

Center for Sustainable Development Studies

Thoughts on the end of the last December of the Heisei era

*Prof. Ryo Matsumaru
Theme coordinator, researcher*

I am writing this at the end of December of 2018, the last December of the Heisei era comes to a close. The Heisei era began in January 1989 and will end in April 2019. The imperial era is an artificial break in history, yet it somehow symbolizes a generation. Since it is a rare experience to actually know that an era is ending, I would like to reflect on the Heisei era from the perspective of the Center for Sustainable Development Studies ("the Center").

In the autumn of 1989 when the Heisei era began, the Berlin Wall fell. The fall of the Berlin Wall subsequently led to the end of the US-Soviet Cold War, with the Soviet Union being dissolved in 1991. In 1999, a unified currency, the Euro, was introduced, thus establishing the European economic zone. Meanwhile, in 2001, when the Center was established, the 9.11 attacks occurred in the US, and the world continues to be under the threat of terrorism to this day. In Japan, since the burst of the bubble economy in 1991, we have experienced long-term economic stagnation and deflation, referred to as the "Lost 20 Years," with unstable employment and severe job shortages. Although the economy is currently on a recovery trend, not everyone can feel its impact.

In terms of international cooperation by Japan, major changes in this period include Japan's support offered to East European countries that began with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the fall of Japan from its position as the number one provider of ODA in the world, and the emergence of new countries providing support such as South Korea and China. While international aid by Japan has expanded geographically with ODA provided to East European countries and an aid strategy focusing on Africa, Japan fell from its position as the number one provider of ODA in the 2000s, partly due to a limited budget. Japan is now ranked fourth behind the US, the UK, and Germany, in total ODA spending (as of 2015).

In terms of international development and cooperation from a global perspective, global goals such as MDGs and SDGs have been introduced in the second half of the Heisei era. MDGs were implemented from 2000 to 2015 to eradicate severe poverty and starvation with global goals for the development of developing countries. MDGs, all 193 members of the United Nations as well as 23 international organizations agreed, have been succeeded by SDGs,

which aim to achieve the sustainable development of all countries. Various initiatives are being introduced to meet these goals, including those interlinking different goals.

Events that occurred since 2001, the year of the establishment of the Center, include the war in Iraq, the Indian Ocean tsunami, the Lehman Brothers collapse, and the Great East Japan Earthquake. It can be said that there were very few positive events during this period. However, from the context of development, the Center has witnessed, as described above, the MDGs and SDGs, as well as the qualitative and geographical shift of Japan's ODA.

The Center was established in 2001 as a part of the Graduate School of Regional Development Studies (RDS) at Toyo University. At that time, the graduate school of RDS was practically the only graduate school in Japan that mixed technology, economics, sociology, management, and others, covering the field of engineering, including the improvement of living conditions. Since its establishment, the Center has conducted research based on field work, with an interdisciplinary structure that cuts across different research areas, capitalizing on the attributes of the RDS. In this regards, it can be said that the Center was a pioneer of the research in the era that MDGs were introduced and Japan shifted the quality of international aid, also the center was responding to the needs of the times. In fact, our research fields were focused on Asia when the Center was established, while our research fields have been expanded to Africa, East Europe, and Central and South America currently. Also, our research is now being focused on practices how to internationally contribute to achieving the SDGs. In the future, we plan to conduct further research with a focus on the linkage between individual SDGs.

It can thus be said that in the second half of the Heisei era, the Center has contributed to the field of development by conducting research based on field work in various regions.

In the new period that follows Heisei, we will inherit the Center's tradition of staying one step ahead of the times and emphasizing results achieved in the field, and will aim to develop further. Going forward, we would like to continue devoting ourselves to research, with the goal of becoming the global hub for research and knowledge in the field of development research in Japan.

《Report on Hosting of the International Symposium》
**Towards the Actualization of SDGs in Asia and Latin America
—In Relation to Common Bonds between Brazil and Japan—**

*Prof. Ikuko Okamoto
Researcher*

On November 23, 2018, the Center for Sustainable Development Studies at Toyo University held the international symposium “Towards the Actualization of SDGs in Asia and Latin America -In Relation to Common Bonds between Brazil and Japan-” (co-hosted by the Toyo University Graduate School of Global and Regional Studies, the Toyo University Graduate School of International Tourism Management, the Toyo University Faculty of Global and Regional Studies, the Toyo University Faculty of International Tourism Management, and the Toyo University Faculty of Sociology, and sponsored by the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Embassy of Brazil in Japan) at Inoue Enryo Hall.

This year’s international symposium focused on Latin America, and Brazil in particular. The aim was to consider and share findings on what roles universities, international aid organizations, and the Japanese community have played or can play in achieving SDGs.

After words from Counselor Gabriela Resendes from the Embassy of Brazil in Japan, lectures were given by Professor Flavio Hourneaux and Professor Shirlei Lica Ichisato Hashimoto from the University of Sao Paulo, followed by a break and additional lectures from Satoshi Yoshida and Mika Yamamoto from the Japan International Cooperation Agency. With the symposium falling on a national holiday, 600 people attended, including students, faculty and staff from the university as well as the general public.

Summaries of the lectures from the speakers follow.

“The United Nations’ sustainable development goals in Brazil: How can universities make international contributions?”

Flavio Hourneaux (Professor, School of Economics, Business and Accounting, University of Sao Paulo)

The University of Sao Paulo, established in 1934, is a prestigious university in Brazil with 300 undergraduate programs (with about 60 thousand students) and 222 graduate programs (with 30 thousand students). The professor noted that it is possible for universities to play a role in achieving SDGs by providing knowledge or learning opportunities, carrying out demonstrations, and other methods. He also introduced in detail what initiatives are specifically taking place at the University of Sao Paulo.

“Contributions by the Japanese community in Brazil and sustainable development goals”

Shirlei Lica Ichisato Hashimoto (Professor, University of Sao Paulo)

Professor Hashimoto, who teaches Japanese at the University of Sao Paulo, says students’ motivations to learn Japanese changed at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. Motivations in the 20th century were mainly the effects of curiosity or orientalism, advantages in job searching, or interest in Japanese subculture such as anime or games, while those in the 21st century included an appreciation not just for Japan’s economic power but



also its deeper aspects of culture or thought such as Japanese literature. The professor emphasized that the spread of the concept of “Mottainai,” which disapproves of squandering, in the Japanese community, as well as the honesty and loyalty that is characteristic of the Japanese people are contributing toward the achievement of SDGs.

“Contributions by the Japanese community to SDGs activities”

Yoko Kino (Professor, Faculty of Sociology, Toyo University)

This was a report on changes experienced by the Japanese community in Brazil, particularly the various issues that Japanese people who live there have faced. This included the conflict and generation gap within the Brazilian community that is being transformed, the difficulty of passing on Japanese virtue or language, and how recent involvement with modern Japanese society is being created particularly by the younger generation, while the Japanese Colonia has incorporated first-generation Japanese as they age. The illustration used in the lecture by Shinji Tanaka, an illustrator that is representative of the Japanese Colonia, left a deep impression, succinctly showing the issues that these Japanese communities face.

“The significance of Japanese immigrants and international cooperation”

Satoshi Yoshida (Deputy Director General, Latin America and the Caribbean Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency)

After an overview of the social and economic background on which the Japanese policy on immigration to South America was planned, as well as a description of travel from Japan to Brazil and immigrants’ lives at their destination, specific examples of international cooperation by Japan, such as development of the Cerrado, were introduced. Emphasis is now being placed on support for the Japanese community as well, and in particular, training of the younger generation, with a focus on the establishment of graduate school programs or support for studying abroad. The aim of these initiatives in international cooperation is not only to build a connection with the Japanese community itself, but also to use it as a window to deepen ties with Latin American countries.

“Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers program for the Japanese community”

Mika Yamamoto (Director General, Secretariat of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, Japan International Cooperation Agency)

After an overview of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers and Senior Volunteers programs at the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the dispatch of volunteers

to Japanese communities and specific activities by volunteers targeting Japanese communities were introduced, with actual comments made by the volunteers. According to Ms. Yamamoto, sending these volunteers to Japanese communities will promote the economic and social development of the communities as well as deepen the understanding of Japanese ways of thinking and behavior, with the goal of training people who will lead the future.

《Report on the Special Seminar》

Discussing Social Inclusion from the perspective of SDGs: Empowerment of persons facing social disadvantage

*Prof. Chino Yabunaga
Researcher*

On November 29, 2018, we held a special seminar entitled “Discussing Social Inclusion from the perspective of SDGs: Empowerment of persons facing social disadvantage.”

In a rapidly changing global society in which information processing and telecommunication technology develop at speeds beyond imagination, the social security system by which people work, produce, and support their livelihood is facing the need for a fundamental overhaul. As such, the issue of how society can face and accept people who have been eliminated from the labor market system as “the disabled” due to their attributes is a problem we all must seriously consider. In particular, as the sustainable development of society is now a global goal, it can be said that the establishment of an inclusive society is an issue common to both developing and advanced countries. Under such circumstances, this seminar was held with the aim of considering how we think and face the issue of people with disabilities being put in socially disadvantaged situations, from a broad perspective encompassing advanced countries as well as developing countries.

The seminar consisted of a keynote lecture and panel discussions. The keynote lecture was given by Professor Bjorn Hvinden, who is the world’s leading authority on social conditions for the disabled and holds the positions of vice president for the International Sociological Association (ISA) and co-governor for the Foundation for International Studies on Social Security (FISS). The theme of the lecture was “Social inclusion and sustainable welfare: Two inter-linked global challenges.” Professor Hvinden has been with Toyo University on a short-term visiting professorship program in commemoration of the academic exchange agreement signed between Oslo Metropolitan University and the Faculty of Global and Regional Studies and the Graduate School of Global and Regional Studies at Toyo University. The keynote lecture noted a number of significant findings, including that young people in Europe are facing long-term social exclusion triggered by unemployment; that a substantial number of NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) will be alienated from economic activities, with their working capacity at a similar level as the so-called disabled; that women tend to be alienated from economic activities in Japan; that the social inclusion of the young people and women is important for sustainable development; and that empowerment in that regard is needed. Also introduced



was that Japan is actively engaging in meeting SDGs, while Norway is not so active in this regard.

Later in the panel discussions, three panelists presented topics based on their activities, leading to active debate. The first panelist was Dr. Kenji Kuno from the Japan International Cooperation Agency, who is creating a global network in Disability Equality Training mainly in developing countries. Under the title “The Social Model of Disability as a platform for Social Inclusion on disability: Theory and practice,” he clearly illustrated and made proposals on the necessity of achieving social inclusion based on the Social Model of Disability, which views disability as something that is created and that exists due to the social environment. Next, Dr. Ryoko Shimano, who is a research fellow at the Center and has put theory in practice by supporting the disabled in Sri Lanka, spoke on the theme of “Empowerment to the people with disabilities and Capacity Development: The effect of the psychological barrier,” based on her experience in Sri Lanka. She commented that through existing values, social norms, or prejudice, a society that is advantageous to the majority is unintentionally created, thus establishing a structure of exclusion, and noted the necessity of removing such psychological barriers to achieve social inclusion. Finally, Zukiswa Nzo, who is a senior instructor of Disability Equality Training in the Republic of South Africa as well as a Master’s course student at the Graduate School of Regional Development Studies at Toyo University through the ABE Initiative, spoke on the theme “Towards Sustainable development with persons with disabilities: A case of the JICA & DSD (department of social development) Disability Mainstreaming Project in South Africa.” She reported on

activities and issues in her native country of South Africa as a person with a disability as well as a practitioner who is engaged in empowerment activities. The reports from the three panelists were followed by comments from Dr. Hvinden, and then questions from the floor, which invited discussion on how we should engage in empowerment.

This seminar was co-hosted by the Graduate School of Global and Regional Studies and was supported by the newly-established Toyo University Center for Student Wellness and the Research Center for Development of Welfare Society at Toyo University. On that day, we

received assistance from the South African Embassy, the Norwegian Embassy, JICA, and Mirairo Inc., among others, and we were fortunate enough to have attracted a large audience. Many students, especially exchange students, participated in the seminar as part of their class activities. It was a fruitful seminar with thought-provoking debate and questions from an active audience. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who gave their support for a successful seminar.

Records of the symposium will be organized and utilized for future research.

Initiatives of Shiwa-cho in Iwate Prefecture to Build a Recycling-based Society

*Prof. Namiko Numao
Researcher*

From September 19 to 20, 2018, I conducted a study on an initiative to build a recycling-based society in the community of Shiwa-cho in Iwate Prefecture, with my fellow researcher Ikuko Okamoto. While Shiwa-cho is known for its Ogal Project which promoted the redevelopment of the area around the train station through a public-private partnership (PPP), it has been promoting initiatives to build a recycling-based society in the community since the 1990s, and such initiatives are reflected in the Ogal Project in various ways.

In this visit, we visited the planning section of the Shiwa-cho town office, the information exchange center (Shiwa-cho library), and Ogal Shiwa K.K to get an overview of the Ogal Project. We also visited three different areas in Shiwa-cho to find out how they built a structure for consensus formation in order to build a sustainable social economic system in the community.

Shiwa-cho raised 270 million yen in donations from its residents to build the long-sought Shiwa Chuo Station, however, redevelopment of the area surrounding the station came to an abrupt halt due to financial difficulties. As a result, the town changed course toward a “public-private partnership” project. The public-private partnership office in the town office coordinated with various section in the office, gathered the opinions of town residents through various approaches including briefing sessions for residents and interactive workshops, and eventually established a future vision for the town. After the public-private partnership master plan was approved by the town council, a design committee comprised of experts has been established and the committee is working on space development and system design in order to execute the project.

The Ogal Project reflects the concept of energy cycling and local production for local consumption. The area has a heat supply system that uses woodchips produced from timber from forest thinning in the town, and housing on the land



Shiwa-style eco-friendly houses

owned by the town around the station requires use of this system, use of materials made in the town, and construction (of Shiwa-style eco-friendly houses) by local construction companies. Further, one of the characteristics of agriculture in Shiwa-cho is the variety of produce, and produce stands were set up in each area from an early stage ahead of other parts of the country. “Shiwa marché” opened a store in the Ogal area, which is its 10th store in the town, and a system has been established where the producers become the members of the stores and sell agricultural produce and processed food.

The number of visitors to the Ogal area continues to increase every year, reaching 950 thousand visitors in FY2016. Shiwa-cho is currently taking a new step to expand the liveliness of the central area to the eastern and western areas, and to build a tighter recycling-based social economic network. The town is operating a business to renovate and restore vacant houses along the old road in the Hizume area, and making efforts to convert various businesses by establishing a small base in the Akazawa area which is suffering from depopulation. In addition, in the Furudate area, we saw that the town is seeking ways to further expand community activities by using its community center as a base.

SDGs Discussion in Japan

*Prof. Akira Kaneko
Visiting Researcher*

As the Japanese government has set the direction for its SDGs initiatives, plans in Japan and their implementation

methods are now being discussed from various angles in consideration of the SDGs. The Japan Association of Planning and Public Management held its 41st national convention in Fukuoka City in September 2018 on the theme of the SDGs, and various SDGs-related seminars and workshops were held at the convention. Below is a brief summary of the seminars and workshops I attended. For further details, please see “Japan Association of Planning and Public Management’s 41st National Convention: Integrated Enhancement of Environment, Economy and Society, and Planned Administration – With the SDGs in Mind – Abstract of Research Report (Version 2)” (July 2018), (in Japanese) which is posted on their website.

http://www.japanpa.jp/cms/wp-content/uploads/2018abstracts_2-1.pdf (Last viewed on 2018/11/27)

1. Special Speech

Title: The 50-year history of International NGO OISCA Western Japan Training Center and its efforts toward achieving the SDGs

2. Keynote Speech

Title: Development for Environment, Economy and Society, SDGs and Inclusive Wealth

3. Symposium

Theme: Integrated Enhancement of Environment, Economy and Society, and Planned Administration–With the SDGs in Mind

At the symposium, environment-focused plans of the administration (state, prefectures and cities) and companies and the implementation of such plans were reported.

4. Workshops (only the ones I attended are listed below)

4-1 Workshop C

Theme: Toward implementation of the SDGs in local policies

The workshop emphasized the importance of having various sectors participate and ingraining the SDGs by not only establishing plans but also by taking actions, in order to achieve SDGs within the local administration.

4-2 Workshop D

Theme: Usefulness and Issues Related to the Urban Traffic-System using streetcar

In this workshop, Utsunomiya City’s LRT project was used as an example case to discuss how to achieve the transition from automobiles to public transportation.

4-3 Workshop E

Theme: Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) and the SDGs

GIAHS identifies traditional agriculture that has been formed over many generations by adapting to societies and environments, which combines agricultural production, culture, landscape and biodiversity. This is a specific example of the SDGs.

The above-mentioned seminars and workshops focused mostly on SDGs initiatives in Japan, and may differ in some aspects from the center’s (Center for Sustainable Development Studies) SDGs initiatives that are focused on developing countries. However, I believe they are beneficial to the center’s research activities, as developed countries should also be involved in achieving the SDGs.

Report on the Annual Assembly of German Energy Agency DENA — Course and Direction from COP21 —

*Prof. Morihiro Kurushima
Visiting Researcher*

1. Global warming issues and the COP21 Paris Agreement

This century is “an era of growth under global environment constraints,” and we can say that the concentration of human intelligence is essential in order to solve environmental issues.

Under these circumstances, COP21, i.e. the 21st Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was held in Paris, France in 2015 as an international measure and action against global warming, and the conference resulted in a great outcome as an agreement was reached on the following matters.

In the conference, the “Paris Agreement” was signed as a new framework which requires all major emitters of greenhouse gases to reduce emissions. The fact that the Agreement targets all major emitters is significant in its meaning. Not only developed countries but also countries with major economic power including China and India agreed to voluntarily accept the obligation to reduce emissions and to provide financial assistance to help developing countries implement the convention.

As part of the administration, I have attended the conference every year since COP3 Kyoto conference in



Speech by Peter Altmaier, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy in Germany

The venue of the assembly (photo provided by the organizer of the assembly)

1997, and to see the entire world unite at COP21 was simply incredible.

The essential elements of the Agreement are the establishment of a goal to keep global temperature rise to below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius, and the establishment of a structure to submit/review the goals and actions of each country every five

years. Further, this comprehensive agreement appropriately incorporates the responsibilities and roles of developed countries in regard to not only emission reduction but also transfer of technology, capacity building and financial assistance, as well as the roles of developing countries.

2. Outlook for industry under the Paris Agreement

As you can see, it is clear that the direction toward building a low carbon society has become a new global rule, and going forward, policies and innovation of technology are expected in various fields. Consequently, industries in European countries, etc. are already starting to make steady pre-emptive moves.

As movements toward low carbon and decarbonization under the Agreement are now fully in progress around the world, there will be new risks and opportunities for many industries.

In particular, some point out that risks of deterioration in profitability and value of fossil fuel-related businesses will increase because energy saving/fuel source transition will be implemented to achieve the above mentioned goals, and in terms of financial/investment perspectives, some point out that it will cause devaluation of assets (referred to as stranded assets).

3. Annual Assembly of German Energy Agency DENA

I attended the above-mentioned assembly in Berlin, Germany from November 26 to 27, 2018, and spoke in a panel discussion titled “Decarbonization of Cities and Communities: Energy Transition.” This year’s assembly focused on urban policies in the areas of urban planning, architecture and transport, and experts from Germany and other countries introduced their progressive approaches. In addition, strategies to promote such approaches and the expansion of their scale and scope were discussed.

Further, I exchanged opinions with local JETRO staff, industrialists, university professors and officials from the EU Energy Directorate General on the direction toward a coexistent global society and related strategies.

As indicated above, European countries are making efforts to switch to low carbon energy, such as the efficient energy and new energy discussed in the assembly. I will continue to deliver information on activities of the center in this field and exchange information with other researchers.

New Research Assistant

YUASA, Takashi, Research Assistant



My name is Takashi Yuasa. I recently joined the center as a research assistant. I started the 1st year of a doctor’s program in October and I am conducting research on improvement of the environment surrounding Inle Lake in Myanmar. I am looking forward to working with you.

I specialize in water environment. My research theme at university was the formation mechanism of water quality in Lake Biwa. I joined Pacific Consultants Co., Ltd. in 1997 and was assigned to the River Engineering Department. Since then, I have been involved in various water-related

issues in Japan and abroad, mainly in the field of water environment, including disaster prevention/flood control, water resources, aquatic ecosystems, water amenity, and watershed management. Six years ago, I was transferred to the Corporate Planning Department at headquarters and this year I was transferred to the Global Business Division, so my current assignment is not so much related to my expertise, but I am always a “lifelong water professional” in my heart.

I love outdoor activities especially running and mountain climbing, so I am usually running around the fields on weekends. Another activity that I love is to travel and find something new in the places I visit. Whenever I visit places for my research, I hope to have an opportunity to interact with local people, get to know the community and find something new so I can leverage that knowledge in my research.

Reference



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