflict between the jurisdiction of the civil court and the Shariah court. Malaysia has a civil, secular court like other countries, but in addition to that, there are special laws for Muslims called Shariah law. It is a separate legal system that deals with matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and child custody. In the last decade, there have arisen many cases where if there is an element of Islam, they are sent to the Shariah court. The Shariah court is only supposed to apply to Muslims, and in a case where there is both a Muslim party and non-Muslim party, it is supposed to be tried in the civil court. In many instances, the civil court has decided that they do not want to be involved in the issue, so it has in essence abdicated its responsibility by sending these cases to the Shariah court.

There are many instances of families being torn apart by the issue of conversion. One case that gained a lot of media attention was that of Lina Joy, who was born a Malay, and by default a Muslim, but converted voluntarily to Christianity and wanted to marry her Christian partner. For ethnically Malay people, under the category “religion,” “Muslim” is automatically written on identity cards. Lina Joy applied for “Muslim” to be removed from her identity card but her application was eventually rejected after being appealed for seven years. Another case involves a woman named Revathi, ethnically Indian, whose parents converted to Islam. Revathi was actually raised as a Hindu by her grandmother, and she tried to get the Shariah court’s approval to renounce Islam. Instead, she was sent to a detention center for rehabilitation for six months, separated from her child and husband and ordered to live with her parents after being released. These cases show that in effect there is no right to freedom of religion in Malaysia.

They also violate the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

There are also cases of conversion to Islam in order to get custody of children in the Shariah court. In the case of Subashini, her husband converted to Islam along with converting their eldest son. When her husband applied to the Shariah court, he was granted a divorce and custody of their son without her consent. Subashini then went to the civil court to contest this. The federal court's decision was that the case was in their jurisdiction; however, only the consent of one parent is needed to convert a child to Islam. Here, we can see that there is a clash of jurisdictions. The court's decision of Subashini's case also violates CEDAW, whereby the wife and husband should have equal rights and responsibilities as parents and the welfare of the child should be paramount.

The constitution states that the Shariah court only has jurisdiction over people who "profess" that Islam is their religion, but the federal constitution has not been upheld in these and many other cases. The legal impact of this is that these people, most of them women, have no access to justice. In such a complex situation, how does Malaysia move ahead? Lawyers in Malaysia are calling for constitutional reform in order to make the laws as clear as possible. There are also calls for law reforms in marriage, divorce, and inheritance. The civil court should be the final arbiter in any dispute as long as one party does not profess his or her religion to be Islam. Furthermore, whether or not a person professes the religion of Islam should be decided by the civil court. Civil society has also been making efforts to raise awareness about these issues, open up debate, and protect the rights of the non-converting spouse and children. A coalition of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) is championing the protection of constitutional rights, including the freedom of belief, and they are also critical of the Islamization process and the judiciary's interpretations. The Joint Action Group for Gender Equality (JAG) is also fighting for law reforms.

In conclusion, the fundamental right to freedom of religion should be upheld regardless of what faith one chooses to profess or not to profess. These contestations do not revolve around Islam per se—Islam is not a "bad" religion—but rather the politicization of Islam. It is used to keep the ruling party in power by using it as one way to show the people that they are "more Islamic than the other party," in order to get more votes. There is a misinterpretation of religion and misuse of religious principles by patriarchal institutions because they favor patriarchal beliefs. Religion, politics, and personal matters have become very interlocked. It seems as though the state is trying to drive a wedge between different ethnic groups and polarize them. To combat this, NGOs are trying to put out a message of unity. In the past in Malaysia, people lived peacefully and there was not the divisiveness that there is today. The cases discussed above are individual cases, and today most people with ordinary lives get along fine. Politics is tricky, but otherwise people move around freely, they are friendly, and there is a cohesive social fabric in Malaysia.