

ユオードー

euodoō

journal of rural future study

土に生きる未来学

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アジア学院 一土とともに生きるー
リッチャード・A・ガードナー

Living Together with the Earth
Richard A. Gardner

Training for Transformation
Sarajea Rossitto

アジア学院のレジリエンス
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**ARI's Ecumenical and
Interreligious Beginnings**
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**A Vision of ARI's Farming
as Eco-Just Farming**
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 **Asian Rural Institute**

Journal of the Asian Rural Institute

学校法人アジア学院紀要

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Editorial Note ・ 編集者から

This journal presents articles and theses written by ARI staff and community members that explore ARI's foundational spirit, motto, key concepts, and training program. It aims to improve supporters' understanding of ARI while also promoting the values and philosophies ARI holds dear to new audiences. In the past, articles and theses about ARI were scattered and not well publicized; even staff members were often unaware of their existence. In order to give these important writings new life and inspire a new generation of ARI friends and supporters, we thought it meaningful to reorganize and republish them in journal form. The journal will be published annually and will also be available electronically via the ARI homepage.

“Euodoō,” the journal's name, is derived from the Greek. The root meaning is “prosperity,” but another translation of “euodoō” is “a good way”. We humans have achieved prosperity and development in many ways, but we need to ask ourselves whether the way in which we have attained prosperity and development is really “a good way”. Did we destroy what is necessary for the next generation? Did we disregard new lives to come? Reflecting on our past activities while presenting a challenge to ourselves as responsible agents for the future, we need to keep asking, “Is this a good way?”. The name “euodoō” shows our will to prepare a space

アジア学院紀要は、アジア学院の理念、思想、強調する価値観のよりよい理解と啓蒙のために、創設の理念、モットー、キーコンセプト、研修内容などについて、主にアジア学院の職員やアジア学院関係者が書いた論文等を集め、アジア学院をご支援いただいている方々、関心を持っていただいている方々に広く読んでいただくために発行するものです。これまでもアジア学院に関して多くの方々が取材や研究をし、それを記事や論文等の形で世に出してくださっていましたが、それらはばらばらに保管されているだけで冊子のようにまとめられていなかったために、内部の人間にすら読まれる機会は限られていました。その中には優れた研究や作品も少なくなく、アジア学院の理念を再認識するうえでも、より多くの方々に理解していただくためにも、さらに後世に伝えていく上でも紀要として定期的にまとめ、発行していくことに意義があると思い、この度の発行に至りました。今年度1回の発行を目指し、紙媒体とともにPDF版も制作し、ホームページ等からダウンロードできるようにしていきます。

この紀要は副題を「土に生きる未来学」、名前を euodoō (ユオードー) としました。「土に生きる未来学」としたのは、この紀要が単なる過去や現在の記録に留まらず、私たちがあるべき未来について再考する機会となることを願ったからです。さらにその未来は、生きとし生けるものがしっかりと大地に足をつけ「土に生きる」という希望の元にあるべきという考えから、「土に生きる未来学」という副題が付けられました。

Euodoō (ユオードー) はギリシャ語で「繁栄」(prosper) の語源となっている言葉ですが、

for careful consideration of this question.

The journal's subtitle, "Journal of Rural Future Study," is also significant. One of the intentions of the journal is to reconsider our image of what the future should be, instead of simply recording important events in the history of ARI, or extrapolating current trends. Further, we want a future that is derived from images of all creatures standing firmly on a living soil. Considering what healthy rural communities can and should look like is another important aspect of the works presented here.

In publishing this first issue, I would like to show my sincere appreciation to all the authors who happily agreed to allow us to publish their precious works. I also would like to give my special thanks to Mr. Itsuo Thomas Fujishima who understood the purpose of this journal more than anybody and gave all his energy and talents to the design work. I also would like to thank Ms. Ayumi Kojima who willingly provided her beautiful art work for the cover of this journal.

Tomoko Arakawa
Director

ギリシャ語の直訳は「善い道」という意味です。人間はまさに繁栄や発展を目指して懸命に生をつないできたわけですが、果たしてそれはすべて「善い道」であったのか。後世に伝えるべきものの多くを破壊し、傷付け、未来の命を軽んじてはこなかったか。そのような反省をこめて、しかしなおも未来に対して責任ある主体としてこれから何をなすべきか、この紀要がその答えの追及を活発に行う場となるようにこの名を付けました。

第1号の発行に当たり、著作や論文掲載に快く応じてくださった著者の皆様をはじめ、この紀要の趣旨を誰よりも理解しデザインと校正に力を注いでくださった藤嶋トーマス逸生さん、そして美しい表紙画を提供していただきました小嶋歩さんに心から感謝申し上げます。

校長 荒川 朋子

Theses · 論文

リチャード・A・ガードナー

アジア学院 — 土と共に生きる —¹

アジア学院は一九七三年四月に設立された学校法人である。栃木県西那須野に六ヘクタールの敷地を有し、世界各国から集まった草の根の農村指導者に、有機農業・リーダーシップ・地域コミュニティ開発などの研修を行っている。創立以来二〇一二年までの累計で、五十以上の国々から、千二百人以上の研修生が参加してきた²。現在は、毎年三十人ほどの若い農村指導者が研修プログラムに参加しており、四月から十二月まで共同生活を営みながら、ともに働き、学んでいる。アジア学院の目的のひとつは、他宗教に対する寛容と敬意を土台とし、宗教・民族・文化の枠を超える共同体を形成していくことにある。

コミュニティを発展させていくことを重視する組織にふさわしく、アジア学院の創立には多くの人が深く関わった。しかし、彼らの多くが指摘するように、最も大きな役割を果たしたのは高見敏弘（一九二六一）である。高見は創立時から一九九〇年まで校長を務め、広報活動でも長年にわたり中心的な役割を果たしてきた。また九六年には、アジアのノーベル平和賞とも呼ばれるラモン・マグサイサイ賞を受賞している。

本章では、主に高見敏弘に焦点をあてて考察を進める。彼の人生やアジア学院の歩みに影響を与えてきた時代背景や出来事が、著作やインタビューなどの資料を介してある程度把握できるからだ。高見とアジア学院は、日本の植民地支配・戦前の農村の窮状・戦争、戦後の貧困・経済復興、また、旧植民地を含むアジアや世界各国の人々との関係改善に向けた日本の努力といった、時代背景の中を歩んできた。高見の人生はそれ自体興味深いものであると同時に、戦前から戦後にかけての困難な時期を生き抜いた多くの日本人の経験を映し出すという点でも貴重である。

高見の生涯とアジア学院の物語は、本書各章に述べられたさまざまなテーマの具体例として読むこともできる。フェッツァー財団を評したローレンス・サリバン（第七章）の言葉を借りると、アジア学院は「愛と寛容の精神の実践例」と考えることができよう。実際、同財団はアジ

ア学院がこのような精神を実践していると認め、学院が自らの教育プログラムを研究するための資金を提供した³。

アジア学院が有機農法や持続可能な農業を重視していることは、ウィリアム・ラフルーア（第十六章）の言う「技術的要請に対する抵抗」と見ることもできよう。「科学的」な大規模農業技術や化学農薬・肥料の開発に伴い、それらの導入によって食糧生産を増大させてきた国は多い。その一方で、このような手法は環境を破壊し、小規模農家に悪影響をおよぼした。食糧自給率が低下した国もあり、「科学的」に進んだ農業手法は環境面で持続可能なのかという疑問も生まれてきた。

高見の人生とアジア学院の事例は、チャールズ・ロング（第一～三章）とアシス・ナンディ（第四章）が焦点をあてた問題とも関わっている。ロングとナンディの論述の中核的課題は、植民地支配を行った側とされた側が互いをどう認識し、その認識を通じてどのような影響を与え合ったのかを解明することであった。ロングもナンディも、植民地主義が生み出した誤った区別から抜け出し、新たな人間共同体が生み出されることを願っている。ロングの思想の影響を受けたダヴィ・カラスコは、「未開」対「文明」といった二項対立からの解放が我々にもたらすものについて、次のように述べている。「我々は感動に包まれ、深い洞察を獲得し、人間共同体についての新たな見方が開かれるだろう⁴」。アジア学院の取り組みもまた、新たな共同体の形や構想が生じる可能性を内包する「文化接触」の場を、意識的に作ろうとする試みとして理解することができるだろう。

満州、日本での貧しい生い立ち

明治維新以降、日本は経済・産業・軍事面で急速な変化を遂げ、列強の仲間入りを果たして世界を驚かせた。日清戦争（一八九四—一八九五）と日露戦争（一九〇四—一九〇五）に勝った日本は、台湾・朝鮮を植民地化し、南樺太を領有。さらに満州にも足場を築き、勢力を広めた。一九三〇年代には日本の軍事行動が活発になり、軍勢は中国へと向かった。一九三一年には満州を占領し、三七年には中国のその他の地域にも侵攻した。アシス・ナンディが論じているように、日本は西洋化を図ることで西洋の帝国主義・植民地主義に対抗したのである⁵。

しかし日本は、近代国家になる過程で多くの難題に直面した。高見が指摘するように、日本（ならびに他のアジア諸国）に立ちはだかった大きな問題のひとつは、都市化と産業化の進行であった。高見は、都市化の過程はそのほとんどが、伝統的な農村共同体に悪影響をおよぼしたと見ている⁶。日本は産業化に向けて大きく前進したものの、農業や農村の人々の暮らしを向上させるという課題は、第二次世界大戦終結後までほぼ手つかずであった。増加する農村の人口を農業では支えきれずに多くの人々が都市へと流れ、軍隊に入ったり、可能な場合には外国に移住したりした。特に一九二〇年代は、都市から離れた農村にとって困難な時期であった。飢餓におちいる者すら居たのである。

高見の両親は、九州での貧農生活を脱しようと、満州の撫順（ぶじゅん）に移住した。父親は南満州鉄道株式会社に職を得た。高見は一九二六年九月三十日に、六人兄弟の五番目として

生まれた。記憶にある最初の情景は紅い空。真夜中にもかかわらず日中のように明るかったという。大勢の中国人（おそらくは共産ゲリラ）が、近くの日本人居留地を襲ったのだ。この事件が起きたのは一九三二年。前年に日本軍が満州事変を起こし、満州への侵略を始めて間もない頃であった⁷。

このように高見は、日本人を優越民族とするイデオロギーに支えられた植民地主義の世界に生を享けた。このイデオロギーは今で言う国家神道と結び付いており、ナンディの言う「イデオロギーとしての宗教」の事例と見ることもできる⁸。また、ロングの言葉を借りるなら、日本人でない人々は日本の植民地主義イデオロギーによって「意味づけられていた(signified)」⁹。すなわち、日本人でない人々は劣った者としての呼び名を与えられていたのだ⁹。

幼少期の高見はこのイデオロギーと、そこに含まれた区別を自然なものとして受け入れている。しかし、後に満州での子供時代を振り返り、植民地社会は不平等・抑圧・差別に溢れていたと回想している。母国では社会的・経済的に底辺に属する日本人であっても、満州人や漢民族よりは上の立場にいると考えていた、と高見は言う。

当時、満州に渡った日本人の多くは農家の次男、三男など、日本で、食いぶちのない人たち。みな大陸で一旗揚げようという思いだったのでしょ。荒くれ者も多く「満州浪人」など呼ばれていました。

そんな背景もあってか、現地の日本人はとても高慢。満州人や漢民族をとてもばかにしていました。差別もありました。駅の乗り場も日本人は改札から近い場所、満州人、漢民族は遠く離れた不便な場所でした。日本人専用の車両もありました。

当時の僕も「日本人の子」というだけでとても威張った態度を取り、満州人たちを見下していました。それがとても愚かな考えだったと気付いたのは、ずっと後。戦後の話です。この経験は生涯、自分の戒めとして持ち続けています¹⁰。

優劣の区別は言葉で表現されただけでなく、日本人は列車に乗る際も専用の入り口を使うなど、日常生活にも浸透していた。

一九三七年五月、高見が十歳の時、一家は内地に引きあげることにした。満州での生活が経済面で思うようにならなかったのだ。「成功者」になれなかった両親は、九州の郷里には恥ずかしくて戻れないと、京都から列車で四時間ほどの小さな漁村だった宮津に身を寄せた。近くに住むいとこが新生活の手助けをしてくれると言ってくれたのだ。しかし貧乏から抜け出すのは容易ではなかった。父親は意気消沈し、脳卒中により半身が利かなくなった。母親は一家を食べさせるため、しばしば着物を質に入れた。生活を支えるために下宿人を受け入れ、母親は魚や衣服を売る行商に出た¹¹。

こうした経験から高見は、植民地主義イデオロギーによる優劣の意識が現実とは乖離しており、皮肉な結果をもたらすことを思い知った。一家は、満州では漢民族や満州人よりも「上」の立場にあったが、「成功」できなかつたため、負け組として蔑まれるのが嫌で郷里には戻れなかつた。その一方で宮津の村の子どもたちは高見を、裕福な家庭の子で自分たちよりも上の存在と

思っていたという皮肉を、彼は指摘している。村の子どもたちは着物と草鞋しか持っていなかったが、高見は満州で買った学校用の制服や靴を持っていたからだ。そのため、いじめにも遭わなかったという¹²。

禅寺での生活

一九三八年に小学校を卒業した後、高見は奨学金を得て京都で五年制の旧制中学に進学した。この奨学金の受給条件は、在学中に禅寺で生活し禅を学ぶことだった。高見は十二歳で親元を離れて京都に行き、臨済宗の選仏寺に住むことになった。

禅寺の生活で学んだことについて、高見は次のように語っている。

中学校五年間を禅寺で生活するうちに、わたしは語り尽くせないほど多くの、そして大きなものを身体で学びました。座禅、行動禅から茶道や生け花の心。日本庭園や美術の賞味、お掃除の心がけ、精進料理など。数えあげればキリがありません。一口に言って「生きることへの構え」を身につけ始めたと思うのです¹³。

座禅に明け暮れ、すべての所作を瞑想の一環として行う禅寺での修行に、高見は自己鍛錬の大切さを教わった。彼は、禅寺での修行はキリスト教徒にとっても学ぶところが多いとし、異なる宗教を持つ人々が互いに学びあうことの意義を説いている。

寺での修行はわたしたちの現在の生活にとっても大いに意義のあるものだと思います。特に、わたしたちプロテスタントにとってはそうでしょう。日常生活において、規律というものが失われてきており、本当にじっと座って、何かを、あるいは虚空を見つめることができなくなってきています。自由でいられるため、神の下で自由な個人でいられるような規律が必要なのです。(中略) わたしは禅の修行を通じて、こうしたことを学んだように思います¹⁴。

禅寺での修行に庭園での作務が含まれていたことも重要だった。土や植物に毎日触れて過ごす中で、人間と自然が共生する大切さを学んだのだ¹⁵。『土とともに生きる』という彼の著書のタイトルは、アジア学院と選仏寺での生活の双方に当てはまると言えるだろう。

京都での学業生活は比較的平穏で、悲惨な戦争の影響を受けることもさほどなかった。檀家からの寄進のおかげで、寺には十分な食料があった。高見は、選仏寺で生活しながら京都府立第三中学校（現、府立山城高等学校）に通っていた。生徒は通常の教科のほかに軍事教練を受け、軍服に似たカーキ色の制服を着ていた。当時、日本軍はアジア各地への進出を盛んに続けていた。学校では愛国心と天皇への崇敬を教え込むことになっており、軍や特高の監視も厳しかった¹⁶。

軍国主義が社会に蔓延していたにもかかわらず、京都三中での教育や学校の雰囲気は比較的リベラルであったという。高見はその理由のひとつとして、京都の人々、とりわけ教師の間にリベラリズムの伝統が根づいていたことを挙げている。あからさまに口にすることはできなかつ

たが、三中の教師の中には政府が軍事教練を義務づけていることへの反対を匂わせる者もいたという。

当時は思うことを自由に発言できなかつたので、ある程度の「したたかさ」が必要だった、と高見は回想している¹⁷。戦時中のプロパガンダやイデオロギーの作り出す「区別の体系」に疑いを抱いていても、それをはっきりと口に出すことは憚られた。しかし、人種差別のもとで暮らしていたアメリカの黒人と同様、戦時中の日本人の方々の中にも、彼らを規定し「意味づけ (signify)」ようとするイデオロギーに対し、目立たない形で抵抗する者がいたのだ。教師らは当時の軍国主義を信じていないことを「匂わせ」た。その時高見は、当時蔓延していたイデオロギー的世界観が正しくない可能性に気づく機会を与えられていた。

当時の高見にとって、読書は現在という時の制約を越える手段であった。三中の教師たちはそのための刺激を与えてくれた。また、俗世間の誘惑から隔絶した禅寺の生活で読書に没頭することができ、寺の豊富な蔵書も存分に活用できた。高見は当時のことを、「読書によって、わたしたちは洋の東西、時代のへだたりを超越して、先人の知恵、人間の叡智の蓄積を享有できるのです」と振り返っている¹⁸。三中と選仏寺の比較的リベラルな環境のおかげで、高見は当時の軍国主義イデオロギーの価値観を、知的な面では乗り越えた見方をするようになった。

戦時中の生活

読書によって広い視野を持てるようになってはいたものの、当局のプロパガンダの影響から完全に逃れることはできなかつた、と高見は言う。京都での生活がさほど厳しくなかつたことも、その傾向を助長した。

十五歳の時、太平洋戦争が始まりました。連合国と戦争が始まったと言われても、当時の僕にはあまりぴんと来なかつた。新聞、ラジオは東南アジアに進撃する日本軍が連戦連勝する様子を伝えていたが、地理的にどの辺なのかも見当がつかなかつた。

京都市は空襲もなかつたので、戦局の悪化も感じなかつた。戦争期末は食糧事情も悪化していたはずですが、寺には檀家が持ち寄る食べ物や、おまんじゅうが豊富にあり、意外と食べることも困らなかつた¹⁹。

新聞の戦争報道を通して、高見はフィリピンや台湾などのアジアの国々の話や情報に初めて接した。報道によると、日本軍は連戦連勝でアジアの人々に平和と正義をもたらしているとのことだった²⁰。当時の歴史をより深く考察し、当時のイデオロギーの裏にいかほど悲惨な現実が隠されていたかを認識できたのは、戦後になってからであった。また、戦時中に「劣った人々」とされていたアジアの人々に実際に会ったのは、戦後かなりの時を経てからだった。

高見は一九四三年三月に中学を卒業。男子は軍隊に入るのが当然とされていたが、初めは進んで志願はしなかつた。「わたしはそうした意味で勇敢ではないから、軍隊からはなるべく逃げようとしたんです」と高見は言う。「でもついに赤紙が来たので、徴兵されるよりは志願しよ

うと思いました」²¹。

海軍に志願したところ、中学校を出て数学のできた高見は神奈川県藤沢市にあった海軍電測学校に配属され、電子工学やレーダーについて学ぶことになった。学校ではレーダーを含む当時の先端技術を学ぶほか、爆弾を背負って敵戦車の下に潜り込む訓練も受けたという。「徴兵されて前線に送られた友人の多くは戻ってきませんでした。わたしは幸運だったのです」と高見は述べている²²。

終戦と戦後の貧困

一九四五年八月十五日、天皇による戦争終結のラジオ放送を、高見は藤沢の電測学校で聞いた。高見はこの発表に衝撃を受けたさまを次のように語っている。「そして八月十五日、敗戦の玉音放送を聞きました。日本が勝ったという話ばかり聞かされていたので、大変ショックを受けました」²³。当時の日本人の多くがそうだったように、高見も、日本の政治的・宗教的イデオロギーが現実とかけ離れていたことをその時初めて知ったのだ。

戦争終結が発表されるやいなや、電測学校の上官たちは貴重品や食料品を漁ってトラックに詰め込み、学生には何の指示も出さず立ち去ってしまった。残された学生は荷物をまとめるほかになく、残った食糧で何とか凌ぎながら、家に戻る方法を探した。当時、高見は「鬼畜米英」とか「米兵は日本人を躊躇せず殺し、犯す」といった政府のプロパガンダを信じていたので、米軍を避けようと大きく迂回して宮津へ戻った。家族は帰還を喜び、電測学校から持ち帰った砂糖を有難がった²⁴。

故郷で直面した状況は厳しかった。父親は終戦間近の一九四五年五月に他界したが、その死の背景には栄養失調があった。高見は後年、戦時中には親の死を嘆き悲しむことすら憚られた、と記している。弟は虫垂炎が悪化し苦しんでいたが、治療も受けられず十分な食料もなかった。また、一家はアメリカ人を恐れており、占領がどのようなものになるかを心配していたという。

だから、わたしたちは家の中にいて、おとなしくしていました。弟は病気と恐怖が原因で亡くなりました。禅の修行を色々やっただにもかかわらず、当時のわたしの振る舞いはとても自己中心的なものでした。空腹の時には、しばしば遠くの山へ出かけ、山菜や木の芽を摘んだものです。皆とても空腹でしたし、わたしはとても身勝手でした。自分だけのために食べ物を得たいと思い、家族や非常に苦しんでいる弟のことは気にかけなかったのです。飢餓状態にある時、自分がどれだけ邪になれるのかを思うと、今でも、自分は神や仲間の助けなしには善良で正しい人間にはなれないのだと感じます²⁵。

身勝手な気持ちを抱いたことがあると告白しているが、高見はそれから数年間、家族を養うために全力を尽くして働いている。地元の港で仕事をもらったり、村から魚・芋・米などを持って町の闇市に行き売ったりもした。仕事が見つからない時は山を越えて海へ行き、水に潜って貝などを採った。袋に入れた貝を持ってまた山を越え村に帰り、塩や米に換えたのだ²⁶。

人生の転機

だが、高見の人生はあるアメリカ人宣教師との出会いによって一変する。一九五一年に神戸で汽車に乗っていた時、毎日新聞の英語版で料理人を募集する広告が目に入った²⁷。広告主は神戸女学院大で美術と音楽を教えるアメリカ人宣教師のアルバート・フォロー。彼は中国から日本にきたばかりだった。一九四九年に共産党が中国全土を掌握したため、他の宣教師らとともに引き揚げてきたのだ。フォローは独身で一人暮らしだった。

高見は職を得て給金を得るためにフォローとの面接で、「意図的に嘘をつき欺いた」と記している。面接で「自分はコックだ」と言い、翌日から働くことになったのだ。高見はこの時のことを、フォローも困っていたのだろう、と回想している。「彼は独身で、現在でもコーヒーの淹れ方さえ知らないのではないかと思います」。禅寺や占領軍関係者の家で働くうちに基本的な料理の経験を多少していたが、コックを自称してしまったことで高見は自らを偽ったと感じたという²⁸。

高見は面接の帰りに大阪の大きな書店に立ち寄り、『The Fannie Farmer Cookbook (ファニー・ファーマーの料理本)』を買った。そしてフォローのもとで働きながら、毎晩辞書を片手にこの料理本のレシピを翻訳した。「しばらくは毎回違う朝食や夕食を出していました」と高見は述べている。「だから、彼は今でもわたしのことをプロの料理人だと信じていると思いますよ」²⁹。

この出会いは高見にとって転機となった。フォローは「鬼畜」などではなかったのだ。

フォロー先生のところで働くようになって、わたしの人生は変わり始めました。彼がわたしを信頼してくれていることがわかったのです。わたしがコックだと言うと、先生は「そうですか」と言い、給料を決めて、雇ってくれました。汚れた衣類と破れたゴム長靴で彼のもとを訪ねたわたしに、「じゃあ、これからはこの家で暮らして下さい」と言ってくれたのです³⁰。

フォローは自室の隣の部屋を彼にあてがい、新しい机・椅子・カーテン・寝具類を用意してくれた。それは高見が生まれて初めて持った自分の部屋だった。

先生はたくさんのお金をわたしに預け、帳簿をつけられるように小さなノートをくれました。わたしの仕事は、家事をこなし、献立を練り、メニューを書くこと。また、買い物をして、諸経費をノートに記録し、請求書の支払いをするといったもので、月に一度だけ報告すれば良いということでした。こんな人にはそれまで会ったことがありませんでした。わたしにはごまかす心づもりがあったし、どうやればごまかせるかもわかっていました。でも、このような信頼を受けたことで、わたしの人生は変わり始めたのです。こんな人を欺くことはできなかった。わたしは先生を信じ、自分自身を信じ始めたのです³¹。

高見の人生は、異なる文化を持ち、当時日本を占領していた国からきた人物が、彼を受け容れ、信頼し、ともに暮らそうとしたことで変化し始めた。フォローは雇い主だが、高見を自分より

下に見てはいなかった。

高見の人生の変化は主義主張の説得によってではなく、ひとつひとつは取るに足らない日々の言動（といっても、実はそれこそが重大事なのかもしれないが）によって生じたと言えるだろう。フォローは高見を信頼し金銭の管理を任せた。また服装を自分との差異や優劣を示すしとは考えず、粗末な服を着る高見に「一緒に暮らそう」と言った。高見にとってこれは満州や宮津での経験とはまったく異なる体験だった。満州や宮津では、衣服・民族の違い・富などが、人々が「ともに暮らす」ことを阻む壁となっていた。フォローは衣服の質の良し悪しなどが持つ社会的な「意味づけ」の力から、高見を解き放ったのだ。

キリスト教徒になって

フォローは一度も高見をキリスト教に改宗させようとはしなかった。このことを高見は次のように語っている。

とても不思議だったのは、わたしに一度も一緒に教会に来るようにと言わなかったことです。でも彼は英語の聖書を読んでいたし、最初は知らなかったのですが、毎週日曜日には教会に行っていることもわかりました。そこで、いつか教会に連れて行ってほしいと頼んだのです。日本人のための教会にね。行ってみると、神戸女学院の院長だった畠中博士の説教がとてもすばらしくて、何度も通いました³²。

こうして畠中博士神戸女学院長の説教に感銘を受けた高見は、定期的に教会に通うようになった。

キリスト教に対する興味が湧いてきた高見は、聖書の勉強会に参加するようになり、宣教師からもらった英語版の新約聖書の一部を、辞書の助けを借りて熱心に翻訳した。特にヨハネによる福音書は深く心を捉えたという。

ヨハネによる福音書を読んでも、心に直接訴えかけてくるものがありました。読んでいる際には、何度も強力な霊的経験をしました。ある一節を読んでいると、まるで神がキリストにおいて、わたしに直接語りかけており、自分が神の前に立っているような気持ちになりました。そうした時は、何一つ隠し立てすることができない、自分のすべてが他者——つまり神——に知られているように思えて、畏れを覚えました。ほかにはない特別な畏れの感覚というのでしょうか。(中略)今では、詩篇にあるように、わたしの髪の毛の本数までも神が御存じである、と心から告白することができるのです³³。

また、パウロの手紙を読んだ際には、「それまでの自分の人生のすべてに意味があることを知った」という³⁴。それから間もなく高見は、洗礼を受けて教会の一員となれるように畠中博士に頼んだ。

洗礼を依頼した際に高見と畠中博士が交わした問答は、含蓄に富んでおり興味深い。

畠中博士とはとても面白い話をしました。わたしはもともと禅僧だったから、こんなことを聞いたのかもしれませんが。聖書には、霊によって洗礼を受けた者は、すでにキリスト教徒である、とあります。そこで博士に「どうして教会でこのような儀式を受けなければならないのでしょうか」と尋ねました。すると博士はこう言ったのです。「気が進まないなら無理にやることはありませんよ。あなたはすでに霊によって洗礼を受けているのですから。それはその通りでしょう。でも、もしあなたがこうした儀式を通じて、皆の前で信仰を告白するつもりがないのなら、あなたが霊によって洗礼を受けていることが、どうしてわたしにわかるのですか」³⁵。

博士の話に説得された高見は、次の日曜日に洗礼を受けた。説得はされたが、この「問答」からは高見が、「霊」の働きはキリスト教やその他特定の宗教だけに限られたものではない、という見解を持っていたことがわかる。これは、高見が「区別」から生じる問題を認識したもうひとつの事例と言えるかもしれない。つまり、宗教の間に明確な線引きをし、救われる者と救われぬ者、優れた者と劣った者を分け隔てることが生み出す危険を認識したのだ。また高見がここで、聖書の「ヨーロッパ的」とも言うべき解釈に疑問を投げかけるのをためらわなかったことも注目に値する。

高見が働き始めて八ヶ月後、フォローはフィリピンのドゥマゲテにあるシリマン大学に移ることになった。しかしフォローは日本を離れる前に、高見がアメリカで勉強できるように、ネブラスカ州の友人たちに資金の工面を依頼してくれた。ネブラスカの会衆派教会の青年部には、すでに日本からの学生を対象とした「和解のための奨学金」が設立されていた。青年部は「トミー」・タカミを受け入れ、アメリカの大学に留学するに十分な資金を用意してくれた。

一九五二年八月、高見は船でサンフランシスコに渡り、さらにバスでネブラスカ州にあるドーン大学へと向かった。大学では歴史を専攻した。卒業後はイエール大学神学部に進むための奨学金を得たが、母親に会うために進学を一年延期し、五六年秋に一時帰国した。日本では毎日新聞の記者として働いた。日本に留まりジャーナリストになるようにと社長は説得したが、高見は牧師になる夢を追った。翌年秋にアメリカに戻った高見は、牧師の資格を得るために神学の勉強に取り組んだ。再渡米して間もなく母親が亡くなったが、帰国する金もなく、たとえ帰国しても葬儀には到底間に合わなかった。一九六〇年六月十六日、高見はキリスト連合教会の牧師となり、追ってイエール大学神学部を卒業した。

鶴川農村伝道神学校の東南アジアコース

一九六〇年九月に帰国した高見は、先ず大阪にある扇町教会で、次いで京都の夜久野教会で牧師として働いた。京都では木俣敏教授に紹介された。木俣は当時、東京町田市の鶴川農村伝道神学校に付属する東南アジア農村指導者養成所（東南アジアコース）で教えていた。高見は木俣の誘いを受けて翌年九月にこの養成所の職員になる。英語で教えられることが評価されたのか、ほどなく東南アジアコースの課長に任命された。その後所長となり一九七三年までその職を務めた³⁶。

東南アジアコースはさまざまな意味でアジア学院の前身であった。農村伝道神学校は、一九

四八年に中央農村教化研究所として東京の日野に設立され、五六年に町田市鶴川に移転した。敗戦後の日本は、植民地からの食料輸入が途絶え、戦災で深い傷を負い、食料不足と飢餓の問題を抱えていた。また、占領軍が農地改革を行い、大地主の所有地は分割されて小作人だった人々に分配されていた。日本は農業分野の根本的な制度改革を迫られていたのだ。

北米と欧州の教会や宣教師たちは、日本の農村・農業基盤の活性化の必要性を認め、経済的支援を行うと同時に、教師や宣教師を派遣した。日本の農村で働くキリスト教徒の養成を使命とする農村伝道神学校にも、金銭・職員の両面で支援が与えられた³⁷。

東南アジアコースの発足のきっかけは、一九五六年に農村伝道神学校で開かれた東南アジア農村伝道協議会の会合であった。東南アジアの農村指導者を養成する研修コースの開設を、東南アジアの参加者から要請されたのだ³⁸。一九五九年五月にはマレーシアのクアラルンプールで、東アジア・キリスト教協議会（現在のアジア・キリスト教協議会 [C C A]³⁹）の設立会合が開かれ、農村伝道神学校はそこでも、多くの参加者からアジア各地の農村指導者の養成を請われた。日本以外からの参加者は、日本の経済発展の基盤は農業分野での成功にあると考え、日本の農地改革や農業技術を学んで新たに独立したばかりの母国の発展に寄与したいと願っていたのだ⁴⁰。

鶴川農村伝道神学校の校長だった武藤健は、帰国後すぐにこの要望を学校に伝え、翌年には東南アジアコースが設置された⁴¹。北米の教会や宣教師たちの助力を得て、コースの設置は迅速に進んだ。星野正興が述べるように、東南アジアコースの設置は日本の農業政策の変化と時を同じくしていた。一九六一年に制定された農業基本法にそれが表れている⁴²。この法律は農業の大規模化、農家の収入増加、農業の合理化・機械化を目指していた。この政策には長所もあったが、総じて北米の農業をモデルとしていた。しかし、北米型の農業を可能にした広大な平坦地や気候上の条件は、日本やアジアの多くの地域には欠けていた。

星野によると、高見は北米型農業手法の限界を認識しており、アジアの農業・環境条件により適したカリキュラムを作ろうとした。また、日本の伝統的農業技法も取り入れて、東南アジアからの参加者と日本の農家との交流を深めようとした⁴³。

農村伝道神学校にとって東南アジアコースの設置は、日本の農村で働く日本人の養成から、アジアの農村で働くキリスト教指導者の養成への、大きな方向転換を意味していた⁴⁴。

しかし高見は、このコースは新興独立国と日本を含む旧宗主国の関係をよく考慮せずに拙速に設置されてしまったきらいがあり、民族・宗教・文化の差異が生み出す問題にも十分な注意が払われていないと見ていた。新コースは基本的に、アジアから来た農村指導者たちに日本・北米・ヨーロッパの先進農業技術を教えることを考えていた⁴⁵。それに対して高見は、植民地化した側とされた側の複雑な関係についての十分な反省がなされず、考慮されていないと感じていたのだ。

戦争責任

農村伝道神学校の指導者たちは、東南アジアコースの設置には植民地時代・戦時中の日本の行為に対する謝罪の意味が込められていると、当初から考えていた。高見は木俣敏（当時の副校長）の以下の言葉を引いている。「『東南アジアコース』を始めたのには、先の太平洋戦争などで近隣

諸国に日本が与えた多大な災厄に対する贖罪、戦争責任告白の意味があるのです」⁴⁶。校長の武藤健もこの見方を共有していた。東南アジアコースの設置を通じた戦争の謝罪は一九六〇年に始まったが、これは日本基督教団が戦争責任を認めて謝罪するのに七年先んじていたと、星野は指摘している⁴⁷。

高見も、六一年に東南アジアコースに関わるようになった当初から、戦争責任の問題を常に念頭に置いて働いてきたという。また、アジア学院で働きながらしばしばこの問題について国内外で論じてきた、とも述べている。しかし、彼が戦争責任に対する考えを文章に書き記したのは、一九九六年に出版した『土とともに生きる』が初めてだった⁴⁸。戦争責任を認めるということは、一片の文書や声明文の発表で終わるべきものではなく、日々の働きの中でまず成すべきおこないである、というのが高見の考えであった。

東南アジアコースに参加した最初の研修生は、台湾・韓国・タイ・フィリピン・マレーシア・ビルマなどの国々から集まった。こうして高見は、戦時中に新聞などを読んで知った国の人々と実際に会う機会を得た。彼らは全員男性の牧師で、その多くが戦時中に日本軍によって大きな苦痛を経験してきていた。

目の前で自分の肉親を殺された人、背中に銃剣の刺し傷が残っている人、ひどく殴られて片方の耳が聞こえない人などが大勢おられましたが、そのような経験を話してくださる時には、どなたもとても穏やかな顔をして淡々と話してくださったものです。時には悲惨な状況を思い浮かべて涙を流されることもありましたが、言葉もなただ聞いてるわたしのつらさを感じ取って優しく話してくださったのです。それはわたしにとってつらいというよりは極めて厳粛な時でした。あえて話してくださる方のつらさをともにし、そのつらさを分かち合うことによってともに人間として生きることへの決断を迫られる厳粛な時、感謝すべき時だったのです。わたしはそのような時を避けようとも、感覚的に無視しようとも思いませんでした。避けることをせず、むしろこの方々とともにあえて生きることを迫る形容しがたい大きな力がそこにあることを感じていたのです。

これが、わたしが日々の生活を戦争責任の告白として生き続けることの基盤です。(中略) またこのようなことが、やがてアジア学院の創設に当たって「ともに生きるために」というモットーを礎に書く基盤ともなったのです⁴⁹。

日本の植民地支配と軍事占領に苦しめられた人々との出会いは、高見に大きな影響を与えた。この出会いは、日本軍の支配に苦しんだ人々が、その痛みや苦しみを、静かに、非難することなく、語ることで始まった。高見はこの経験を「感謝すべき時」であったとし、「そのつらさを分かち合うことによってともに人間として生きる」ことへの決断を迫られたと記す。「分かち合う」という考えは、その後アジア学院の中心的な思想となった。若い頃には高見も見下したことのあつたアジアの国々の人々が、いまや多くを学ぶべき相手として彼の前に現れた。彼らは「被害者」でありながら憎しみを表すこともなく、そうあることによって新しい人間の共生の可能性を開いていた⁵⁰。

アジア学院の創立——西那須野とバングラデシュ

一九七〇年代初頭は、鶴川農村伝道神学校と東南アジアコースにとって困難な時期であった。学校は財政難に直面し、教育プログラムをどう再編していくかについて意見が割れていた。財政を立て直すために学校が所有する農地を売却することも検討された。高見ら東南アジアコースの関係者はプログラムをそのままの形で存続させることを望んだが、それ以外の人々は学校の資産を別の方法で活用する方向を考えていた⁵¹。こうした先行き不透明な状況を受けて、高見を含む東南アジアコースの関係者は、同コースを学校から切り離して独立組織を立ちあげることを考えるようになった。

アジア学院の創立にあたり大きな力となったのは、栃木県西那須野町の住民たちであった。彼らはすでに東南アジアコースとの協力関係を築いており、また以前からアジア各国の人々との絆を深めていた。西那須野で最も重要な役割を果たしたのは福本治夫だろう。福本は農村伝道神学校の卒業生で、一九五八年から西那須野教会で牧師を務めていた⁵²。一九五九年からは福本の後押しもあり、著名な竹工芸家の八木澤啓造が、アジアからの研修生のためにワークショップを開いていた⁵³。一九六二年、短期研修のため神学校に戻った福本は高見と初めて出会った。福本はその際、東南アジアコースの研修生を西那須野に招いて二週間の夏期講座を行うことを提案した。

この夏期講座は地元の多くの団体の協力を得て実現した。西那須野町ユネスコ協会では、東南アジアコースの研修生による講演会がおこなわれた。朴鐘球(韓国)と呂金俊(台湾)の講演は、西那須野と韓国・台湾の学校の間にも姉妹関係を結びつきかけとなった。栃木北部キセキ販売株式会社社長の郡司昌佳もフィリピンからのインターンを自社に受け入れ、中古の農業機械をフィリピンに寄贈している。

アジア学院の創立には、一九七〇年と七一年にバングラデシュ（七一年十二月までは東パキスタンと呼ばれていた）を襲った一連の自然災害が深く関わっている。モンスーンによる未曾有の洪水と台風がバングラデシュを襲ったのだ。日本キリスト教協議会（NCC）は、世界教会協議会（WCC）の要請を受けて、一九七一年十一月に「ともに生きるために」というモットーを掲げた救済運動を立ちあげた。アジア学院は後にこれを自らのモットーにしている。東南アジアコースの職員である高見は、日本キリスト教協議会を通してバングラデシュに派遣され、世界教会協議会の現地復興計画に参加することになった⁵⁴。

一九七二年四月初めに、高見は西那須野の福本を訪ね、東南アジアコースを独立組織として立ちあげるための協力を内々に求めた。そしてその直後に、彼はバングラデシュ農業復興奉仕団の団長として現地に向かった。日本から送られたという耕運機が三百台倉庫に眠っているのが見つかると、現地のカトリック系救援団体がそれを購入して、日本の教会に耕運機の運転を指導するボランティアの派遣を要請。日本キリスト教協議会の宣教・奉仕部門とカトリック系の慈善団体カリタス・ジャパンが共同委員会を組織して、高見を団長とする奉仕団を編成したのだ。東南アジアコースの菊地創と牧野一穂もこれに加わり現地に入った⁵⁵。

バングラデシュでの体験は東南アジアコースの関係者に大きな影響を与え、新しい学校を

発足させる意欲をさらに掻き立てた。菊地はこの時の体験を、世界各地で農民が経験している苦難を本当に理解する機会となった、と語っている。また、アジア学院を創立する上でこの復興支援プロジェクトが大きな刺激となった、とも述べている⁵⁶。菊地によると、アジア学院の創立に向けた準備が本格化したのはバングラデシュでの復興支援が完了した同年夏以降であった。

高見も、バングラデシュでの体験がアジア学院の構想を立てる上で重要な意味を持ったと記している。このプロジェクトに参加して、高見は二つのことに感銘を受けた。そのひとつは、異なる信仰や文化を持つ人々がともに働くことができたことだ。ボランティアの多くはキリスト教徒だったが、特に宗教を持たない人々の中にも「崇高な精神を持つ」人は数多くいた。また、ボランティアと、イスラム教徒・ヒンドゥ教徒・仏教徒と、それ以外の人々が、一体となって生き活きと働く姿を目にした。もうひとつ高見が感銘を受けたのは、自らの食べ物にさえ事欠く貧しい農民が、食べ物を惜し気もなく分け与えていたことだ。助けられるべき存在が、助けにきた人々を助けていたのである⁵⁷。このような体験を通して、分かち合いの精神はアジア学院の思想的支柱になった⁵⁸。

危機的状況がこうしたことを可能にしたという面は確かにあるだろう。困難な状況に直面した時に、人は暴力に訴え流血の惨事を生み出すこともあるが、危機的状況が人々を結び付けて普段よりも強い絆が生まれることもある。水害に見舞われたバングラデシュの場合は、地域の人々もボランティアも信仰の違いや有無を超えて助け合いながら働くことができたのだ。

東南アジアコースの関係者が帰国すると、福本は新しい学校の創立に向けて奔走し始め、地域の人々にも協力を呼びかけた。栃木北部キセキ販売社長の郡司昌佳が学校の敷地に適した土地を探す手助けをしたことは、とりわけ大きな後押しとなった。郡司は母親のアサとともに、学校が土地の取得その他の費用をまかなえるように多額の資金援助も行った。田嶋篤次も学校が資金を借り入れる手助けをした。地元の建設会社も採算を度外視して工事を請け負った。菊地と牧野を含む東南アジアコースの関係者もさまざまな面で福本を支援した。高見は同年晩夏から初秋にかけてアメリカに渡り、資金集めに尽力した。

学校開設には、行政の認可を受けるための相当な事務手続きも必要だ。学校開設の発起人となったのは、西那須野教会に配属されたアメリカ人宣教師ウォルター・ショアである。ショアは福本の助力を得て、町や県の認可を受けるという難事業に取り組んだ。

学校の施設を整え、学校法人設立の認可を取得し、十分な資金を確保するには、数々の難関を乗り越えねばならず、すべてを開校に間に合わせるのは時間との戦いであった。学校開設の認可が下りたのは一九七三年三月三十一日。アジア学院の名で学校が開校したのはその翌日だった。学校のモットーは「ともに生きるために」であった⁵⁹。

新しい構想と方向性

アジア学院は鶴川農村伝道神学校の東南アジアコースから多くを継承していたが、同時に多くの新機軸を打ち出した。東南アジアコースでは参加者を原則としてキリスト教徒に限っていたが、アジア学院では信仰を問わずすべての人々に門戸を開いた。菊地によると、東南アジアコースの

スタッフには、参加者をキリスト教徒に限ることに当初から疑念を抱き、あらゆる信仰を持つ人に開かれた新しい学校を開きたいと考えていた者もいたという⁶⁰。すでに触れたように、信仰を問わずあらゆる人々に門戸を開くという決定は、高見や菊地がバングラデシュで目にした、宗教の違いや有無を超えてともに働く人々の姿にも影響されていた⁶¹。学院はその後ほどなくアジア以外からの研修生も受け入れるようになった。

アジア学院の創立者たちは、「ともに生きるために」というバングラデシュ復興支援活動のモットーを採用しただけではなく、このモットーが持つ意味を考え続けた⁶²。そこには、人々が互いに協調しつつともに暮らして行ってほしい、またそれを実現していきたい、という願いが込められている。高見は、「ともに生きる」というメッセージは聖書に一貫して見られるテーマだという。神・人間・その他の被造物が互いに分かち合いながら生きることを、聖書の大きなテーマのひとつと捉えているのだ⁶³。

このモットーはまた、人々を隔てるさまざまな壁を取り払うことの大切さを強調している⁶⁴。アジア学院は、東と西の文明の区別、「北」と「南」、先進国と途上国、援助する側とされる側の区別、などの壁を取り払おうとする。言葉を換えると、アジア学院の目標は、先進国の人々が途上国の人々に援助する学校を作ることではなく、世界各地から集まった人々がともに生き、分かち合い、その中で互いに学び合い、助け合っていく共同体を作ることにあった。

アジア学院の目標は別の意味でも東南アジアコースとは異なっていた。農業技法の伝授は引き続き大切だったが、中心的な目的はむしろ、職員と研修生が一体となり、宗教・民族・文化の壁を超えた共同体の感覚を作り出すことにあった。そして、アジア学院で体験した新たな共同体の可能性を、参加者たちが自分の地域に持ち帰り、育てていくことが期待された⁶⁵。このような新しい方向性も、バングラデシュでの体験によるところが大きかったようだ。

地域に根差した有機農業

アジア学院の基本目標のひとつは、東南アジアコースと同様に、アジアや世界各地の農村で地域の小規模農業を発展させられる農業技術を持つ農村指導者の育成にあった。一九七四年には、有機農法を実践・指導し、できる限り食料を自給することに決めた。有機農法の導入により、地域の小規模農家が持続可能な農業を発展させる助けとなることを目指したのだ。またこの決定は、「ともに生きるために」という学院のモットーには自然環境と調和して生きるという意味が含まれている、との考えに基づいていた⁶⁶。アジア学院による有機農法の取り入れと持続可能な農業の重視は、経済的・技術的要請に対する抵抗の一形態と捉えることもできるだろう。

アジア学院のこのような取り組みは、脱植民地化時代の諸問題と関連づけて考えられねばならない。旧植民地諸国のほとんどは第二次世界大戦後に独立を果たしたが、世界経済の仕組みは色々な意味で植民地主義の残滓を留めていた。先進諸国が製造業や金融の中心であるのに対し、いわゆる「第三世界」は原材料や食料の供給地と見なされることが多かった⁶⁷。都市産業化を通じて経済発展を促す試みが、却ってマイナスの結果を生み出すことも少なからずあった。高見が述べているように、欧米の援助を「援助独裁」と捉える者もいる⁶⁸。

この時代はまた、世界中の農業が、しばしば国内外の企業に支配される形で大規模農業へと転換し、化学農薬・化学肥料を使用する動きが高まった時期でもあった。もちろん、こうした変化に伴い、多くの国々で農作物の生産量はある程度増加した。このような手法は経済的にも農業的にも合理的かつ科学的で、先進的だと考えられていた。

しかしこのやり方は多くのマイナスの結果も生んだ。農薬や化学肥料の使用がしばしば土壌に大きなダメージを与えたことは、多くの資料で明らかになっている。化学物質は周囲の動植物や昆虫に悪影響を与え、繊細な生態学的環境を脅かした⁶⁹。また多くの国々で、化学物質が土壌を実質的に破壊し農作物を作れなくしてしまった。こうしたことから、持続可能な農業発展の必要性を多くの人々が唱えるようになった。

加えて、農企業と地域の農業生産者の一部は、伝統的な農作物による食料生産から先進諸国に売れてより儲かる作物へと転換してしまった。その結果、代々継承して来た自家消費用の作物生産の知識を多くの農家が失った。また、高価な化学肥料や農薬を購入する資金のない人々もいた。科学的な大規模農業の導入により一部の企業や政府が経済的利益を得る一方で、伝統的な手法の農業は打撃を受け、小規模農家は困窮し、多くの地域共同体で食料が自給できなくなった⁷⁰。

アジア学院が有機農法を採用したのは、小規模農業を営む農家が持続可能な農業を推進していけるようにするためであった。また、それと同じく重要なこととして、有機農法は人と自然の関係を修復し回復させていくための手段とも位置付けられた。高見は学院のモットーの意味を、人は単に分かち合いを通じてともに暮らすだけではなく、自然とも共生し互いに支え合う存在として理解されるべきだ、と捉えていたのである。

食料は単なる人間労働の産物ではない。人と自然が協力し合って生み出されるものである。自然を尊ばねば、人間の生存すらおぼつかない。言い換えると、アジア学院のモットーには、動植物や昆虫といった自然環境と調和しながら人々がともに生きる、という意味が含まれている。つまり、アジア学院は人間社会の調和だけを目指すのではなく、生態学的にも調和した共同体を目指しているのだ⁷¹。

新しい共同体の形成

アジア学院の研修プログラムは、参加者が指導力を磨き、互いの知識を共有し、有機農法を学べる場、および、さまざまな民族・文化・宗教が混ざり合う中での生活を経験する場の形成を目指している。プログラムの内容は以下のようなものである。一、学院職員による教室での指導。二、参加者による職員および他の参加者に対する指導。三、職員・参加者全員による毎日の農作業。四、学院の活動に関する委員会に参加し、交代でそのリーダーを務めること。五、地元の農家訪問。六、日本人の家庭でのホームステイ。これらの研修の目的は、参加者が自国に戻り、貧しく餓えた人々や底辺にいる人々のために働く際に、より力を発揮できるようにすることにある。

海外から研修に参加した人々は、各地域の団体から推薦された草の根レベルの指導者たちだ。彼らは自国でエリート層に属しているわけではない。研修プログラムには二〇一二年時点の累計で、五十以上の国から千二百人以上が参加しているが、これまで参加してきた人々の多くは、

アジア学院での研修で初めて住み慣れた村を離れて飛行機に乗ったのだ。

研修参加者（キリスト教・仏教・ヒンドゥ教・イスラム教、およびその他の信仰を持つ者を含む）が生まれ育った社会では、民族・宗教・階級・性別などの属性によってアイデンティティーが規定される場合が多い。このような属性による区別は、「優劣」「多数派対少数派」「貧富」といった二項対立のカテゴリーによる人々の関係の固定化に向かいがちだ。ベテラン職員の遠藤抱一は、学院では有機農法を指導するが、より根本的なねらいは、多様な人々が集う新たな環境の中での体験を通じて参加者のアイデンティティーに変化をもたらすことにある、と述べている⁷²。アジア学院がさまざまな手法を用いて打破しようとしているのは、民族・階級・性別などの属性と複雑に結び付き、硬直化したヒエラルキーなのだ。

アジア学院では、多くの課題について職員が指導を行うが、参加者自身もさまざまな形で指導に携わる。たとえば、遠藤が筆者に語ったところによると、参加者は「わたしの出身地では」という表現を前置きとして、自らが体験した農業やそれ以外の問題とその解決策を、学院の職員や他の参加者と分かち合う⁷³。高見が述べているように、このようなやり方をするねらいは、教師と生徒、援助する側とされる側といった区別を超えた共同体を作ることにある⁷⁴。

研修参加者たちはしばしばこのような新しい環境にショックを受け、そこで求められることに反抗することもある。たとえば、参加者は学院での種々の活動に関わる委員会で順番にリーダーを務めることになっているが、研修者の半分は女性であり、男性の参加者の中には女性が指導的立場を担う姿を目にすることも、「女性の下」で働くことも初めての者がいる。また、それまで敵と考えてきた宗教や民族に属する人々と、初めてともに働くことになる者もいる。

あるいは、学院では底辺のものとされる仕事を含めて、あらゆる仕事を手伝わされると知ってショックを受ける者もいる。これは、学院が近年採用している、サーバント・リーダーシップというモットーに関係している。指導者は自ら奉仕することで他者を導くと教えられるのだ。参加者の中には、自分たちのような地域のリーダーや牧師である人間が肉体労働や調理をすることなど、考えられない社会から来る者もいる。つまり、アジア学院での研修は、自分は何者かということについての固定観念を参加者自身が問い直す機会となっているのだ。遠藤抱一が筆者に語ってくれたエピソードは、学院がサーバント・リーダーシップをどう教えているかを知るひとつの手掛かりとなる。ある参加者が、学院の校長とまだ会っていないと不満をもらした。しかし、校長はその日の朝に、彼と一緒にシャベルで肥料をすくっていたのだ⁷⁵。

高見は、研修プログラムの中で受ける「カルチャーショック」の大切さを重視しており、著書の中で、バングラデシュから単身で参加した男性が寮の部屋で声を上げて泣いていたエピソードを記している。その男性は故郷から何週間も便りがなく、家族に不幸があったのではと心配していたのだ。高見によると、バングラデシュでも男性は人前では泣かない習慣である。高見はその男性の泣き声に羨望の気持ちを抱き、日本の社会でも男性は公然と泣いてはならないとされていることに考えを巡らせている⁷⁶。アジア学院のコミュニティでは、参加者も職員も、自分たちの感覚の変化を受け容れることが求められているのだ。

研修プログラムではさまざまな研修旅行もおこなっている。たとえば大阪を訪れて、日雇い労働・貧困・ホームレス・差別などの、日本が抱える問題を参加者に知ってもらおう。水俣への訪問は、

日本が闘ってきた公害の問題に触れる機会となる。このような研修旅行の目的のひとつは、日本は経済的に進んでいる「先進国」だが、解決の難しい基本的問題をいまだに抱えていると、参加者たちに気づかせることにある。こうした気づきは、「先進」諸国は必然的に「後進」諸国よりも「優れて」いるという思い込みを取り払う役割を果たす。また研修旅行を通じて、「先進」諸国が「後進」諸国には存在しない問題を抱えていることが明らかになることもある。

要するに、研修参加者は、宗教・性別・優劣・師弟などの区別がそれまでのような意味を持たない、新しい関係の在り方を体験する機会を与えられる。そのような区別を乗り越えるために、新しいアイデンティティを形成していくこと、また、思いやりや、赦しと寛容などの精神をさらに培っていくことが求められるのだ。

分かち合う宗教性

ともに生きるというモットーには宗教的な意味合いも込められている。アジア学院はキリスト教に基づいてはいるが、あらゆる信仰を持つ者を分け隔てなく受け入れる。高見はこの点について次のように語っている。

アジア学院はキリスト教の信仰に基づいて立っている学校です。神の愛は限りなく大なるものであり、その慈しみはすべてを覆うものです。その神の愛によっている学院には、世界各地からさまざまな宗教に属する人々、あるいは宗教に属さない人々が来られます⁷⁷。

世界には、宗教が人々の間に境界線を引く役目を果たしている地域も多いが、アジア学院は異なる信仰を持つ人や信仰を持たない人、すべての人々をひとつにまとめる共同体作りを目指している。

新しい共同体の形成を目指す高見の構想は、人間は基本的な宗教的経験を共有しており（または共有する可能性を持っており）、その経験は特定の宗教伝統の枠を超えて各伝統の基盤となっている、という信念に基づいている。

宗教的な経験はなにも特別なものではありません。ともに生きている中で、自分が変わり、また周囲もともに変わっていく。この経験が宗教的な、霊的なものなのです。つまり人間がいのちを分かち合って生きること自体、宗教的なのです。世界にはさまざまな宗教があるのですが、それらはそれぞれの地域に生きる人々の状況、歴史や文化的な環境の中で組織化、体系化されてキリスト教、イスラム教、ヒンズー教、仏教などとなったのでしょうか。そこには宗教的体験の文化的な違いがあると言えましょう⁷⁸。

高見によるこのようなレベルでの宗教的体験の強調は、自身の宗教的伝統や文化を捨て去ったり、人々の間にあるさまざまな違いを抑え込むことに向かうものではない。

学院に集う人々が「ともに生きるために」というヴィジョンのもとに努力を続ける中におのずから宗教的体験があるのです。これには特定の組織化された宗教教団の伝統的経験を超越するもの、根源的、実在的なものがあるのです。三三五五集まってくる異なる文化の人々が、それぞれの個性を無視したり押さえたりせず、おおらかに分かち合う宗教的体験。この根源的なものがあって初めて、自分が生きてきたそれぞれの宗教の理解がより深く、新しくなることもあるのです⁷⁹。

つまり高見は、異なる宗教や文化的背景を持つ人々がともに生活することが、各人が自身の宗教についての理解を深め、新しくしていくことにつながると指摘しているのだ。

著書の中で高見は、バングラデシュから研修に参加したイスラム教徒の男性がラマダンの断食を行う姿に感銘を受けたと記している。この男性は、断食の持つ意味を次のように語った。「わたしはこのきよい季節に、断食することが好きです。おなかがすき、喉が渇き、体力が衰えてくると、餓えに苦しむ人々や、弱い立場にいる人々のことを、自分の全存在で理解できます。餓えの痛みを自ら味わう時に、人の痛みを知ります」⁸⁰。

このような経験の分かち合いは、キリスト教徒にとってイスラム教徒をより良く理解する機会となるだけでなく、キリスト教徒が自らの宗教のしきたりにある断食の意味を考える機会にもなる。

また高見は、ともに生活することの中に、キリスト教の聖餐式に相当する宗教的経験があると指摘する。

アジア学院の学生たちは、違った国、違った文化圏から集まっているために、お互いのコミュニケーションがたいへん難しいのですが、その壁を越えさせるものが食べものです。食べものを一緒につくり、分かち合っていく中で、だんだんひとつの共同体ができていきます。教会の聖餐式において、主の身体であるパンとぶどう酒によって、群れがひとつにされるのと同じです⁸¹。

チャールズ・ロングは、宗教と宗教的体験に関する理論を展開するにあたり、宗教的体験は人間の意識の働きから生じるだけでなく、人間の意識があらゆる形の事物と邂逅することから生み出される、という点を強調している⁸²。この観点に照らすと、アジア学院の研修プログラムが、人間にとってきわめて重要なものである食物が環境と人間の関わりの中で生み出され消費されていく過程を、重視していることが見て取れる。

つまり、分かち合いとは単に話し合うだけではなく、周りの環境と調和しながら汗を流してともに働くこと、ともに食べ物を生産すること、またそれをともに消費することを意味する。また分かち合いとは、これらの労働・生産・消費の過程に関わるすべてを、たとえば、土や動植物や昆虫などの自然と人間の共生の在り方を、考慮することでもある。アジア学院の研修プログラムは、人間の生命および共同生活にとって欠かせない「食物」や「分かち合い」を神聖なものと考え、古来からの精神を呼び覚ますものでもある。このような思想は、学院の基本思想を打ち出すために作られた、「Foodlife (食べ物といのち)」という概念によってさらに発展を見せている⁸³。

新しいヒューマニズム？

本書の序論で述べたように、ヒューマニズムという言葉はさまざまな意味合いを含んでいるが、私はここでヒューマニズムという言葉、信仰や文化や時代を越えた対話を開くことの意味で用いる。ヒューマニズムは西洋で発展するにつれ、キリスト教に基づくか否かを問わず、この世界における人間存在の価値と可能性に焦点を当てるようになった⁸⁴。他者から学ぶ方法としての対話への関心は、その相手とのあいだに対話を成立させる共通の人間性が、少なくともある程度存在すると想定している。そのような対話はさまざまな形を取り得る。ルネサンス期のヒューマニズムでは、過去の文明に生きた思想家との対話がしばしば行われた。ミルチャ・エリアーデは、同時代に生きるさまざまな霊的・宗教的・哲学的伝統の代表者のあいだで行う対話を構想した⁸⁵。またキリスト教界には、二十世紀の初めから教会間の理解と協力を目指すさまざまな活動があり、キリスト教の統一性を何らかの形で再構築することを目指して神学者や教会の指導者たちが集い、対話を続けている。そして二十世紀の後半には、異なる宗教の代表者との対話も営むようになった。

高見がアジア学院に託した構想は、キリスト教ヒューマニズムの一形態と見ることができるだろう。高見の構想はキリスト教の精神に基づき、人間は個々の宗教伝統を越えて基盤になる基本的な宗教的経験や傾向を潜在的に共有していることを想定している。そのような宗教的経験は、人々がお互いの文化的・宗教的・個人的な違いを否定や抑圧せずに、ともに働き分かち合うことにより呼び起こされる。そして、そのような経験から新しい形の共同体が生まれるのである。

アジア学院の活動は、より広く知られている他の宗教間対話や相互理解を目指す試みの多くとは一線を画している。アジア学院は学者や「宗教上のエリート」ではなく、草の根レベルの指導者を集わせる。さらに、研修参加者は数日間の会議やシンポジウムではなく、およそ九ヶ月間生活と労働をともにする。そしてそのねらいは宗教間の相互理解に関する文書の作成ではなく、異なる信仰を持つ人々に新しい形の共同体を体験させることなのだ。

またアジア学院が回復させようとしている寛容と共同体は、ルネサンス期を通して西洋に現われたヒューマニズムの考え方にのみ即しているわけではない。近代の国民国家が現われる以前の伝統的な社会の多くで、人々は宗教的寛容と相互尊敬を尊ぶ共同体でともに生きていた。インド・中東・アフリカ・東南アジアなど、現在では時に寛容よりも暴力と結びつく地域でも、伝統的には寛容な共同体があった。伝統的な共同体の土台を崩し破壊した近代の世俗的国家は、伝統的な宗教的寛容の例から学ぶことが多いと、アシス・ナンディは論じている⁸⁶。

最後に、アジア学院の構想の中心的な源のひとつに、高見ら東南アジアコースの職員の、一九七二年のバングラデシュでの体験があることを改めて思い起こしておきたい。彼らが体験した宗教的寛容と協力は危機的情況に対する人々の反応だったが、バングラデシュに存在した伝統的な形の宗教的寛容が少なくとも部分的には反映していた可能性があるだろう。またバングラデシュでの体験は、アジア学院に集う人のあいだには互いに教え学ぶことが多くあるという、信念の源になったとも言えるだろう。

注釈

1. 本稿は以下の第九章として執筆された。リチャード・ガードナー、村上辰雄共編著『宗教と宗教学のあいだ』上智大学出版局、二〇一五年。
2. Kenichi Otsu, et al., eds., *Forty Years of Walking With Grassroots Leaders: The History of ARI 1973-2013* (Nasushiobara-shi, Japan: Asian Rural Institute, 2013), 28.
3. 筆者は二〇一一年四月から二〇一三年四月までの間、フェッツァー財団の教育に関する顧問会議のメンバーを務め、アジア学院のために財団から資金を獲得して、学院がその教育プログラムについて調査を行えるようにした。
4. David Carrasco, “Proem,” in Charles H. Long, *Significations: Signs, Symbols, and Images in the Interpretation of Religion* (Aurora, CO: The Davies Group, 1996), xvii.
5. Ashis Nandy, “The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance,” in *Timewarps: Silent and Evasive Pasts in Indian Politics and Religion* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 77.
6. Toshihiro Takami, “The Fate of Rural Folk in Urbanizing Asia”, 1. (この論文は、一九九六年九月四日に、マニラのラモン・マグサイサイ賞財団で行われた受賞記念フォーラムで発表されたものである。)
7. 根津知広構成「私の生きた刻 2 満州での少年時代」『下野新聞』二〇一〇年七月三十一日。
8. 国家神道については、島蘭進『国家神道と日本人』岩波書店、二〇一〇年を参照。
9. ロングが“signify”と“signification”という言葉で何を論じているかについては、序論を参照。「意味付けられた」は、“signified”の訳語であり、「記号化された」と訳されることも多い。
10. 根津「私の生きた刻 2」。
11. Vicente G. Tirol. “Biography for Toshihiro Takami: Ramon Magsaysay Award 1996 for International Understanding”, 2. (この論文は、一九九六年九月四日にマニラのラモン・マグサイサイ賞財団で行われた受賞記念フォーラム用に準備されたものである。)本論文はインターネット上の、ラモン・マグサイサイ賞財団のホームページで見ることができる。
(<http://www.rmaf.org.ph/newrmaf/main/awardees/awardee/biography/274>).
12. 根津知広構成「私の生きた刻 3 帰国」『下野新聞』二〇一〇年八月十四日。
13. 高見敏弘『土とともに生きる—アジア学院とわたし』日本基督教団出版局、一九九六年、二〇四頁。
14. J. Harry Haines, “Toshihiro Takami: Japan,” in *Ten Hands for God* (Nashville, TN: The Upper Room, 1982), 37.
15. Haines, “Toshihiro Takami,” 30-31.
16. 根津知広構成「私の生きた刻 4 中学進学」『下野新聞』二〇一〇年八月二十一日。
17. 同。
18. 高見『土とともに生きる』、二〇五頁。
19. 根津「私の生きた刻 4」。
20. Tirol, “Biography for Toshihiro Takami,” 3.
21. Tirol, “Biography for Toshihiro Takami,” 3.
22. Tirol, “Biography for Toshihiro Takami,” 3.
23. 根津「私の生きた刻 4」。
24. 根津知広構成「私の生きた刻 5 終戦後」『下野新聞』二〇一〇年八月二十八日。
25. Tirol, “Biography for Toshihiro Takami,” 4.
26. Tirol, “Biography for Toshihiro Takami,” 4.
27. 高見は一九四八年にも似たような経験をしている。汽車の中で隣の乗客が読んでいた新聞の、イギリス人の夫妻が使用人を探す求人広告が目に入った。電話番号を暗記し、次の駅で降りて電話をかけると採用され、家事と料理の一部などを任せられることになった。この仕事は英語力を磨く機会にはなったが、彼にはなつかない飼犬を毎日散歩に連れ出さねばならず、次第に自分がこの犬の召し使いになったように思えてきた。夫妻のもとで働いたのは一年ほどであった。
28. Tirol, “Biography for Toshihiro Takami,” 5 および Haines, “Toshihiro Takami,” 34.
29. Haines, “Toshihiro Takami,” 35.
30. Haines, “Toshihiro Takami,” 35.
31. Haines, “Toshihiro Takami,” 35.
32. Haines, “Toshihiro Takami,” 35.
33. Haines, “Toshihiro Takami,” 36. ここで高見は詩篇第一三九に言及しており、続けてこれを引用している。
34. Tirol, “Biography for Toshihiro Takami,” p.

5. 聖書と高見の出会いに関する詳細については、Haines, “Toshihiro Takami,” 35-36 を参照のこと。
35. Haines, “Toshihiro Takami,” 37.
36. 根津知広構成「私の生きた刻 9 農村伝道神学校」『下野新聞』二〇一〇年十月八日。
37. 農村伝道神学校の歴史に関する詳しい説明としては、星野正興『日本の農村社会とキリスト教』日本キリスト教団出版局、二〇〇五年、二一―二二頁を見よ。
38. 高見『土とともに生きる』、一九頁。
39. 当時の英語での名称は、the East Asian Christian Council (EACC) であった。現在の名称は Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) となっている。
40. 高見『土とともに生きる』、一九―二〇頁。
41. 同、一九―二〇頁。
42. 星野『日本の農村社会とキリスト教』、二一―四一―五頁。
43. 同、二一―六頁。
44. このコースは東南アジアコースと呼ばれているが、実際には当初から台湾と韓国の研修生も受け入れていた。
45. 高見『土とともに生きる』、二〇頁。
46. 同、二一頁。
47. 星野『日本の農村社会とキリスト教』、二一―四頁。
48. 高見『土とともに生きる』、二二頁。
49. 同、二二―二三頁。
50. フィリピンで日本軍の被害を受けた人々に会った際にも同様の経験をしたという。根津知広構成「私の生きた刻 10 妻との出会い」『下野新聞』二〇一〇年十月十六日を参照。
51. 星野『日本の農村社会とキリスト教』、二一―七頁。
52. 本節で紹介した情報の多くは、福本治夫、福本光子『三十五年間導かれて(一九五六年～一九九一年)』出版地・出版年なし、四四―四五頁によるものである。
53. 八木澤は一九六〇年代にはインドネシア、タイ、フィリピンにも出向いて、伝統竹工芸を指導している。
54. Otsu, *Forty Years of Walking With Grassroots Leaders*, 2-3.
55. 一九七二年にバングラデシュから帰国するとすぐに、奉仕団に参加した人々の多くが日本のNGOの草分けのひとつである「ヘルプ・バングラデシュ・コミティ」(現在のシャプラニール)を組織している。
56. 菊地創「未来を拓く三愛精神」『三愛塾運動50周年記念集会報告』一八頁、および「未来を拓く三愛精神」『酪農学園教職員研修会』二〇〇九年八月十八日、一八―一九頁。
57. 根津知広構成「私の生きた刻 11 バングラデシュへ」『下野新聞』二〇一〇年十月十六日。
58. 分かち合いの精神については、菊地もその大切さを力説しており、その起源を三愛運動に求めている。菊地創「未来を拓く三愛精神」『三愛塾運動50周年記念集会報告』、二〇一―二頁。三愛運動については、星野『日本の農村社会とキリスト教』、一七―八―八七頁で論じられている。
59. しかし、アジア学院は、創立に関わったすべての人々が集まった東京での会合(一九七二年九月十六日)を記念して、この日を創立記念日として祝っている。Otsu, *Forty Years of Walking With Grassroots Leaders*, 4.
60. 菊地創「未来を拓く三愛精神」『酪農学園教職員研修会』二〇〇九年八月十八日、一七頁。
61. 高見へのインタビュー(二〇一三年五月二十三日)による。
62. 菊地「未来を拓く三愛精神」『酪農学園教職員研修会』、一九頁。
63. 高見『土とともに生きる』、二五頁。
64. 同、二五―二六頁。
65. この点については、菊地「未来を拓く三愛精神」『三愛塾運動50周年記念集会報告』、二〇頁 および高見『土とともに生きる』、二四―二七頁を参照。
66. 菊地「未来を拓く三愛精神」『酪農学園教職員研修会』、一六―一七頁、および高見『土とともに生きる』、一五―一八頁。
67. 脱植民地化時代の農業と経済発展の問題に関する議論については、フェルナン・ブローデル『文明の文法 第二巻』、みすず書房、一九九五年、二九―三三頁。
68. Takami, “The Fate of Rural Folk in Urbanizing Asia” を参照せよ。
69. 高見『土とともに生きる』二五―二六頁。
70. 同、七六―七九頁。
71. 同、六三―六五頁。
72. 遠藤抱一へのインタビュー(二〇一一年八月二十二日)。
73. 同。
74. 高見『土とともに生きる』、二四―二五頁。
75. 遠藤へのインタビュー。
76. 高見『土とともに生きる』四一―四六頁。
77. 同、二八頁。
78. 同、二八―二九頁。
79. 同、二九頁。
80. 同、五七頁。

81. 同、一一四―一五頁。
82. Charles H. Long, "Indigenous People, Materialities, and Religion: Outline for a New Orientation to Religious Meaning," in Jennifer I. M. Reid, ed., *Religion and Global Culture: New Terrain in the Study of Religion and the Work of Charles H. Long* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003), 172.
83. 菊地「未来を拓く三愛精神」『酪農学園教職員研修会』、二〇―二一頁。
84. ヒューマニズムについてのこうした理解は、フェルナン・ブローデル『文明の文法 第二巻』三七―五五頁の議論に依拠するものである。
85. ミルチャ・エリアーデ「新しいヒューマニズム」(前田耕作訳『宗教の歴史と意味 エリアーデ著作集第八巻』、せりか書房、一九八一年)、一四―三〇頁。
86. Nandy, "The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance," *Time Warps*, pp. 61-88.

Richard A. Gardner

Asian Rural Institute: Living Together with the Earth

Asian Rural Institute (ARI) is a vocational training school established in April of 1973 on five hectares of land at Nishinasuno, Tochigi-ken, Japan. The purpose of ARI is to train grassroots leaders from throughout the world in organic farming techniques, leadership skills, and community building skills. At present, approximately thirty young rural leaders gather each year at ARI to live, work, and study together from April to December. From its founding through 2013, over 1,200 people from over fifty countries have studied at ARI.¹ Based on a vision of Christianity that includes tolerance and respect for other religions, ARI offers students the chance to live and study together in a multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural community. ARI's aim is not simply to teach techniques for sustainable agriculture; it also aims to instill in students the values and skills needed for creating more harmonious communities throughout the world where people of different faiths, ethnicities, and languages are living together.

As is appropriate for an organization that values community building, a number of people were deeply involved in the founding of ARI. As many have noted, however, it was Takami Toshihiro (1926 -) who supplied much of the vision for ARI. Takami also served as the director of ARI from its inception in 1973 until 1990 and was the main spokesperson for the group for many years. In 1996, Takami was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Prize for International Understanding, often referred to as the Nobel Peace Prize of Asia. This essay will focus primarily on Takami because there are writings and interviews available that allow us to at least partially understand how his life and ARI were shaped by and related to larger historical events: Japanese colonialism, rural poverty in Japan, war, postwar poverty in Japan, Japan's economic recovery, and Japan's efforts to initiate new forms of relations with their former

colonies and other peoples throughout Asia and the world. While the details of Takami's life are interesting in and of themselves, they also stand for the experience of many Japanese who lived through this difficult period of history.

Takami's life and ARI itself illustrate a number of the themes found throughout this book.² In relation to Lawrence Sullivan's essay on the Fetzer Institute, ARI might be seen as an example of love, forgiveness, and related values in action.³ The Fetzer Institute has, in fact, recognized ARI as just such an example and awarded ARI a grant to fund a study of its program.⁴ Through its emphasis on organic farming techniques and sustainable agriculture, ARI might also be viewed as resisting one form of the technological imperative discussed by William R. Lafleur.⁵ The development of "scientific," large-scale farming techniques, including the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers, has contributed to the growth of food production in parts of the world. It has also caused environmental damage, negatively impacted small-scale farmers, reduced food self-sufficiency in some countries, and raised questions about whether such "scientifically" advanced modes of agriculture are environmentally sustainable.

Takami's life and ARI also illustrate some of the central concerns of Charles Long and Ashis Nandy.⁶ At the heart of their work is an effort to untangle the ways in which colonialists and the colonized have interpreted and shaped each other. Both hope that new forms of human community might develop by overcoming the sorts of misleading dualities that colonialism engendered. In terms of Long's thought, David Carrasco has described the result of freeing ourselves from such oppositions as "primitive/civilized" and undeveloped/developed in the following terms: "we will be touched and gain insight and a new conception of human community may emerge."⁷ ARI might also be understood as consciously attempting to create a situation of "culture contact" from which new forms and visions of community might emerge.⁸

A Childhood of Poverty in Manchuria and Japan

Following the Meiji Restoration, Japan amazed the world by rapidly transforming itself into a major economic, industrial, and military power. Its victories in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and Russo-Japanese War (1905-05) resulted in colonies in Taiwan, Korea, and the southern half of Sakhalin. The latter war also enabled Japan to establish a presence and influence in Manchuria. The 1930s witnessed increasing Japanese military activity and expansion into China. Manchuria was occupied in 1931 and other parts of China invaded in 1937. As Ashis Nandy has suggested, Japan countered western imperialism and colonialism by attempting to become like the West.⁹

But not all was well in Japan. In the early part of the 20th century, as well as other times

before in its history, Japan had difficulty providing enough food for its people. The situation was particularly difficult for poor, rural farmers. There was simply not enough land to support a growing population. This is one of reasons that many Japanese emigrated to other countries throughout this period. It is also one of the reasons that Japan, imitating western countries, developed its own colonies.

In an effort to escape the rural poverty in Kyûshû, Takami's parents emigrated to Fushun, Manchuria, where his father found work with the Japanese-owned Southern Manchurian Railway Company. The fifth of six children, Takami was born there on September 30, 1926. His earliest memory is of a red sky, as bright as daytime, though it was midnight. A group of Chinese, possibly communist insurgents, had attacked a nearby Japanese settlement. This was in 1932, shortly after the Manchurian Incident and the invasion of Manchuria by Japanese troops.¹⁰ Takami was thus born into a colonial world marked by the ideology of Japanese colonialism that understood the Japanese as being a superior "race." Within this world of Japanese colonialism, non-Japanese were, in Long's term, signified. In other words, they were named in such a way that rendered them inferior.

Takami has said that as a child he took this ideology and the oppositions it embodied for granted. In looking back on his childhood in Manchuria, he describes the colonial society as one marked by inequality, oppression, and discrimination. Japanese, even those who were at the lower end of the social and economic spectrum in Japan, understood themselves as being in the superior position relative to the Manchurians and Han Chinese.

Most Japanese in Manchuria were arrogant and looked down on the Manchu and Han, who were discriminated against under the Japanese regime....I felt privileged and acted big because I was a "Japanese child," and looked down on the Manchu. It took me a long time to realize how foolish I had been. Actually the war was over by the time I came to my senses. It is an experience that will remain with me throughout my life as an admonishment.¹¹

Takami also notes here that signs of superiority and inferiority were expressed, not just in words, but also built into the practice of everyday life: Japanese had, for example, their own special gate to board trains.

In May of 1937, when Takami was ten, his parents decided to move back to Japan since things were not going well financially in Manchuria. Because they had not been a "success," Takami's parents were too embarrassed to return to their home village in Kyûshû. They chose instead to settle at Miyazu, a small fishing village about four hours by train from Kyoto. A cousin living nearby had promised to help them start anew. They found, however, that they could not escape poverty. Takami's father became increasingly depressed and suffered a stroke that paralyzed half of his body. His mother often had to pawn their clothes to get food.

To support themselves, they took in boarders, and Takami's mother sold fish and kimono cloth door to door.¹²

Takami was thus exposed to the arbitrary, ironic nature of perceptions of inferiority and superiority resulting from Japanese colonial ideology. Though they were "superior" to the Han Chinese and Manchurians while in Manchuria, their lack of "success" made his parents too embarrassed to return to Kyūshū where they feared they would have been perceived as failures or inferior. Takami also notes with some irony that the village children in Miyazu thought of him as coming from a rich family and thus being superior. They thought so because he had a school uniform and shoes, brought from Manchuria, while they had only everyday clothes and straw sandals. As a result they did not bully Takami.¹³

Life in a Zen Temple

When he graduated elementary school in 1938, Takami was able to continue his education only because he was granted a scholarship to attend a five-year public high school in Kyoto.¹⁴ There was, however, one condition for receiving the scholarship: Takami had to live at a Zen temple and study Zen throughout the five years of school. At the age of twelve, Takami left home for Kyoto where he took up residence at Senbutsuji, a temple of the Rinzai school of Zen. Takami has summed up what he learned through his years of living at a Zen temple as follows.

During my five years of living at a Zen temple during high school, I learned through my body many important things, more than I can ever hope to describe. I learned the spirit of Zen meditation, working meditation, the tea ceremony, flower arrangement, etc. I also learned an appreciation of Japanese gardens and fine arts, cleaning as an exercise in mindfulness, and Buddhist temple cooking. There is no end to the number of things I learned. To put it simply, I think I was able to begin to develop "a basic attitude to living."¹⁵

Takami has said that his Zen training, which involved much sitting meditation and learning to treat all action as a form of meditation, taught him the importance of discipline.

Illustrating his view that people of different faiths have much to learn from each other, Takami thinks that Zen monastic discipline has much to teach Christians.

I think that monastic discipline is very important for us today, especially for us Protestants. We seem to be losing discipline in our lives, losing the ability to sit really still and look at something or nowhere; we need that kind of discipline that will keep us free, a free individual under God.... I think I learned some of those things from my Zen experience.¹⁶

Takami has also stressed that his monastic training involved working daily in the temple's landscape garden. This experience of working daily with the earth and plants taught him about the importance of humans and nature working together.¹⁷ The title of his book *Living Together with the Earth* might be seen as applying to his life both at ARI and at Senbutsuji.

Takami has described his years at school in Kyoto as being relatively peaceful and sheltered from the worst effects of the ongoing war. Thanks to offerings from temple parishioners, there was plenty of food at the temple. While living at Senbutsuji, Takami attended Kyoto 3rd High School, a public school. In addition to the regular subjects, students received basic military training and wore khaki-colored school uniforms resembling military uniforms. This was a time when the Japanese military was actively expanding Japan's colonial empire in Asia. Schools were mandated to inculcate patriotism and reverence for the Emperor. The army and the special police forces kept close watch on the schools.¹⁸

Despite the climate of militarism, Takami recalls that the education and atmosphere at Kyoto 3rd High School was relatively liberal. The reason for this Takami attributes, at least in part, to a tradition of liberalism among the people and especially teachers in Kyoto. Though they could not speak openly, some of the teachers at his school hinted that they did not support the mandatory military training and education required by the government. This was a time, Takami recalls, when one could not speak openly and a certain amount of "cunning" was required.¹⁹ Teachers were able to "hint" that they did not believe in the current militaristic propaganda. This was, in other words, a time when Takami was given the possibility of realizing that the way that the current colonial ideology defined things was perhaps not fully true.

Reading became for Takami a way of transcending the present moment and its limitations. He describes his teachers at school as being inspiring. And because he lived in a temple and was thus free from worldly distractions, he was able to devote himself to reading and make use of the temple's extensive library. "Through reading I was able to get beyond East versus West and the gulf separating different ages by drawing on the wisdom of people of the past."²⁰ The relatively liberal atmosphere provided by his school and Senbutsuji seems to have allowed Takami to begin developing a perspective, even if only at an intellectual level, that went beyond dualities embodied in Japanese wartime ideology.

Life in the Midst of War

Despite the broader perspective his reading provided him, Takami admits that he was not completely free of influence from government propaganda.

When I was fifteen years old, World War II started. I did not understand what it meant to fight against the Allied Powers. The newspapers and radio reported that the Japanese army was

winning in the war front in Southeast Asia, but I did not know where the countries involved were on the world map. Since there were no air raids in Kyoto, we did not feel that we were losing the war. Even at the end of the war when many Japanese were suffering from a lack of food, we had plenty of food at Senbutsuji because temple members brought in food and sweets as offerings.²¹

As he read the newspapers reporting on the war, Takami encountered information and stories about countries in Asia—such the Philippines and Taiwan—for the first time. The newspaper accounts depicted the Japanese troops as always victorious and as bringing peace and justice to the peoples of Asia.²² It was not until the end of the war that Takami was able to reflect more deeply on this period of history he was living through and realize that the rhetoric or propaganda of colonialism masked a different, more tragic reality. It was not until considerably after the end of the war that Takami actually met people from Asia who had been defined in the war period as people who were inferior.

In March of 1943, Takami graduated from high school. While this was a time when young Japanese men were under great pressure to join the armed forces, Takami initially resisted enlisting. “I am not a very brave man in that way, so I tried to stay away from the armed forces as long as possible,” Takami has admitted. “But finally the draft paper came, and I thought that rather than being drafted I should enlist.”²³ Takami decided to enlist in the navy and, because he was a high school graduate with some mathematical ability, he was assigned to the Navy Electric-Engineering School at Fujisawa in Kanagawa Prefecture where he studied electronics and radar. In addition to studying radar and other advanced technologies, Takami was also trained in how to arm himself with explosives and throw himself under enemy tanks. Takami has noted that “Many of my friends who were drafted and sent to the front didn’t come back. I was saved.”²⁴

The End of the War and Post-war Poverty

It was while he was at the naval school in Fujisawa that he heard the Emperor announce the end of the war on radio on August 15, 1945. The announcement came as a shock to Takami: “I heard the Emperor announcing the end of the war on August 15. Since we had always been told that Japan was winning the war, it was a great shock.”²⁵ As soon as the end of the war was announced, the senior officers at the naval school raided the school’s supplies, loaded them into trucks, and left leaving no instructions for the students. The students had no choice but to pack their belongings, help themselves to what provisions remained, and try to find their way home. Believing the government’s propaganda that American and European soldiers were like devils and would freely kill Japanese, Takami took a long round about way, hoping to avoid American troops, to his home in Miyazu. His family delightedly welcomed him home

and were very grateful for the sugar he had been able to bring from the Naval School.²⁶

The situation Takami found at home was a difficult one. Towards the end of the war, Takami's father had died, partially due to malnutrition, in May of 1945. Takami later noted that it was difficult to grieve during the midst of war. His younger brother was suffering from a ruptured appendix and had no access to medicine or adequate food. His family was also afraid of the Americans and worried about what the occupation would be like.

So we just stayed inside the house and remained quiet. My younger brother died from sickness and also from fear. I found myself, despite all the Zen discipline, becoming a very wicked person. When we were hungry, I often went to the faraway mountains to pick young leaves and grass for eating. We were very hungry, and I was quite selfish. I only wanted to get food for myself, not for my family or even for my brother who was suffering tremendously. When I think of how wicked I could be in a hungry situation, I realize even today that I cannot be a good and righteous man without help from God and the people around me.²⁷

Despite the sense of selfishness Takami admits to in this passage, he did spend the next few years working to support his family as best he could. In addition to working at the local port as a labourer, he also took fish, potatoes, and rice from the village to sell on the black market in the city. When he could not find a job, he hiked over the mountains to the seacoast where he could dive for clams. With sacks of clams, he would climb back over the mountains to his village where he could exchange them for salt or rice.²⁸

A Change in Life

Takami's life underwent a change through an encounter with an American missionary. While riding a train in Kobe in 1951, Takami noticed an ad for a cook in an English language newspaper someone beside him was reading.²⁹ The ad had been placed by Albert Faurot, an American missionary who taught art and music at Kobe Women's College. Faurot had recently arrived from China where missionaries were being evacuated following the Communist takeover in 1949. Faurot was unmarried and living by himself.

Takami describes his interview with Faurot as one of the times when he "wilfully cheated and lied" to find work or earn extra money. He told Faurot he could cook. Faurot told him to come back and start work the next day. Takami later recalled that Faurot was desperate. "He was a single man and even today I think he doesn't know how to make coffee." Though he had done some basic cooking at the Zen temple and with an occupation family he had worked for, Takami felt he was misrepresenting himself by claiming to be a cook.³⁰ On the way home from the job interview, Takami stopped at a big bookstore in Osaka and bought *The Fannie Farmer*

Cookbook. After starting work with Faurot, he would translate recipes every night from the cookbook using a dictionary. “For some time I never served him the same kind of breakfast or dinner,” Takami has said. “I think that to this day, he believes that I’m a professional cook.”³¹

The meeting with Faurot proved to be transformational for Takami. His encounter with Faurot was not an encounter with a “devil.”

When I began working for this man, my life began to change. I saw that he trusted me. When I said I was a cook, he said, “Okay.” He fixed a salary and hired me. When I went with all my dirty clothes and one pair of torn rubber boots to wear, he said, “Okay, you will start living with me in the same house.”³²

Faurot gave Takami a room next to his own and outfitted it with a new desk, chairs, curtains, and bedding. This was the first time Takami had ever had a room to himself. Takami was particularly impressed, however, with the way Faurot trusted him.

He gave me a large amount of money and a small notebook to keep accounts. He said my responsibility was to keep the house, plan meals, write menus, do the shopping, keep all records in the book, pay the bills, and report only once a month to him. I never met this kind of person before. I was ready to cheat and I knew how. But when I experienced such trust, this really began to change my own life. I couldn't cheat this person. I began to trust this person and I began to trust myself.³³

Takami’s life seems to have been transformed by someone, from a different culture and of a nation now occupying Japan, accepting, trusting, and being willing to live together with him.

This was a transformation that seems to have been brought about not by some effort at ideological persuasion but by a number of small every day acts. Faurot trusted Takami. Faurot did not seem to care about Takami’s clothes as a marker of difference or a relation of superiority and inferiority. Despite his dirty clothes, Faurot said “live with me.” This is quite different from Takami’s experiences in Manchuria and Miyazu where clothes, ethnic identity, and wealth were markers of distinction that prohibited people from “living together.” Faurot seems to have enabled Takami to break free of the signifying power of things such as the quality of one’s clothes.

Becoming a Christian

According to Takami, Faurot also never made an explicit effort to convert Takami to Christianity.

A very interesting thing was that he never told me to come to church with him. But I saw him reading the Bible in English, and I saw him going to church every Sunday, although at first I did not know where he was going. I asked him to take me to church someday—a Japanese church. The sermon preached by Dr. Hatanaka, president of Kobe College, was impressive, so I kept going.³⁴

With his interest in Christianity awakened, Takami began attending a Bible study group and laboriously translating, with the help of a dictionary, from an English-language New Testament he had received from a missionary. He found the Gospel of John particularly compelling.

When I came to the Gospel of John, this particular book spoke to me directly. Many times I had a very strong spiritual experience. Often, when I was reading a passage, I felt like I was being exposed—that God in Christ was speaking to me directly. When I felt that I was being exposed, I felt I could hide nothing; everything about myself was known to someone else—God—and I was filled with fear, a special kind of fear... And so today I can truly confess with the psalmist that every hair of mine is numbered by God.³⁵

When he read the letters of Paul, Takami said that “all the life that I had thus far experienced became meaningful.”³⁶

Soon after this, Takami asked Dr. Hatanaka to allow him to join the church. This request entailed a telling argument between the two.

We had a very interesting argument. I was formerly a Zen monk. I said the Bible tells us that if we are baptized by the Spirit, we are already a Christian. “Why do we have to go through this ritual in the church?” I asked. “Well,” Dr. Hatanaka said, “if you do not feel like it, that’s all right; you have been baptized by the Spirit. That may be true. But how can I tell that you have been baptized already unless you are ready to confess before the public in this ceremony?”³⁷

Takami recognized the logic of the argument and was baptized the following Sunday. At the same time, this “argument” illustrates Takami’s vision and understanding that the movement of the “Spirit” is not limited to Christianity or any one religion. This is perhaps another instance where Takami recognized the limits of “signification,” the dangers of making clear cut distinctions between religions, between who is saved and not saved, and thus between who is inferior and superior. Takami also showed himself willing to question what might be termed the “European” reading of the Bible.

Eight months after Takami started working for him, Faurot decided to leave Japan and

move to Silliman University in Dumaguete City in the Philippines. Before leaving, however, Faurot asked friends in Nebraska to help raise funds to send Takami to the United States to study. The Nebraska Congregational Church youth group had already established a “scholarship for reconciliation” fund for students from Japan. The youth group embraced the cause for “Tommy” Takami and raised sufficient funds for him to travel to the U.S. and attend college.³⁸

In August of 1952 Takami traveled by boat to San Francisco and then by bus to Doane College in Nebraska where he majored in history. Following graduation, Takami was awarded a scholarship to attend Yale Divinity School. Takami postponed his admission to Yale for a year in order to return home to see his mother in the autumn of 1956. While back in Japan, he secured a job as a reporter for the *Mainichi Daily News*. While the president of the newspaper tried to convince him to stay on and become a journalist, Takami decided to pursue his dream of becoming a minister. In the autumn of 1957, he returned to the United States to pursue theological studies in hope of being ordained as a minister. Though his mother passed away soon after his departure, Takami did not have the money for the trip and the funeral would have been completed before he could have returned. On June 16, 1960 he was ordained as a minister in the United Church of Christ and graduated from Yale Divinity School soon thereafter.³⁹

Tsurukawa Rural Evangelical Seminary and the Southeast Asian Course

After returning to Japan in September of 1960, Takami served as a minister, first at Ôgimachi Church in Osaka and then at Yakuno Church in Kyoto. In Kyoto, Takami was introduced to Kimata Bin who taught in the Southeast Asian Course (SEAC) that was attached to Tsurukawa Rural Evangelical Seminary in Machida city in Tokyo. In response to an invitation from Kimata, Takami joined the staff of the school in September of 1961. He was soon appointed section manager of the SEAC, probably because of his ability to teach in English. Takami later became director and served in that position until 1973.⁴⁰

In many ways, the SEAC was the forerunner of Asian Rural Institute. The Rural Evangelical Seminary was established in 1948 in Hino City in Tokyo and moved to Tsurukawa in Machida, also a part of Tokyo, in 1956. No longer able to rely upon the import of foodstuffs from its colonies and having suffered a devastating defeat in the war, Japan was struggling with the problem of food shortages and hunger. The occupation authorities had also instituted a program of land reform in Japan; the holdings of large landowners were broken up and redistributed to what had in effect been tenant farmers. Japan was faced, in other words, with the task of radically reforming its agricultural system. Protestant churches in North America and Northern Europe recognized the need for a revitalization of Japan’s agricultural base and rural areas and provided financial support as well as sending teachers and missionaries.

Included here was support, both in terms of money and staff, for Rural Evangelical Seminary that was intended primarily to support the training of Japanese Christians to work in rural communities in Japan.⁴¹

The SEAC had its roots in a meeting of the Southeast Asia Rural Evangelical Association held at the seminary in 1956. Participants from Southeast Asia requested that the seminary establish a training course for rural leaders from Southeast Asia.⁴² In May of 1959, the founding meeting of East Asian Christian Council was held at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. A number of participants again requested that the seminary establish a training program for rural leaders from Southeast Asia. The participants from countries outside of Japan felt that the basis of Japan's postwar economic development lay in the success of its agricultural sector. They wanted to study Japanese agricultural techniques and reforms to help the development of their newly independent countries.⁴³

Mutô Ken, then the president of Rural Evangelical Seminary, conveyed this request to the seminary on his return to Japan from the meeting. The SEAC was established in 1960.⁴⁴ Support from North American churches and missionaries helped make the rapid establishment of the program possible. As Hoshino Masaoki has explained, the establishment of the SEAC coincided with a change in the Japanese government's policy on agriculture and, in 1961, the enactment of the Basic Agricultural Law.⁴⁵ The new law emphasized the need to move towards more large-scale agriculture, raise the wages of farmers, and rationalize and mechanize agriculture. While there were good points to the new policy, it was based in many ways on the North American model of agriculture. Japan and many parts of Asia did not have the vast expanses of open, non-mountainous land or the climate upon which the North American model was built.

According to Hoshino, Takami recognized the limits of the North American approach to agriculture and worked to develop a curriculum that was more suited to the actual agricultural and environmental situation in Asia. In addition, Takami tried to draw on traditional Japanese farming techniques and encourage interaction between Southeast Asian participants and farmers in Japan.⁴⁶

The establishment of the SEAC marked a radical change for Rural Evangelical Seminary since it had initially focused on training Japanese to work in Japanese rural areas. The SEAC, on the other hand, was focused on attempting to help and provide training for rural, Christian leaders from Southeast Asia.⁴⁷ In Takami's opinion, however, the program was established without much reflection on the relation of the newly independent Southeast Asian countries with former colonial powers such as Japan. In addition, Takami felt the problems posed by ethnic, cultural, and religious differences were not sufficiently taken into account. For the most part, the SEAC assumed that rural leaders just needed to be taught the advanced agricultural techniques of Japan, North America, and Europe.⁴⁸ Takami sensed, in other words, that

the legacies of colonialism had not been fully reflected on and taken into account.

War Responsibility

From the time of the founding of the SEAC, the leaders of the seminary understood it as representing an apology for Japan's action during the colonial period and the war period. Takami quotes Kimata Toshi, the vice-president of the seminary at the time, as saying: "The establishment of the SEAC is meant as an admission of responsibility and apology for the suffering Japan inflicted on neighbouring countries during the war."⁴⁹ This statement also reflected the view of Mutô Takeshi, the president of the seminary. Hoshino has noted that this apology for the war, which occurred in 1960, predated the United Church of Christ in Japan's formal recognition of responsibility and apology for the war by seven years.⁵⁰

Since 1961 when he first became involved with the SEAC, Takami says he has always worked with the thought of war responsibility on his mind. While working at ARI, Takami says he frequently discussed this topic both within and without Japan. But he did not put his thoughts on war responsibility into writing until the publication of *Living Together With the Earth* in 1996.⁵¹ He thinks that an acknowledgment of war responsibility is not something that ends with a publication of acknowledgment but something that should be expressed daily in one's work.

The first students to attend the SEAC came from countries such as Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Burma. Takami thus had the chance to meet actual people from the countries he had read about during the war period. All of them were male and Christian ministers. Many of them had suffered much at the hands of the Japanese military during the war years.

Some had seen family members and relatives murdered right before their eyes, some had scars on their backs from being stabbed with bayonets, and some could no longer hear because of being brutally beaten about the head. But when they talked about such experiences, they were calm and spoke without making accusations. Sometimes when they recalled tragic events they broke down crying. Sensing the pain I felt as I just listened without saying a word, they spoke very gently and kindly to me. For me that was not just a painful but a very awe-inspiring moment. I shared the pain of those who had taken the trouble to speak with me of their pain. I was moved to try to live together with others by sharing our sufferings. It was also a blessed moment. I did not think of trying to avoid such times or to disregard the pain and suffering. Rather than avoiding such feelings, I felt there was a great indescribable power urging me to meaningfully live together with these people.⁵²

This encounter with those who had suffered under Japanese colonialism and military rule seems to have had a profound impact on Takami. The encounter began with victims of Japanese military rule expressing their pain and suffering calmly and without recrimination. Takami notes that he felt he was able to share their pain. This is described as a “blessed moment” and awoke in Takami a desire to “live together with others by sharing our sufferings.” The idea of “sharing” (*wakachiau*) would also become central to Takami’s understanding of ARI. While Takami had, earlier in life, perceived those of other Asian countries in terms of inferiority, he now experienced them as people who had something to teach. They were “victims” who showed no hate and thus opened up new possibilities of human community.⁵³

The Founding of ARI: Nishinasuno and Bangladesh

The early 1970s were a difficult time for Tsurukawa Rural Evangelical Seminary and the SEAC. The seminary was experiencing financial difficulties, and there were differences of opinion about how the existing programs within the seminary should be reformed. To meet the financial difficulties, there was also the possibility of the school’s farmland being sold off. While Takami and other members of the SEAC were in favour of maintaining the training course in its current form, others felt that the seminary’s resources might be best used otherwise.⁵⁴ Given this uncertain situation, members of the SEAC, including Takami, began thinking that it would be best that the SEAC separate from the seminary and establish itself as an independent school.

In various ways, the founding of ARI was made possible by many of the residents of Nishinasuno in Tochigi-ken who had developed connections with the SEAC and had a tradition of reaching out to people from other Asian countries. Perhaps the most important figure in Nishinasuno was Fukumoto Haruo, a graduate of Rural Evangelical Seminary, who became the pastor of Nishinasuno Church in 1958.⁵⁵ With Fukumoto’s encouragement, Yagizawa Keizô, a famous bamboo craftsman, ran workshops for students from Asia starting in 1959.⁵⁶ Gunji Masayoshi, the president of a local company, had also been involved in hosting interns from the Philippines at his company and donating used farm equipment to the Philippines.

In 1962, Fukumoto returned to the seminary for a period of study and met Takami for the first time. Fukumoto proposed to Takami that students of the SEAC be invited to Nishinasuno for a two-week study program in the summer. The program was eventually established with the cooperation of a number of local groups. It was also decided to invite students of the SEAC to give talks for the Nishinasuno UNESCO Association. Talks given by students from Korea and Taiwan resulted in the creation of sister school relations between schools in Nishinasuno and schools in those countries.

In the start of April in 1972, Takami visited Fukumoto in Nishinasuno and informally

asked whether he might provide help in establishing the SEAC as an independent school. A few days later Takami departed for Bangladesh as head of the Bangladesh Ecumenical Power Tiller Project that was backed by both Caritas Japan and the Japanese Christian Association. A group of fifty volunteers had been organized to help rural farmers recover from devastating floods. Both Kikuchi Hajime and Makino Kazuho of the SEAC also participated in the program and traveled to Bangladesh.

For the members of the SEAC, their experience in Bangladesh seems to have been transformative and further inspired them to establish a new school. Kikuchi describes his experience in Bangladesh as helping him to really understand the plight of rural farmers throughout the world. In addition, he also describes the relief project in Bangladesh as one of the main sources of inspiration for establishing ARI. According to Kikuchi, work on establishing ARI did not begin in earnest until the completion of the Bangladesh project in the summer.⁵⁷

Takami has also described his experience in Bangladesh as playing an important role in his vision of ARI. Two things deeply impressed Takami. One was the way in which people from different faiths and cultures were able to work together. While many of the volunteers were Christian, many had no religious affiliation but struck Takami as being “deeply spiritual.” Takami also witnessed the volunteers from Japan, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and those of other faiths joyously working together in community. The other was the way in which poor farmers who did not have enough to feed themselves so generously shared their food. Those who were supposed to be helped ended up helping those who had come to help.⁵⁸ As noted, the simple notion of sharing would become central to ARI’s philosophy.⁵⁹

With the return of the SEAC staff members from Bangladesh, Fukumoto began urgently working on behalf of the new school and called on members of the local community for help. Of particular importance was Gunji Masayoshi who helped Fukumoto locate appropriate land for the school. In addition, Gunji and his mother Aya provided important financial backing to secure funds for the purchase of the land and to cover other expenses. Tajima Tokuji also provided backing and support for securing loans.⁶⁰ A number of local construction firms also provided their services at a considerable discount. Staff members of the SEAC, including Kikuchi and Makino, helped and consulted with Fukumoto throughout. During much of the late summer and early fall, Takami was in America attempting to raise funds for the new school. There was also considerable administrative work to be taken care of in getting governmental approval for establishing the school. Walter Shore, an American missionary assigned to the Nishinasuno Church, became the main sponsor of the new school. With Fukumoto’s help, he undertook, among other things, the difficult process of getting approval for the school from local and prefectural officials.⁶¹

The efforts to prepare the facilities, to get government approval for establishing the school, and to secure sufficient financial support were a desperate rush against time. Official

approval to establish the school was not received until March 31, 1973. The new school with the name of Asian Rural Institute was officially opened the next day on April 1, 1973 with the school motto “That We May Live Together.”

A New Vision and Orientation

While ARI owed much to the SEAC, the new school differed in many ways and expressed a new vision. While the SEAC was limited in principle to Christians, the new school was open to those of all faiths. According to Kikuchi, at least some of the staff of the SEAC had been questioning for some time whether it was proper to limit participants to Christians only and wished to establish a school open to all.⁶² As suggested above, the decision to open the school to all, regardless of faith, was also influenced by Takami and Kikuchi’s experience of people of different faith and no faith working together harmoniously in Bangladesh.⁶³ A decision was also soon made to open the program to participants from outside Asia.

The school motto, “That We May Live Together,” also seems to have been influenced by the experience in Bangladesh.⁶⁴ Its most basic meaning expresses the desire and purpose of people living together in harmony. In Takami’s understanding, “That We May Live Together” is a theme running throughout the Bible. He sees one of the main themes of the Bible as being the way in which God, people, and all of God’s creation exist in a mutual relationship of sharing. In a number of senses, the motto expresses the value of going beyond many of the dualities that separate people.⁶⁵ Included here are distinctions such as East/West, North/South, developed countries/undeveloped countries, and those helping/ those being helped. The aim of ARI, in other words, was to create not a school where those from the developed world taught and helped those of the undeveloped world but a community where people from all over the world came to live together and share in order to teach and help each other.

In another sense, the fundamental aim of the school had also changed. While teaching agricultural skills was still an important element, the major purpose had shifted to engage participants and ARI staff in the project of creating a new sense of community that was multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural. It was hoped that participants could then take the sense of new possibilities for human communities back to their home communities.⁶⁶ This shift also seems to owe much to the experience of members of the SEAC in Bangladesh.

Local Organic Farming

As with the SEAC, one of the basic aims of ARI was to train local leaders in agricultural skills so that they might help improve local, small-scale farming in rural communities in Asia and other parts of the world. Within a year or so of ARI’s founding, it was also decided that ARI

would practice and teach organic farming techniques and try to be as self-sufficient in food as possible. Kikuchi's role was central here because he was a graduate of Rakunô College, an agricultural school located in Hokkaidô, where organic farming had been studied and taught since at least the early 1950s.⁶⁷

ARI's adaption of organic farming techniques and its emphasis on sustainable agriculture might be seen as a form of resistance to a form of what might be termed economic and technological imperatives. ARI's approach here must be seen in the context of a post-colonial world. While most colonies had been granted independence following the Second World War, the international economic system in many ways was still marked by colonial structures. The so-called "Third World" to a large extent still was viewed as a source of raw materials and foodstuffs and the developed world as the center for manufacture and finance. Even efforts to encourage economic development, including industrialization and urbanization, in "Third World" countries often had negative consequences. Some, as Takami has noted, viewed Western aid programs as "development dictatorship."⁶⁸

This was also a time when there was a growing move towards large-scale farming, often controlled by domestic and international corporations, and the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers throughout the world. These developments were, of course, able to increase agricultural production, in some senses, in many parts of the world. Such approaches were understood to be economically and agriculturally rational, scientific, and advanced. There were also, however, a number of negative consequences. As has been well documented, the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides has often had a devastating effect on the soil. In addition, the chemicals were having a negative impact on plants, animals, and insects in the surrounding environment and thus upsetting the delicate ecological environment.⁶⁹ In many places, it has ended up rendering the land virtually useless for agricultural production. Many have thus advocated the need to develop sustainable forms of agriculture.

In addition, food production, both by corporations and some local, independent farmers, was redirected away from traditional crops to more lucrative crops that could be sold to the developed world. As a result, many traditional farmers were losing the knowledge to produce crops to support their own food needs. Others did not have the funds to purchase expensive fertilizers and pesticides. Thus, while the introduction of scientific, large-scale forms of agriculture may have allowed some corporations and governments to reap economic benefits, it also led to the destruction of traditional farming techniques, the impoverishment of local small-scale farmers, and a loss of food self-sufficiency in many local communities.⁷⁰

The adaption of organic farming methods by ARI was meant to help small-scale, local farmers develop sustainable agricultural practices. Just as importantly, it was understood as being a means of restoring and healing the relation of people and nature. Takami took the school motto to mean not just that people should live together through sharing but also that

people should conceive of themselves as living together and sharing with nature. Food is not just a product of human labour; it is a product of people and nature working together. If nature—including plants, animals, and insects—is not valued, people will not be able to sustain themselves. ARI aims, in other words, not just towards a harmonious human community but also a harmonious ecological community.⁷¹

ARI's Training Program

ARI's training program aims at creating a community where participants can develop leadership skills, share their knowledge with one another, learn organic farming techniques, and experience life in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural, and multi-religious community. Included in ARI's training program are the following: 1) classroom instruction by ARI staff, 2) participants instructing ARI staff and other participants, 3) daily work by all on the farm, 4) participation in and rotating leadership on committees overseeing ARI's activities, 5) visits to local Japanese farmers, and 6) home stays with Japanese families. One aim of the training is to help participants "to more effectively serve in their communities as they work for the poor, hungry, and marginalized."⁷²

Participants from outside of Japan are local grassroots leaders recommended by organizations in their local communities. They are not members of the elite segments of the countries from which they come. ARI's participants (including Christians, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, and those of other faiths) tend to come from communities where identity is defined by factors such as religion, ethnicity, gender, class, and caste. These factors, quite naturally, tend to structure the relations of people in terms of oppositions such as inferiority/superiority, minority/majority, and poor/rich. While ARI does teach organic farming techniques, Endô Hôichi, a long time staff member of ARI, has described its more basic aim as inducing a change of identity in participants through the experience of a new form of community.⁷³ ARI attempts to undermine fixed hierarchies of identity linked to factors such as gender, ethnicity, and class in a variety of ways.

While ARI staff members do offer instruction on a number of topics, participants themselves do about half of the instruction. They teach ARI staff and other participants about the problems and practices of their home communities concerning agriculture and other matters. As Takami explains, the aim is to create a community that overcomes distinctions such as student/teacher and those being helped/helpers.⁷⁴

Participants are often shocked by and resist some of the demands of this new type of community. About half of ARI's participants are female. As noted, all participants take turns leading committees responsible for different activities at ARI. For some male participants, their experience at ARI is the first time they have seen women in leadership positions and the

first time they have had to serve under female leaders. Others sometimes find themselves having to work with participants from religious or ethnic groups they have traditionally regarded as enemies.

Others are shocked to learn that they are expected to help with all of the work, even the lowliest, at ARI. This relates to one of the values and mottos, servant leadership, that ARI has adopted in recent years. Leaders are taught that they should lead by serving. Some participants come from a community where, as a local leader or minister, they were not expected to do manual labor or cook. Participation in ARI thus challenges them to question assumptions about their own identity. Endô has related a story that explains one way how ARI attempts to teach servant leadership. One participant complained about not having been introduced to the director of ARI yet. He was told that the man he was shoveling manure with in the morning was the director.⁷⁵

Takami has stressed the importance of “cultural shock” in the training program. He tells the story of finding a participant from Pakistan alone in his dorm room crying. He had not heard from his wife in several weeks and was worried. Takami noted that it would not be normal for a Pakistani male to openly cry in his home culture. Takami himself was moved by the tears and reflected on how Japanese men are also not expected to cry.⁷⁶ The ARI community requires that both participants and staff allow their sense of themselves to be open to change.

ARI’s program also involves a number of study tours. Included here are trips to Osaka where participants are introduced to problems in Japan involving day laborers, poverty, homelessness, and discrimination. A visit to Minamata also illustrates the problems with pollution that Japan has struggled with. Part of the purpose of these tours is to make participants aware that Japan, despite being a “developed” and economically advanced country, still has basic problems it is struggling to solve. This serves to break down the assumption that “developed” countries are somehow better than “developing” countries.

Participants are thus given the experience of creating a new community where distinctions between religions, high/low, male/female, teacher/student, etc. no longer have meaning they once did. Overcoming such distinctions requires participants to create new identities and inevitably requires a greater awareness of values such as compassion, forgiveness, and tolerance.

A Model Human Community

The motto “That We May Live Together” also has a religious meaning. Though based on Christianity, ARI is a community that welcomes all. Takami explains as follows.

ARI is a school based on Christian faith. God's love is limitless. God's love and compassion embrace all. People throughout the world, some religious and some not, come to this school that is grounded in God's love.

Takami also points to a level of religious experience that unites all people.

Religious experience is nothing special. In living together, one's self and the surroundings go on changing together. The experience of this is a religious, spiritual experience. In other words, the act of people sharing life together is religious. There are various religions in the world. But they are structured and systematized in the context of the different cultures, histories, and human situations in various regions of the world and thus taking the form of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. In other words, there are different cultural meanings given to religious experience.⁷⁷

In Takami's view, the experience of people living and working together at ARI is a religious experience that goes beyond the experience of traditional religious groups. This experience is grounded in people coming together, without suppressing their differences, and sharing life together. Through this experience, Takami believes that one's understanding of one's own religion can be deepened and renewed.⁷⁸

Takami also suggests that this religious experience based on sharing has its own form of communion. One of the important features of ARI is that about 90% of the food consumed at ARI is produced by ARI.

Because students at ARI come from different countries and cultures, communication is very difficult. Food is the thing that allows them to overcome the barriers making communication difficult. Through producing and sharing their own food, everyone finally becomes one community (one common body). It is the same as Christians becoming one body through the bread and wine that are the body of Jesus in Christian communion.⁷⁹

One of the ways in which Long has refined theories of religion and religious experience is to emphasize that religious experience is not just the result of the inner workings of human consciousness but also the result of the encounter of consciousness with matter in all its various forms.⁸⁰ ARI's training program involves focusing on one very important form of matter: food, including its relation to both human beings and the environment.

Sharing thus involves not just talking but sharing physical labour, working in cooperation with the surrounding environment, producing food together, and consuming food

together. It also involves reflecting on all of these processes, including the ways in which humans exist in relation to nature, including the soil, animals, plants, and insects. ARI's program might be described as attempting to reawaken in people a sense of the sacred value of food and sharing, two things upon which human life and community depend. This aspect of ARI's thought was further developed with the introduction of the concept Foodlife to explain ARI's basic message.⁸¹

A New Humanism?

As noted in the introduction to this book, the term humanism has many different meanings. I use the term here to mean being open to engaging in dialogue with those of different faiths, cultures, and periods of history. As it developed in the West, both secular and Christian forms of humanism focused on the value and potential of human existence in this world.⁸² The concern with dialogue, as a way of learning from others, also assumed there is, to a degree at least, a shared humanity that allows for dialogue. Such dialogues can take many forms. In Renaissance humanism, the dialogue was often with the thinkers of a past civilization. Mircea Eliade envisioned a contemporary dialogue between representatives of various spiritual, religious, and philosophical traditions.⁸³ Since the beginning of the twentieth century, there have been various ecumenical movements within Christianity where Christian theologians and church leaders meet to engage in dialogue in order to re-establish some form of Christian unity. In the latter half of the twentieth century, Christians have also been engaging in dialogue with representatives of other faiths.

Takami's vision of ARI might well be described as a form of Christian humanism. Grounded in Christianity, Takami's vision is built on the assumption that people share or potentially share a basic religious experience or orientation that goes beyond or underlies particular religious traditions. This experience can be awakened through the act of people working together and sharing without denying or suppressing the differences—be they cultural, religious, or individual—among them. Such an experience gives rise, in turn, to new forms of community.

ARI stands apart, however, from many of the well-known examples of efforts to promote inter-faith dialogue and understanding. ARI brings together rural grassroots leaders rather than scholars, theologians, and what might be termed the "religious elite." In addition, ARI participants spend roughly nine months, rather than the few days of a conference or symposium, living and working together. The aim is not to produce written documents concerning inter-faith understanding but to give people of different faiths the experience of a new type of human community.

There is also a sense, however, in which ARI may be trying to revive a form of tolerance

and community that has little to do with humanism understood as a way of thought emerging in the West during the course of the Renaissance. Prior to the emergence of modern nation states, peoples of different faiths in many traditional societies lived together in communities that valued religious tolerance and mutual respect. Included here are many traditional societies in parts of the world—including India, the Middle East, Africa, and Southeast Asia—that are at times now associated with violence rather than tolerance. Ashis Nandy has argued that modern secular states, which have done much to undermine and destroy traditional forms of community, have much to learn from such examples of religious tolerance.⁸⁴

It is thus important to recall that one major source of the ARI vision was the experience that Takami and other SEAC staff had in Bangladesh in 1972. While the religious tolerance and cooperation they experienced there might have been a result of people's response to a crisis situation, it also seems likely that it reflected at least in part traditional forms of religious tolerance that were still surviving in Bangladesh. Whatever the case, Takami's vision of peoples of different faith living together in harmony might well be viewed as an effort to establish a form of community based on religious tolerance and cooperation that is in some ways related to the traditional forms of religious tolerance Nandy discusses. Tolerance thus might have roots besides those of western humanism.

NOTES

1. Kenichi Otsu, et al., eds., *Forty Years of Walking With Grassroots Leaders: The History of ARI 1973-2013* (Nasushiobara-shi, Japan: Asian Rural Institute, 2013), p. 28.

2. This essay originally appeared in Japanese in Richard Gardner and Tatsuo Murakami, eds., *Shûkyô to shûkyôgaku no aida: Atarashii kyôdôtai e no tenbô* [Between Religion and the Study of Religion: Visions of New Forms of Community] (Tokyo: Sophia University Press, 2015), pp. 259-98. It has been slightly adapted for publication here.

3. Lawrence E. Sullivan, "Aratana taiwa no kyôdôtai no sôshutsu" (The Creation of New Communities of Dialogue), *Shûkyô to shûkyôgaku no aida*, pp. 221-45.

4. The author served as a member of the Fetzer

Advisory Council on Education from April 2011 to April 2013 and helped secure a grant for ARI to conduct a study of its training program.

5. William R. Lafleur, "Reigai no hisomeru kanôsei: Shûkyôgaku ni totte no senshi jidai no nihon igi" (Anomalies That Matter: The Importance of Japanese Pre-history for the Study of Religion), *Shûkyô to shûkyôgaku no aida*, pp. 417-40.

6. In addition to the essays by Long and Nandy included in *Shûkyô to shûkyôgaku no aida*, see here Charles H. Long, *Significations: Signs, Symbols, and Images in the Interpretation of Religion* (Aurora, CO: The Davies Group, 1996) and Ashis Nandy, *Timewarps: Silent and Evasive Pasts in Indian Politics and Religion* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002).

7. David Carrasco, "Proem," in Long, *Significations*, p. xvii.
8. For the notion of cultural contact, see Long, "Conquest and Cultural Contact in the New World," *Significations*, pp. 107-24.
9. Ashis Nandy, "The Politics of Secularism and the Recovery of Religious Tolerance," in *Timewarps*, p. 77.
10. Nezu Tomohiro, "Watashi no ikita toki" (The Times I Lived Through), *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, July 31, 2010. This is part of a series of fifteen newspaper articles based on interviews with Takami that ran from July 24, 2010 through November 20, 2010. The translations from these articles included here are based on an unpublished translation provided to me by Asian Rural Institute.
11. Ibid.
12. Vicente G. Tirol, "Takami, Toshihiro: Biography," Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation, <http://www.rmaf.org.ph/newrmaf/main/awardees/awardee/biography/274> (accessed February 10, 2017).
13. Nezu, "The Times I Lived Through," *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, August 14, 2010.
14. Such schools were termed "middle schools" at the time but are roughly equivalent to present day high schools.
15. Takami Toshihiro, *Tsuchi to tomo ni ikiru: Ajia gakuin to watashi* [Living Together With the Earth: My Experiences at Asian Rural Institute] (Tokyo: Nihon kirisutokyô shuppanyoku, 1996), p. 204.
16. J. Harry Haines, "Toshihiro Takami: Japan," in *Ten Hands for God* (Nashville, TN: The Upper Room, 1982), p. 37.
17. Ibid., pp. 30-31.
18. Nezu, "The Times I Lived Through," *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, August 21, 2010.
19. Ibid.
20. Takami, *Tsuchi to tomo ni ikiru*, p. 205.
21. Nezu, "The Times I Lived Through," *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, August 21, 2010.
22. Tirol, "Takami, Toshihiro: Biography," p. 3.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Nezu, "The Times I Lived Through," *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, August 21, 2010.
26. Nezu, "The Times I Lived Through," *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, August 28, 2010.
27. Tirol, "Takami, Toshihiro: Biography," p. 4.
28. Ibid.
29. Takami had a similar experience in 1948 when he noticed an ad in the newspaper someone standing beside him was reading. The ad was from a British couple looking for a servant. Takami memorized the phone number, got off at the next station, and called the couple. He was hired and put in charge of housework and some of the cooking. While the job gave him a chance to develop his English skills, he gradually began to feel like he was the slave of the dog he had to walk every day and did not get along well with. He worked for the couple for about a year before quitting. Nezu Tomohiro, "The Times I Lived Through," *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, August 28, 2010.
30. Tirol, "Takami, Toshihiro: Biography," p. 5 and Haines, "Toshihiro Takami," p. 34.
31. Haines, "Toshihiro Takami," p. 35.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid., 36. Takami is referring here to, and goes on to quote, Psalm 139.
36. Tirol, "Takami, Toshihiro: Biography," p. 5. For a more detailed account of Takami's encounter with the Bible, see Haines, "Toshihiro Takami," pp. 35-36.
37. Haines, "Toshihiro Takami," 37.
38. Tirol, "Takami, Toshihiro: Biography," p. 5; Nezu, "The Times I Lived Through," September 4, 2010.
39. Nezu, "The Times I Lived Through," *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, September 18 and September 25, 2010.
40. Nezu, "The Times I Lived Through," *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, October 8, 2010.
41. For a more detailed account of the history of Rural Evangelical Seminar, see Hoshino Masaoki, *Nihon no nôson shakai to kirisutokyô* [Japanese Farming Society and Christianity] (Tokyo: Nihon kirisutokyô shuppanyoku, 2005), pp. 211-21.
42. Takami, *Tsuchi to tomo ni ikiru*, p. 29.
43. Ibid., pp. 19-20.
44. Ibid.
45. Hoshino, *Nihon no nôson shakai to kirisutokyô*, pp. 214-15.
46. Ibid., p. 216.
47. Though the course referred to Southeast Asia, students from Taiwan and Korea also participated from an early date.
48. Takami, *Tsuchi to tomo ni ikiru*, p. 20.
49. Ibid., p. 21.
50. Hoshino, *Nihon no nôson shakai to kirisutokyô*, pp. 214.
51. Takami, *Tsuchi to tomo ni ikiru*, p. 22.
52. Ibid., pp. 22-23.
53. Takami also had a similar experience when meeting with victims of the Japanese military in the Philippines. See here Nezu, "Watashi no ikita toki," *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, October 16, 2010.
54. Hoshino, *Nihon no nôson shakai to kirisutokyô*, p. 217.

55. Many of the details in this section are drawn from Fukumoto Haruo and Fukumoto Mitsuko, *Sanjūgonen michibikarete* (Thirty-five Years with God), n.p., n.d., pp. 44-55.
56. In the 1960s, Yagisawa also traveled to Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines to teach traditional bamboo crafts.
57. Kikuchi Hajime, "Mirai o hiraku san'ai seishin" (The Pioneering Spirit of the Three Loves Movement), *San'ajuku undo gojū shūnen kinen shūkai hōkoku*, August, 2001, p. 18 and "Mirai o hiraku san'ai seishin," *Rakunō gakuen kyōshokuin kenshūkai*, August 2009, pp. 18-19. Though bearing the same title, the content of these two articles are different.
58. Nezu, "The Times I Lived Through," *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, October 16, 2010.
59. Kikuchi also stresses the importance of the notion of sharing in "Mirai o hiraku san'ani seishin," *San'ai undō*, pp. 20-21.
60. Nezu, "The Times I Lived Through," *Shimotsuke Shimbun*, October 30, 2010.
61. Fukumoto, *Sanjūgonen michibikarete*, pp. 49-51.
62. Kikuchi, "Mirai o hiraku san'ani seishin," *Rakunō gakuen kyōshokuin kenkyūkai*, p. 17.
63. Personal interview with Takami, May 23, 2013.
64. Kikuchi, "Mirai o hiraku san'ani seishin," *Rakunō gakuen kyōshokuin kenkyūkai*, p. 19.
65. Takami, *Tsuchi to tomo ni ikiru*, p. 25.
66. See here Kikuchi, "Mirai o hiraku san'ani seishin," *San'ai undō*, p. 20 and Takami, *Living Together With the Earth*, pp. 24-27.
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81. See here Kikuchi, "Mirai o hiraku san'ai seishin," *Rakunō gakuen*, pp. 20-21.
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Training for Transformation

Summary

Development training programs can develop more than knowledge and skills and can influence values bringing about more long-term impacts than increased agricultural yields. This article shares the results of an assessment of The Asian Rural Institute's (ARI) Rural Leaders Training Program and the influence on participants. By looking at both learnings and individual changes connected to the program's core values of Servant Leadership, Community Building, and Sustainable Agriculture, this also seeks to better understand the roles that the diverse environment, methods and principles play in impacting participants.

The 2013 program participants, 31 individuals from 16 countries, described their original goals and motivation, related to leadership and technical training and, subsequently, more deeply in terms of values learned. Individual participant accounts illustrate the relationship between the transformation experienced and how core values have been incorporated into the program. By introducing changes described, how they understand their transformation through the program, and how they plan to implement this gained experience in their home communities, this article highlights the elements of the program that are most impactful. Concluding comments focus on connections between these values and their relevance in an era of globalization.

Key words

transformation, servant leadership, community, international development, rural training.

1. *Introduction*

Training can transfer more than knowledge and skills; it can also influence values bringing about more than increased skills, knowledge or yields. This article focuses on The Asian Rural Institute's (ARI) Rural Leaders Training Program and its influence on participants. After introducing participants' motivation and learnings, it then reviews individual reported changes in relation to the program's core values of Servant Leadership, Community Building, and Sustainable Agriculture. Targeting the 2013 participants, 31 individuals from 16 countries, this study also seeks to understand the roles that diverse community environment, servant leadership methods used and sustainable agricultural principles play in value transformation.

Individual participant interviews were conducted at the beginning, middle and end of the program and illustrate the relationship between the transformation experienced and how the core values are incorporated into the program. 2013 participants initially described personal goals and motivations for joining the training largely in terms of leadership and technical training skills development. Subsequent interviews revealed their learnings and personal changes in terms of values evolution. This introduces commonly reported changes, how they understand their transformation through the program, and how they plan to utilise the experience upon return to their home communities. Concluding comments focus on connections between these values and their relevance in an era of globalization.

1.1 **The Asian Rural Institute (ARI)**

From 1973 to 2013, the Asian Rural Institute (ARI) invited more than 1100 community leaders from 56 countries to rural Japan. ARI strives to create an environment where participants gain not only knowledge and skills, but also engage in personal reflection that will transform their understanding of issues and values. This helps them make connections between issues faced at the local and global levels.

To satisfy the demand for training by Christian groups already active in rural development in Southeast Asian countries, ARI started training leaders engaged in rural development in developing countries.¹ Representatives from churches, orphanages grassroots NGOs, community-based organizations and educational institutions join the training program. ARI refers to the group back in the communities from where the participants come as "Sending Bodies (SBs)". In alignment with its commitment to social justice, ARI specifically recruits women, racial, ethnic and religious minority groups as program participants. Many come from remote or marginalized communities with limited travel or international experience. The personal development and empowerment provides inspiration to apply these new values and skills for the good of the people in their own communities.

Each year, ARI brings together a diverse group of grassroots leaders for a 9-months inten-

sive training. According to the Rev. Dr. Takami, the founder of ARI, *“We are investing in persons who will dedicate their whole life to sustain life for the future. I think it’s a valid investment, and a lasting investment, in persons who will work as leaders for the people”*²

Directors, staff, participants, volunteers and community supporters make up the ARI community. At any one time there are 40-50 people from 20 different nations engaged in daily activities; there are also visitors and short-term volunteers from universities and overseas who join ARI for a weekend or month to learn by being part of the ARI community experience.

1.2 The questions for the program assessment

As the Asian Rural Institute approached its 40th anniversary, it became clear that systematically compiled data and feedback on curriculum, meaningful elements of the program, impactful learnings and/or applicable learnings would be useful for further program development. Based on experience, ARI staff assumed there was an impact and that the program content was useful; however, information on participants and graduates had only been compiled on an ad hoc basis. The purpose of this training program review was to assess the program content, assess how it contributes to the understanding of others to develop more peaceful communities, and then draw up a list of recommendations for future program development.

For this article, the focus starts with the overarching question of

Can the training program change values of participants? If yes, then how? And what elements or factors lead to value change?

ARI’s three core values form the base of other questions:

- A. Does the environment of the training influence participants? If yes, what is the influence or how does it change them?
- B. Does utilizing the servant leadership methods as part of the training affect the participants? If yes, then how?
- C. Does the use of sustainable organic farming impact participants? If yes, then how?

1.3 The data sources and methodology

Starting in April 2013 through May 2014, the research team gathered data from more than 200 people from 37 nations in the forms of interviews, surveys, visits and impact survey reviews. This article focuses on the 31 individuals from 16 countries who took part in the 2013 training program and their reported learnings and transformation.

Interviews of 2013 participants were conducted three times: At the end of the 1st month of the training in April, in the middle of the training in July and then in the last month of the training in November. First interviews were introductory and focused on trust development,

understanding participants needs and background, and discovering expectations. Midterm interviews in July focused on learnings, gains, usefulness of the training based on key themes and challenges experienced. Final interviews in late November focused on the changes the participants found in themselves and how they expected to use the experience upon return.

Various methods were reviewed to ascertain which would best meet the organization's and donors' goals. Ideas from Kirkpatrick's "Evaluating Training Programs"³ provided useful insight for the development of assessment tools. The four-level training evaluation model for the purpose of finding out about the reactions, learnings, behaviors and results influenced how questions were developed and data was compiled. Key Themes were organized into a matrix including various hard and soft skills. "Hard" skills refer to specific technical training, while "soft" skills refer to value-oriented themes. The relationship between these, with an increasing emphasis on learning the latter through the former, appeared in many interviews.

2. About the ARI Rural Leaders Training Program

ARI's motto "That We May Live Together" is embedded in all aspects of the program including the methods used. At ARI, organization leaders work alongside participants and volunteers in field work, cleaning, meal preparation and programming. The training program involves a 360° experience of creating a new community where distinctions between religions, ethnic and linguistic groups, educational background, caste, sex and gender, positions in community or organization are replaced by a flat hierarchical structure that promotes equity. It therefore focuses not just on skills and knowledge enhancement but also on values.

From the foundational values of love of the soil, love of neighbors and love for God the core values of community building, servant leadership and sustainable agriculture are derived. While the content of the ARI curriculum has evolved over the past 40 years, the values have remained consistent.

2.1 Core Values

While many trainings focus on community development, agricultural skills or leadership development, it is the conscious fusion of these that make the ARI training distinctive. Descriptions of these three core values from ARI printed materials and the website have been summarized below:

Community Building

The Foundation for Community Encouragement refers to community building as "a group process that leads to deeper, more authentic communication... Experiential in nature, community building is an adventure in human interaction based on a set of guidelines and

principles rather than an agenda or particular procedure.”⁴ Thus, community building is different than what is more commonly understood in the academic realm as community development. Coming from diverse backgrounds, ARI community members engage over the course of nine months, sharing everything. The process includes more than studying; they live, eat, and work together each and every day, sharing joys and sorrows along the way. Through the regular sharing of knowledge, experiences and ideas, they attempt to help each other become more effective leaders.

Servant Leadership

While servant leadership has recently come into common use in the nonprofit sector, this concept of leading by serving one’s community has been one of the ARI core values since its inception. In the classroom there is learning about leaders such as the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and Gandhi, but modeling and experience are integral. Participants learn through the modeling behavior of the director, management staff and volunteers. As the program is currently run, there are two opportunities for each participant to lead a field work team for two weeks. Besides these opportunities they are also invited to take the lead on committees for community programs and events.

Foodlife

Foodlife is a term developed at ARI to show that food and life cannot be separated; it represents how explicitly and implicitly the two depend upon each other. Emphasis is placed on the production of healthy local food using natural methods. Value is also placed on the whole cycle of food from taking care of the soil, harvesting, sowing, preparing meals, washing up afterwards, reusing leftover food and food, to sales and processing for income generation. Farmers and rural communities as the providers of life are looked up to, rather than looked down upon or seen as dirty, which is the case in many communities.

The mainstays of the curriculum are experiential learning (learning by doing), through day to day work in the fields (field management), classroom learning (introducing a variety of issues and skills), running community events as well as taking care of the daily needs of cleaning and food preparation. External exposure through study tours to community organizations and organic farms and regular visits by volunteers, guest speakers and supporters from a wide array of backgrounds enhances the ARI experience for participants.

Using agriculture and leadership training as a means rather than only as a goal makes the ARI program stand out. There is an intensive investment in individual and value-oriented transformation alongside the development of skills and knowledge. This value-based learning has the potential to empower participants to return to their communities and communi-

ty-based organizations to share more than knowledge when searching for new solutions to local problems.

3. *About the 2013 participants*

Thirty-one persons from sixteen nations made up the 2013 class. Figure 1 shows the demographics of the 2013 participants; this diversity is similar to other years assessed. Close to half of the participants came from NGOs, community-based, local or national organizations; 39% were from faith-based institutions and a few were from educational organizations. Japanese participants join as individuals and as such do not have what ARI calls Sending Bodies (SBs) The gender balance was 42% women and 58% men and more than half of the participants were in their 20's at the commencement of the program.

Figure 1: Demographics of the 2013 participants
(Data source: Author's own research)

Demographics of 2013 participants		Country of Origin	
N=31			#
<i>Interviewed in April, July and November.</i>			
Sex	# (%)	Brazil	1
Male	18 (58%)	Cameroon	1
Female	13 (42%)	Ecuador	1
Sending Body	# (%)	India	3
Type of org		Indonesia	3
Nonprofit NGOs (local & domestic)	14 (45%)	Japan	3
Educational institutions	2 (6%)	Kenya	1
Faith based or religious	12 (39%)	Malawi	3
Other	0	Myanmar	4
None	3 (10%)	Nepal	3
By Age	# (%)	Philippines	2
20s	16 (52%)	Sri Lanka	1
30s	11 (35%)	Tanzania	2
40s	4 (13%)	Thailand	1
		Uganda	1
		Zambia	1
		Total Number of Countries	16
		Total Number of 2013 Participants	31

3.1 Motivation for participation

The motivation for training participation is an important starting point for discussion. Of the 31 participants interviewed, 29 shared their motivation for joining the ARI training. While there is no one simple answer, the motivation for joining the ARI training can be broken into 2 categories: 1) hard skills and 2) values-based reasons.

Six of the participants' key motivation was to learn leadership from ARI that can be appropriate to their organizations' needs. Twelve were essentially interested in learning technical skills, specifically organic farming, to apply in their communities. Participant 14 explained that "I am from rural area, remote area. We needed many skill for many course – leadership, agricultural develop. We want to know for our community. ARI is a good training institute for agricultural leadership. Everything for me. Good for our community."

3.1.1 Learnings

Most participants agreed that they learned what they wanted to learn at ARI as well as things they had not anticipated at the start at the program. A majority commented on the skill areas of organic farming, agricultural techniques and leadership skills development. The soft skill and value learning areas are deeper and more closely related to the personal transformation that happens to participants through the training process. Other responses surfaced included those directly connected to the ARI values. Many of these may be difficult to understand upon application, but over the course of the experience participants come to understand the purpose of the training more fully.

While this assessment focused on qualitative data collection, some quantifiable data was also tracked. For the final interviews, we tracked all mention of skills, themes or values they found useful, important or meaningful. The list of themes was developed by the research team through review of training materials and in discussion with ARI staff. The following chart represents the themes mentioned by the 2013 participants. The reason for asking similar yet different questions (Which learnings did you find important / useful / meaningful?) was mainly due to the gaps in English language and communication skills.

Figure #2 tracks the themes participants mentioned. The left column lists the key training program themes; the middle column includes all mentions of a term, whether it was direct or indirect mention. The right column displays the percentage of the 2013 participants.

Since contexts, needs and experiences are diverse, this was useful only to track general trends. However, reflecting upon those aspects of the training mentioned by more than 70% of participants, the results include many of the key values ARI focuses on in the training program including the following (in order from highest) :

- 1) Organic farming skills, 2) Learning by doing, 3) Leading by serving others, 4) Personal

Figure 2: Learnings reported in final interviews with 2013 participants.
N=31

Questions: Which learnings did you find important / useful / meaningful?

	Total Mentions	Percentage		Total Mentions	Percentage
1. Technical Skills			4. Training Program Core Values		
<i>Organic farming skills</i>	31	100%	Living in harmony with nature	13	41.94%
Livestock	19	61.30%	The value of rural life	15	48.39%
Fruit and vegetable farming	16	51.62%	Foodlife	19	61.30%
Use of local resources	17	54.84%	Dignity of labour	17	54.84%
Appropriate technology	11	35.49%	Serving the marginalized	21	67.75%
Integrated farming	15	48.39%	Social justice	12	38.71%
Food self-sufficiency	17	54.84%	Love and understanding	11	35.49%
2. Servant Leadership			Living in a diverse environment	23	74.20%
<i>Learning by doing</i>	29	93.55%	Understanding other religions	7	22.59%
<i>Leading by serving others</i>	27	87.10%	Spirituality	8	25.81%
Developing the abilities of others	14	45.17%	Compassion	11	35.49%
Community participation in decision making	18	58.07%	Sacrifice	6	19.36%
<i>Community building</i>	22	70.97%	Learning from conflict	11	35.49%
3. Practical Skills and Information			Forgiveness	7	22.59%
Communication skills	19	61.30%	Patience	10	32.26%
English language skills	9	29.04%	Tolerance	12	38.71%
Presentation skills	4	12.91%	<i>Accepting and respecting differences</i>	22	70.97%
<i>People management</i>	24	77.42%	<i>Personal change</i>	27	87.10%
Planning skills	16	51.62%	<i>Community change</i>	23	74.20%
Gender & women's' issues	10	32.26%			
Environment and sustainable development	16	51.62%			
Water and sanitation	5	16.13%			
Health Issues	8	25.81%			
Learning about Japan, society, customs, values	16	51.62%			
Visits to ARI by guests	3	9.68%			
Observation tours, study tours, visits around Japan	21	67.75%			

change, 5) People management, 6) Living in a diverse environment, 7) Community change, 8) Community building, and 9) Accepting and respecting differences

This simple information may not be meaningful on its own, but when coupled with more details from the interviews, these come together with how the training can influence participants in an ongoing way. Beyond knowledge and skills transfer, the reported changes in themselves closely overlap with the learnings listed above.

4. Main question: Can a training program influence the values of participants? If yes, then how? What are the elements or factors that lead to this value change?

In final interviews in late November, all 2013 Rural Leaders Training Program participants were asked if, since they started the program in April, they felt they had changed. Thirty of the 31 participants responded that they felt they had changed since taking part the training. The remaining one person was not clear about the meaning of the question.

For the thirty persons who responded positively that they had changed, a follow-up question was asked about how they had changed in their ways of thinking, ways of seeing or ways of behaving. When possible, participants were also asked to describe the ways they felt they had changed. Participants reported many different changes based on their experiences both on campus and from outside visits. Some reported personal changes included becoming more confident, calmer, more open to others, more patient, more humble and changing their world view, and a few specifically mentioned gaining a new philosophy of life or mission. Most mentioned coming to appreciate ideas and values more over time.

Figure 3 shows the reported changes in relationship to the core values.

Figure 3: Individual change reporting as connected to core values.
Data from final interviews with 2013 Participants.

Exact questions:

In what way did you change?

Did you change your ways of thinking or behaving?

How did you grow or change? What made you change?

N=31	<i>Number Reporting</i>	<i>Ratio</i>
Affirmative responses - Do you feel you changed?	30	97%
Responses related to the diverse environment and community building	17	55%
Responses related to servant leadership methods used.	27	87%
Responses related to sustainable agriculture and foodlife	10	32%

The summaries above overview the reported changes and are accompanied by representative comments from the participants' final interviews. While each person's experience is different, the outline below attempts to highlight common threads. An attempt was made to select diverse comments from all participants, but it is impossible to include the vast array of relevant feedback collected. Comments from each part of the world, from different types of organisations, from male and female representatives of all ages have been added to convey the breadth of impact.

4.1 Does the environment of the training influence what participants are learning? If yes, what is the influence or how does it change them?

While 74% and 70% reported learnings related to the diverse environment and community building respectively, in the final interviews, out of the 31 participants from 2013, 55% reported more specific personal changes based on the diverse ARI environment. Common responses include recounting the importance of understanding each other, and how the training taught them to be more patient and accept others. Several mentioned recognizing that each person came with different ideas based on their background. The differences, major challenges early in the training, were overcome through dialogue, acceptance, and tolerance.

Understanding difference involves many steps such as becoming open, flexible and patient, as evidenced by Participant 34 who told us, *"my opinion changed. I want to receive other person and their opinions. Example, when transplanting in the field, we discuss for the best idea,"* and Participant 26 who stated, *"I became more calm, listen to more things."*

Participant 10 explained the experience of greater self-understanding and becoming more accepting of others.

Before I came I considered myself open-minded but maybe here I learned to be more tolerant, more patient... and also to be critical in a good sense to others but also to myself. To think about myself. It was really a great experience to do this somehow I don't feel the same... Such diversity... Very thankful for that.

Participant 5 explained the impact from working in a diverse group,

Be patience. We have leadership reflection. We learn what we want to learn. My weakness, easily get angry, and to hesitate and to ask, "please do like this." If I see bad attitudes I get angry. I really change approach to others in a good way. Not get angry. Understanding their attitudes, how teach different people. Each person is different. To be sensitive to each person. Be close to each other to understand them.

This also included persons from different religious backgrounds which, in light of the current status of the world, is particularly poignant. As Participant 16 explained:

Sometime it has changed me. Especially, religious background. Sometimes, back home difficult to approach someone Hindu, Muslim, without knowing. ARI institution embraces all. No boundary. It change my life. I come to understand every faith. I shouldn't despise other people from other faith. Maybe if we are together, they have a fellowship in interfaith. If I have the chance to approach different religion, different faith. [It] helped in community development.

In addition, by understanding the differences and then accepting them, they find they learn more and become open to new ideas and ways. Their world view may also change, as Participant 15 reported, *“learning for me to respect each member, more responsible of our doing. That all if you combine if more compassionate. I learn to respect each other.”*

By learning about boundaries and tolerance, as evidenced by Participant 29, *“how to have relations with people with differences, and how to accept difference. Or how to make distance with people—comfortable distance. It's really invisible; how to understand difference, it's something nobody can tell me. I guess we do not have to like everything. There are many ways to solve issues without stress.”*

The active listening and direct engagement enables participants to share with and understand each other. The negotiation, nonviolent communication and conflict resolution skills also included in the program also help when living in a community with persons from 20+ backgrounds. Participant 9 shared the experience this way.

[Here at ARI] we try to understand each other. Even in the community we have different feelings and view of life. Believe my learning here [will help me] how to organize with differences and different ideas. Even in field management we have an argument. In spite of the argument we come up with a good plan and good implementation. Sometimes I am very afraid in the church. We are Christian. I am afraid to have an argument. But I will allow people to have the argument so they can express that. They can realize deeply how people feel. Even in this institution we have problems. We have ego, pride. Some are realizing their point is different and the points are different. Even if they see other [ways or ideas, it is] better they argue than they hold on. We become much closer.

The direct experience is what leaves a deep impression on them and lessons become embedded in them as Participant 4 explained, *“I learn many things in theory in (my country) and I do many trainings in theory, but here I can learn practically and different attitudes at ARI... I need to accept others so and we are all human beings just one things I know the style and attitudes. So I can accept more types of the people when I work.”*

Overcoming the view that differences are the not basis of conflict but a resource requires participants to rethink many of what they previously thought of as truths. Through the community they build together, participants are able to redefine themselves through new awareness and values of the surrounding environment, community and each other.

4.2 Does utilizing the servant leadership methods as part of the training affect the participants? If yes, how?

Servant leadership methods, skills and style were reported by 87% of the 2013 participants when discussing how the training program had changed them. This closely overlaps with the reported results of learning by doing and leading by serving which were reported by 93% and 87% of the participants, respectively.

It is also clear that that the practice of servant leadership influences them as evidenced through the use of ARI terminology, namely *learning by doing*, *leading by serving* and *serving as an example for others*. This is connected to developing people skills and learning how to work together more effectively. Developing a collaborative spirit and valuing the importance of each and every member of a team or community go hand in hand. Participant 3 explained how he felt moved to make changes in his work and self:

I want to change my behavior. I am not myself. I see I was wrong. I also did like a dictator—power. I am founding member of my organization. Sometimes before, I think I know many things. I have been working 15 years. I say, “You do not know.” “You need to ask me what to do.” I feel now what I do was wrong. Now, I know I need to ask many people. Make groups and every person can think they’re responsible. I want to change myself behavior... now I am practicing ARI way. I look here many ARI staff, director they are working together. Every time give participants the chance to share. Give leadership. We do leadership. Every person doing together. Cleaning I want to share, I want to change myself my behaviors more.

Participant 7 also chose to share a before-and-after story this way:

Let me start about who I was before. Before ARI I studied a lot, a lot of training and workshops and they helped me to become to a better leader. Heard something about servant leadership. It was new. It was unexpected. It is more learning by doing. By doing is how we learn. When I think about the leader, the leader is someone more respected. The main duty is to direct others and give duties. But here the leader should be in the forefront and doing, and with others doing together. Here I was very shocked to see people doing things... like dishwashing and cleaning the toilet. But it was so strange to me. If the director does, why I can't do the same? The way they see me in my community will be how I felt. Servant leader is certain type

of leader, which is unique. So why not [me too]?

Other persons similarly commented how this program changed their view of what a leader is and/or how a leader behaves. They mentioned the evolution of seeing a leader as one who orders others from a comfortable position to a leader as a person who serves and leads by example. According to Participant 30, *“a leader is not a commander but serves the people ... I have got a great challenge and lesson from ARI on the role of servant leadership which completely changed my attitude of leadership.”* This participant in the mid-term interview was highly critical of the methods used at ARI, but in the final interview spoke at great length about the influence of the training on what makes one a leader,

Here at ARI the servant leadership completely changed me. ... The staff always practicing servant leadership, that is why. Not just learn, but practice every day. Every people are equal. No discrimination. Never learned before. I know “servant leadership,” the word, but not in the community. I know servant leadership as a Christian. But from ARI I really know it.

Every participant is a leader from a different community, but experiencing a situation with so many different leaders with different styles allows them to learn to lead by example. They learn to recognize the skills, vision and direction needed as well as the need to be humble, a good listener, and to have a positive attitude toward helping others are all important.

The methods employed reflect the importance of community members and the need to focus on the needs of the people as well as the need to work directly with people in the community. Participant 4 explained,

Leaders must come down to the grassroot people as the servant and good leadership. Leader should sacrifice everything to get the new result, to reach the goal, which depends on vision. As for a servant leader, must be ready to serve in community. I had learned different types of leadership style, different roles of leadership style in theory before. Now, here in ARI, I had learned more practically leading roles and styles in many different ways.

Servant leadership at ARI is manifested in the mundane, and this also offers learning opportunities. Participant 22 described, *“in my country, [I do] no cleaning. But in ARI, president cleaning, dishwashing. In my country, no dishwashing. I am official, no cleaning no dishwashing— very different.”*

Learning through the daily practice of servant leadership was discussed by most 2013 participants, and many also mentioned wanting to apply the techniques upon return to their communities. Participant 14 shared their ideas, saying, *“before we have project village, I go to visit them... they do their duty, I do nothing. I just sit down. I don’t do. They cook, I eat. That I realize if I go*

back to my country, do everything with them. Not top-down, share it together, this is my thinking now, I change.”

A primary concern for the participants once they go back to their communities is how to implement the things they learn at ARI. To create change, many understood that putting the learning—skills, knowledge and values—into practice had to start from their own initiative. Another example of the change experienced comes from Participant 9:

It's because sometimes our community have stereotype of thinking. Persons in the high positions must be in the office. It changed my attitude and my thinking about working with people as a servant leader. Not just giving instruction. But working with people. Most of the leader in society that they think they know everything. They think they know everyone. Impose what they think is best. (But they know nothing about the people.)

A servant leader develops the community by working with and in the community directly, not by telling people what to do from someplace else, as Participant 18 illustrated: *“My way of thinking changed a lot. At first I just think – this is a leader. A person given the authority, directive, the leader there to guide and walk together with people. For us, leader give the command; here we have to participate, we have to do it. The servant leader is with the community, listening to people in the community, actually asking them what they need and what they want,”* and responding based on active interaction.

4.3 Does the use of sustainable organic farming impact participants? If yes, how?

Almost all reported learning specific agricultural skills. They realize the value of the food they eat as they take part in every step, from the growing to the harvesting of the food, until it reaches their table. While 100% mentioned organic farming as one of their learnings, it is not as highly mentioned in discussions about their value change; only 32% mentioned Foodlife and farming directly as part of the main changes they experienced. This may be because many of them were engaged in agriculture before or because it is the prime values that made a deeper impression upon them. However, this may be seen as a success, since sustainable farming is not the end point but a conduit for the training process.

Developing more sustainable, self-sufficient communities is also a goal of ARI. Viewing their communities from the vantage point of what resources they have is significant for many who previously viewed their communities through the lens of what they needed from outside. This is eye-opening for many used to outside support. Participant 17 explained: *“Ask everybody, they say: we are poor. But we are rich, we have good soil, there is land. The problem is spending time in games; men working morning, finish go to other things or to do work. Many time not used to develop self.”* Learning to make use of local resources more effectively and coming to understand that focusing on outside resources can result in dependence or unhealthy practices that are not

sustainable was mentioned by Participant 26, “*About being self-sufficient in all things, living without dependence on outside things.*”

Reflecting on the overall feedback as well as on these comments, it can be said that sustainable agriculture is not mentioned as often as the personal transformation agent as the diverse environment and the servant leadership training approaches. However, Foodlife does influence participants’ values. It helps them develop skills, but the focus on self-sufficiency and understanding the wealth of community resources is no small matter. Reusing and recycling as much as possible is not just good for the planet, it also makes economic sense. The 2013 participants gained an appreciation of Foodlife as it is part of their daily experience together and a significant aspect of their training, despite it not being a major agent for personal transformation.

4.3 Other: Knowledge-based and issues-connected-based learnings

Participants reported developing an understanding of global and local issues through lectures, workshops and visits to different parts of Japan. Trips, homestays and study tours give exposure to homelessness, mercury poisoning, the environmental impact of mining and many other issues including suicide and an aging society. Seeing the challenges development brings is eye-opening for many. Participant 7 recalled with great surprise the difficulties faced in Japan,

We have also observed challenges people in Japan face. I saw with my own eyes the homeless. The study tour in western Japan we saw patients with leprosy, Minamata disease [mercury poisoning illness] we saw the root of the disease. And also patients of leprosy. I was shocked to see how they were treated.

A few participants discussed a deeper understanding about the connections between global and local issues. For some participants, the focus was on how organic farming and agriculture are connected to the environment and hunger. For others it expanded to the level of agriculture policy. Such comments were often based on past experiences as well as understanding other participants’ experiences through conversation. Enhancing their learning about the impacts of globalization and development on their societies helped them see that the root causes and implications extend beyond their communities.

5. *Expected use*

In the final interviews many participants expressed concern about what they will implement upon return to their communities. Of the 31 Participants joining the 2013 training program, 29

shared at least one example of actions they would like to take upon return. Examples included using or sharing organic farming techniques, developing food processing, including participatory approaches, making use of local resources, serving the marginalized and raising awareness about the dangers of chemicals. While overlapping in values and skills, three overarching themes were identified: educational programs, agricultural programs and community development programs.

Nine participants responded with interest in developing training programs to spread the learning gained. Five (5) participants wanted to create agricultural trainings for their organization and their community. Six (6) mentioned developing trainings for vulnerable populations including women and vulnerable families. Two (2) participants showed interest in providing training to young people about sustainable agriculture. Ten participants (10) discussed technical skills training in organic or natural farming and three (3) shared hopes of creating a demonstration farm to encourage organic farming.

Graduates discussed sharing learnings with their communities in different ways. Four (4) 2013 participants wanted to focus on developing their communities once they return. Participant 2 specifically shared the desire to reduce hunger through organic farming but also mentioned many of the other key themes covered in the ARI training,

My plan is I want to reduce hunger. In an organic way from here. After reporting to my organization, I want to start. The dangers of chemicals and about gender. Some I need to convince. Training helps you in how to change your mind—how to change is very difficult but my best ways is to explain very well. To understand, then start practicing so they can see. If I am not doing fine I need to continue and not give up. As a leader I need to explain.

Some participants were very focused on using their learnings to solve local problems using the local issues they face. Participant 22 expressed a desire to enhance community capacity through the use of organic farming skills, trainings and even a credit union:

Gender and women issues, also big problem. My women, all have rape cases, many rape cases. Gender, and maybe husband and wife fighting. This also problem... Maybe also, men drinking, big problem. In Japan, man and women in early morning wakeup, in working - many hardworking women also. My community, women only housewives, no working outside. Serving the marginalized—my community also, very poor... [so I think I will try to] Make a credit union!

Participant 5 was primarily interested in helping farmers build a sustainable community where they can be self-reliant in terms of food:

My dream is build a sustainable community where people live self-reliance and where I live with farmers who struggle day by day. But they cannot uplift their livelihood. They want to live without depending on others—be self-sufficient. The middlemen get the benefits. My dream how to convince farmers to not buy fertilizer but to make at home, and show how food, own food processing. No need to be dependent on others. First I want to practice myself. Little by little they will get interest and get what they want. I want to encourage them.

Participant 19 shared the commitment to return to enhance the capacity of the Sending Body and the community members,

In this time. My step one [is] think about my church vision. We have vision - Church is center to learning from community. If after we keep knowledge here I can prepare translate English to [my] language, makes interest knowledge in people in the country. Second thing, after that we have teamwork in church. I want to share all actions, experience, and some ideas with my team, how they think with me how they want to make plan together like that. I want to continue my farm, but many things are new. New knowledge. I want to learn in my farm before I teach my members. To teach the ... new generation, younger one.

While there were various other examples shared, those mentioned here represent a snapshot of the different needs, communities and plans. However, within their education, skills and knowledge development plans, many of the previously mentioned core values of community building, servant leadership and Foodlife are raised.

6. *Commentary and conclusions*

This study attempted to ask if Asian Rural Institute's Rural Leaders Training Program can affect participating individuals' values and how the diverse environment, servant leadership approach and sustainable agriculture skills can also lead to such transformation. The goal was to understand what value changes were reported as they reflected on the program, noted their individual changes and shared their post-training implementation plans.

Almost all 2013 participants reported some type of personal transformation and expected to utilise the program learnings back in their home communities. What was also learned from the participant interviews is that there is an overlap among the reporting of what they learned, and how they personally changed and the values of the training program. The diverse community setting, the participatory flat organizational structure and Foodlife concept all contribute to changes in values, skills and knowledge. These changes also inspire them to employ not just skills-based methods but also to actively share new values in the form of

servant leadership approaches.

ARI invests many resources—time, skills, patience and finances—in each individual who is then expected to graduate the program with new knowledge and skills and also a deeper understanding of complex ideas, global issues, new values and ways of seeing others. These participants who become graduates bring not only the knowledge and skills to their home communities, but also changed perceptions about their personal and professional lives.

For a training solely focused on the development of agricultural skills or learning about global issues, a three months training program may be sufficient, but ARI aims are much higher and multi-dimensional. In order to transform values, to go from tolerating personal differences to the level of respecting and accepting differences requires “deprogramming” of preconceived notions. Servant leadership, an approach that is generally outside the purview of how most think of what makes one a leader, proves challenging for many, men in particular. More than skills and knowledge transfer, it is the value-based change which moves community leaders to become more egalitarian and inclusive by working directly in the community with the people they serve rather than directing from above.

What does this mean for their communities’ futures, and dealing with the effects of globalization? At face value, some post-graduation plans may be seen as the simple use of agricultural skills and knowledge, but upon deeper review of their stories, the values and sustainability aspects as well as the commitment to working with different marginalized populations reflect the core values of ARI. In many villages around the world, becoming more effective at feeding the local population nutritious food while not becoming dependent on INGOs, government seed, GMOs, and/or chemical fertilizer programs is no small feat. At the local community level, hunger and disasters, both natural and human made, take their toll disrupting communities and their coping mechanisms. As consumption and access to resources become more imbalanced and as competition brings more precarious consequences, it is clear that there is a need for value-based training, not only for increased economic development or field outputs.

ARI’s founding was based on the reality that our failure to accept and understand each other causes many problems in the world 40 years later this is no less true. While some policies and global campaigns aim to end hunger or curb the influence of extremism by starting from the top down, they do not necessarily take into consideration the realities that vulnerable people face each day. ARI starts with the lack of trust and understanding between people right where people live, by beginning at the individual level. By first creating a uniquely diverse community based on social justice values, participants develop themselves by coming to know people who are different from themselves and building a strong community through diversity. The development of grassroots leadership is enhanced by the sharing of low-level technology skills and knowledge that may also assist in bringing about positive concrete changes from

the bottom up. These skills, when coupled with social justice values, may in the long-term bring about yet more nuanced social changes.

The overarching purpose of the Rural Leaders Training Program is to discover the meaning of the ARI motto “That We May Live Together,” and should the 2013 participants follow through on a fraction of what they anticipated, they would be living up to ARI’s expectations and empowering others to also better themselves. While these interviews cannot prove a direct link between the training program and major changes in communities, it does show that the training program itself has a strong influence over individuals who in turn are motivated to bring about change. In order to discover more about the actual implementation, future follow-up interviews would be needed to assess to what degree they were able to follow through with their plans, what challenges are faced and how ARI might assist future participants to overcome difficulties. ARI is encouraged to systematize reported learning of participants and the real work of graduates, in order to better develop the training program and to even more effectively enable the implementation of learnings in communities.

This program assessment was done as a collaborative project between the Asian Rural Institute in Tochigi Japan and the Fetzer Institute of Kalamazoo, MI, USA. The author coordinated the assessment with assistance from Sophia University Graduate Students Lisette Robles and John Lichten. Sophia University Professors David Slater and Richard Gardner served in an advisory capacity. Management and other staff members at ARI also supported in the development of an assessment plan.

NOTES

1. ARI Website, <http://www.ari-edu.org/en/our-training/> accessed 2014/0912
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永田 佳之

アジア学院のレジリエンス

「共に生きる」ことを通して
培われる強さとしなやかさ

社会正義とは、世界の人々が
一人の例外もなく分かち合う喜びをもって
豊かな食卓につくことができること。

(高見敏弘)

はじめに

栃木県的那須山嶺に、アジア学院という生活共同体が在る。1973年に創設された学校法人（アジア農村指導者養成専門学校）である。この学院では、主にアジアやアフリカ諸国からの農村指導者を受け入れ、有機農法をもって共に耕し、食し、分かち合うという暮らしが40年以上にわたり営まれてきた。公正かつ平和で健全な環境を創出するという使命のもとに、自ら他者に仕えようとする「サーバント・リーダー」の育成が行われている。これまでの卒業生は1,300人を超え、出身国は56カ国に及ぶ。2015年度は第43期にあたり、19カ国から30名が研修に参加した。彼らの多くは、研修終了後に発展途上と称される国々で主に農村のリーダーとなり、農業による被害や地力の低下、森林伐採などの乱開発などから地域を守り、持続可能な地域づくりを担っている。

ここでは、2015年12月19日～22日に実施された、東日本大震災を同学院で体験した職員へのインタビューをもとに、また同学院についての最近の文献を参照しつつ、アジア学院がいかにレジリエントな共同体、すなわち、災害等の急激な変化により否応なくシステムの変化が余儀なくされても、強くしなやかに対応することによって基本的な機能や構造を維持できる共同体であるか、について述べてみたい。

1. 震災時の様子

2011年3月に起きた東日本大震災による被災地は東北3県と言われることも多いが、福島県に隣接する栃木県も相当の被害を被った。大地震がアジア学院を襲った時、各国の研修生らはすでに帰国しており、キャンパスには30人の職員とボランティアらが滞在していた。うち20人ほどの職員は集会場等のある旧コイノニアという複合施設の1階で新年度の計画を立てる会議の最中であった。大きな揺れを感じた時、はじめは建物内に留まっていたが、建物の古さを懸念したある職員の外に出ようという一声で皆飛び出した瞬間、建物のガラスが割れ、建物自体は大打撃を受けることになる（被災後には全て建て替えとなった）。

その後、学院内はある種のパニック状態に陥る。ドイツ人やアメリカ人のボランティア達が母国から得た福島第1原発事故の情報をもとに、バン2台に乗り込み、学院を飛び出したのである。なかにはパスポートも持たずに逃げた者もいたほどの混乱状態であった。

この時、バンで逃げるように誘われた職員の中で、学院に留まることを決めた者もいた。元学院の学生でもあり、ガーナ出身の宣教師であるTはその一人であり、「一瞬、皆と一緒に逃げようとも思ったが、校長先生はじめ、ここの人々に仕えるために自分は日本に来たのだから、踏みとどまらねば」と思ったという。

震災時のアジア学院にはT以外にも2人の外国人宣教師がいた。アメリカ及びガーナ、韓国からの宣教師である。彼らは安全性のために帰国するようにとの母国からの強い要望を受けながら、何が起きるか予測もつかない危険性の高い時期であったにもかかわらず、命をかけて同学院にとどまった。震災後に知られるようになったことであるが、アジア学院が存続するに値するのであれば守って下さいという祈りを毎日、職員たちの知らないところで外国人宣教師と家族らは捧げていた。

前述のとおり、建物の被害は甚大であったが、幸い震災による怪我は人にも動物にもなかった（アジア学院には鶏・山羊・豚舎がある）。しかし、その後、福島第1原発からの放射能が学院を襲った。アジア学院は福島第1原発から110キロの距離にあるが、原発事故後の風向きによって運ばれた放射能はアジア学院のある西那須野上空で雨とともに降り落ちたのである。文科省発表のデータによれば同学院の周辺地域には1㎡あたり1万～6万ベクレルのセシウムが降り注がれたとされている。これは、土と共に生き、持続可能な農業を実践することの重要性をみずから標榜してきた学院の拠って立つ基盤を土台から覆されたような痛恨の極みの事件であった。

正確な情報も届かなかった震災直後の混乱期には、「アジア学院はもう駄目になってしまうのではないか」という想いが幾人もの職員の頭をよぎった。しかし、「神様が望まれれば継続するのだろうし、望まれなければ続かないのだろう」と自らに言い聞かせていた職員は少なくない。

2. 被災直後の対応

結局、震災が起きてからも6週間以上、幾人かの職員は避難をせずに西那須野の地にとどまった。家畜の世話などを続けるのと併行して、放射能について自ら学び、放射能汚染対策に勤しんだ。

一方で、新学期を迎えていたアジア学院の研修機能は、4月末には東京都町田市にある農村伝導神学校（鶴川学院）に移り、通例の1ヵ月遅れで海外からの研修生を迎えることになった。選抜された研修生には放射能汚染の現状などを伝え、それでも来日するか否かは本人に決めてもらった。その結果、学生のうち1人を除いた19人が来日した。彼（女）らの多くは、この機会を逃すのなら、二度と自身の人生で有機農法やサーバントリーダーシップを学ぶチャンスはないであろう、とっていたという。

当時の校長や副校長はじめベテランの職員は西那須野で放射線汚染からの回復の道を後述する地元の人々と共に模索し続けた。他方、教務主任の職員を中心に、それまでとは相当に異なる環境下において町田での研修は続けられた。この双方の努力により、震災後においても、強靱な意思と柔軟な対応をもって、震災後も学院は存続し、7月末に安全性を確認した後、町田に一時避難をしていた研修生たちは西那須野へ移動することになる。その時に、学生たちに学院が伝えた理由は次の3点であった²。

1. 建物、施設が研修に適した状態にまで回復していない。
2. 余震が続いている。
3. 福島第1原発の状態が安定していない。

学生たちは来日の際、成田空港から町田に直行したので、なぜより安全な町田ではなく、放射能に汚染された地に移動しなくてはならないのか、不安に駆り立てられた。なかには「アジア学院は私たちに毒を食わせるのか」と学院の方針を非難をした者もいたという。その後も、アジア学院は西那須野での研修を若干短くし、県外での研修を長くするなど、柔軟な対応力をもって震災の年度を乗りきることになる。

3. 復興の軌跡：個人的レジリエンスと社会（共同体）的レジリエンス

1) 個人的レジリエンス

一連のインタビューを通して気づいたことは、アジア学院では大半の職員が、洗礼を受けたキリスト教信者であろうがなかろうが、聖書の言葉に支えられながら人生を歩んでいるということである。彼（女）らは災害という困難を乗り越えられたのは信仰のおかげであるという確信をもっている。「神が望むのであればアジア学院は継続するし、望まないのであれば継続しない」という震災直後に抱いた想いは複数の職員に共通していた。

インタビューをした8人の内3人が自らを支えている言葉として「ローマ人への手紙」（第8章）を挙げていたことは興味深い。そこには次のように記されている。

「神を愛する人々、すなわち、神のご計画に従って召された人々のためには、神がすべてのことを働かせて益としてくださることを、私たちは知っています。」

(And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.)

もちろん後述する放射線測定をめぐる判断などにおいて迷いはあったにせよ、大震災という危機的状况に対して、みずからが奉職してきた学院を継続するか否かは当事者である人間の意思というよりも神の意思に委ねるという「深み」まで幾人かの中心的な職員が至っているということは、コミュニティ全体の強靱さを物語っていると言えよう。

「ローマ人への手紙」からは上記の8章以外のくだりも震災後の苦難を語る中で言及されていた。例えば第5章の「艱難は忍耐を生じ、忍耐は練達を生じ、練達は希望を生ず」。また、時として人間は窮地に追い込まれる存在であるが、みな共にうめき、そのうめきは苦しみに終わるうめきではなく、希望を待ち望むうめきである、という第8章 18-25 節を精神的な拠り所にしていく職員もいた。以上から、震災後、聖書の教えがいかにアジア学院職員の心の支えとなっていたかが分かる。

興味深いことに、一人ひとりが4年半前をふり返る言葉に傾聴していると、信仰以外にも、職員のレジリエンスに寄与していた要素があることに気づかされる。例えば、アジア学院の存在する土地への愛着、もしくは強固な「センス・オブ・プレイス」を多くの職員はもっていた。震災後、放射能を被った土地となってしまったアジア学院は、他地域への移動案も浮上した。しかし、校長（当時）は「この地を離れたらアジア学院ではなくなる」と思ったという。

震災の年を想起し、当時、副校長であったAは、震災後に研修機能を町田に移して初めて気づいたことがあるという。町田の場合は研修のためのインフラや施設は整っていても、そこはアジア学院ではなかったのである。「ここはこの土地とやはりこの建物、この40年間築いてきた、なんでしょうねえ・・・目に見えないもの、皆の過去から脈々と受け継がれてきたスピリットとか（中略）みんなが本当に大事に大事に作ってきた畑の土とか、なんかこう染み込んだものがあって、そこに人が加わったのがアジア学院なんだろうなあ、って凄くその時に思いましたね」という。

みずからが暮らし、守ってきた土地への愛着は幾人もの職員が共有していたのであり、その想いは放射能汚染にもめげず、共にうめきつつも、乗り越えていく土台であったように思われる。

2) 社会（共同体）的レジリエンス

レジリエンスの重要な特徴として多様性を内包していることや資源を複数持っていることが挙げられるが³、アジア学院の「強さ」は何はともあれ「複数の支え」を組織の内外にもっていることであろう。このことは、被災後の支援状況から容易に見てとることができる。

震災後、女子寮とセミナーハウスを除いた全ての建物が「危険な状態」と診断され、建て替えを余儀なくされた。しかし、その建設費は有に6億円を超える額であり、すでに借金を抱えていた学院にとって法外なコストであった。しかし、主に米国やドイツから調査も受入れ、瞬く間に8億円以上が世界各地から集められた。うち日本国内からは約1億2千万円のみであり、いかに学院が世界的なネットワークをもっているのかが分かる。一例であるが、2014年に完成したオイコスチャペル献堂は、日本基督教団等の国内の教会組織のみならず、米国カリタス（CRS）や韓国メソジスト教会、台湾基督長老教会という多様な海外の組織からの寄付で完成した。建物の支援ひとつとっても、実に多様性に富んだネットワークが見えてくる。

日本政府は、当初は公的支援が半分は国から出されるという情報も流されたが、結局は全壊もしていない状況であったので一文も出されなかった。東日本大震災後、国からの助成金なくしては復興が進展しなかった組織が多かったことを考えると、アジア学院は資金確保の面でも自律的なレジリエンスを持っていたと言える。

上記の支援は海外との信頼関係の現れとも言えるが、学院内の相互扶助もレジリエンスに大きく寄与していると思われる。

アジア学院を表すところのように表現になるのかという問いに対する米国人宣教師の J の答えを引けば、「共に居るといふことの深い感覚」(deep sense of being together) であるという。この「深い感覚」は震災を機により強固になる。

ガーナ人宣教師は、この共同体が復興できたのは、第 1 に「神の恩寵 (God's grace)」があったからであり、第 2 に「(震災後に) 残った職員の決意 (determination of remaining staff)」であることを強調する。震災前と震災後ではコミュニティの変容が見てとれるという。かつて見られた競争的なエートスは消え、「一体であるという考え (idea of oneness)」や「受容という絆 (bond of acceptance)」が定着したのである。

「アジア学院という共同体が現在ある姿まで復興した背景には何があるのか」という質問に対して、教務主任である O は「仲間に対する信頼です」と即答した。「それがなかったら、あんなものを乗り越えられなかったと思います」と当時をふり返っている。「その信頼感は職員の大半がクリスチャンだから共有されているのか」という更なる質問に対しては、「違います」と返答している。自身も洗礼を受けている O はクリスチャンでない人の忍耐強さを前に震災後は驚嘆していた、という。この点についてはより詳しく後で述べることにする。

4. ベクレルセンターの設立、そして地域貢献へ

市民の力で放射線被害から身を守るため、地域の安全で安心な暮らしづくりを目的に 2011 年から講習会や放射線測定、除染研究などを実施してきた市民団体「那須を希望の砦にしようプロジェクト」を藤村靖之 (工学博士) が始め、2012 年に「那須希望の砦」として NPO 法人化した。特に震災直後は、ありとあらゆる「専門家」の異なる見解に翻弄されていたアジア学院が那須の地にとどまるという決意に至ったのは信仰や土地への愛着だけではなく、藤村らによって明確にされた除染方針への共感が大きかった。

藤村の主張の要点は、次のとおりである⁴。

- ・ この地域の汚染度は、今すぐに避難をしなければならないレベルではない。だからまずは落ち着いて実態を知るべし。
- ・ 誰かが答えをくれることを待つな。自分たちで真実を探そう。
- ・ 市民 (自分たち) がお金を集めて、測定器を買って、自分たちで放射能を測ろう。空気も、水も、牛乳も、食べ物も、土も、不安なものは何でも測ろう。
- ・ 一緒に勉強して、どのくらいの放射能がどう危険なのか、どうなったら危険なのか、何ができて、できないのか、その答えを自分たちで探そう。

- ・ 皆で一緒にやれば、絶対にできる！

これは行政頼みのマインドからの、いわば市民的自立の宣言であったとAは言う。

このような後ろ盾をもった学院は、震災後の進むべき道を放射能汚染対策として次の6項目を立てて、明確化していった⁵。

1. 放射能に関する勉強と測定を続ける。
2. 自己消費または販売する食べ物の放射性物質含有量の独自基準を設ける。
3. 農場の除染対策を迅速かつ積極的に実施する。
4. 地域住民たちと共に立ち上げた「那須野が原の放射能汚染を考える住民の会 (NRARP)」と協同で栃木県に対して健康調査の要望を提出する。
5. 国に対しては子ども被災者支援法の実行と対象地域に栃木県北部を含めるように要望する。
6. 東電に賠償請求を行う。

震災直後から放射線問題に取り組んできた職員Aは、藤村氏のメッセージがアジア学院の進むべき道を示した「羅針盤」になったという。国内外のあらゆる科学者による異なる見解が飛び交う中、「この地に足の着いた立場で助言して下さったのは藤村先生以外にはいなかった」とAは当時を回顧している。また、藤村氏は、「安全性を判断した上でこの地からアジア学院は出ていかなくてくれ、もし出ていったら他の人達も皆つられて出ていってしまう。アジア学院はリーダーになってくれ。あなた達が砦だ」と訴え、アジア学院に地域のリーダーとなるようにAに語りかけたという。

この言葉によって、Aは、サーバント・リーダーとしての地域開発をアジアやアフリカの研修生に説いておいて、自らの足下ではそれを実践してこなかったこれまでの「あり方」を問い直したという。「おたおたして誰かにくっついていくのでなく、先頭を切らなくてはならない。(中略)この土地で40年間やってこれたお返しをしなくてはならない」と思ったという。こうした思いは、後述するベクレルセンターを通しての地域への継続的な貢献として結実していく。

震災後、日本キリスト教協議会より教会によるアジア学院の支援で何かしてほしいことはあるかと尋ねられ、放射能検出の精密な計測器を申し出たところ、快諾された。間もなくドイツ製の計測器はアジア学院内の那須セミナーハウスに設置され、地域の人々が食物等をもってくれば測定できる市民測定所「アジア学院ベクレルセンター」(以下、「ベクレルセンター」)が開設された。そして NRARP (那須野ヶ原の放射能汚染を考える住民の会) が放射線測定の計測をボランティアで担うことになった。地域住民によるボランティアは 2015 年 12 月現在においても毎週火曜～金曜まで続けられている。1回の測定は 1,500 円 (水の場合は 2,000 円)。測定所がない県外からも郵送で測定を依頼されている。開設から4年半で 4,000 件以上の検体の持ち込みがあったという。アジア学院の食物もすべてこの機械で計測され、学院内の食卓に運ばれたり、外に売られたりしている。ちなみに、当時から用いられている安全基準は世界でも最も厳しいと言われているベラルーシの子どもの食に対する基準であった 37 ベクレルである。

5. 開かれた共同体

インタビューを受けた職員全員が、震災後の混乱の中、確信をもって存続していくという方向性を決めたわけではなく、たえず決意の揺らぎの中にいたと言える。O 校長（当時）は「40 年間続けてきたものを止めるということは大変なことであるけれど、その一方で、100%安全であると言えない中で続けるということも大変なことでした」と当時をふり返る。特に、当時、校長等の役職に就いていた職員は、最終的な意思決定者としての重責を双肩に担い、苦渋の時をくぐり抜けていたことはインタビューの節々に感じられた。

それにしても、想像を絶するような苦難を乗り越え、ベクレルセンターを通じた地域貢献を実践するまでに変容した背景には何があったのであろうか。もちろん、科学的な推察に基づいた明確な指針を提示してくれた藤村のような人物との出会いは大きい。同時にまた、学院を強く根底から支えていたのは信仰であり、特にベテランの職員らに共通の信仰があることもレジリエンスの大きな要因であったと言えよう。一人ひとりの語りから、祈り、祈られ、相互に強く生き抜いてきたという震災直後からの回復の軌跡は容易に辿ることができる。また、インタビューではいかに職員が聖書の言葉に励まされ、苦難を乗り越えられたのかを随所に聞くことができた。ある職員は、「すべてに時があり、意味がある」という聖書のメッセージをもって、大震災後の放射線被害という災難を乗り越えたという。「神様が私たちの使命をリニューして下さった」「(震災によって) 私たちがアジア学院でやるべきことに神様がフォーカスさせてくれた」というように、信仰は苦境においても前向きに生きる原動力となっていたのである。

職員 S は、危機的な状況における宗教の効用について怪我に喩えて語っていた。「指を切っても放つといたって治るじゃないですか。(被災後の回復は) あれに近いのかもしれませんが。ただ、それは宗教があると早いっていうか、その自然治癒力が早くなるっていうか。絆創膏みたいな感じです」。アジア学院がたくましく回復した背景にはやはり信仰を礎にした共同体であるという事実は歴然としている。

ここで注目しておきたいのは、アジア学院で見られる信仰は決して排他的なものではなく、むしろ開かれているということである。

「自分はクリスチャンではないけれど、聖書の言葉には多く共感します。クリスチャンに寄り添うように私は生きています」と語る職員 S は「宗教の言葉の中で宗教よりも愛が前面に出されていることによって、自分も受け容れられているって思える」という。この言葉に象徴されているように、アジア学院にはキリスト教信者以外にも受容感をもたらすほどの開かれた何かがある。さらに続けて S は次のように語る。

私がここはクリスチャンが主体で、そこに寄り沿う場合、つながるポイントは、言葉にしたら愛なんですよ。私もクリスチャンでないながらも、クリスチャンがすごく、ああ、いいこと言っていると思う。聖書の中のコリントの章で、あそこは愛についてすごくたくさん語りますよね。(中略)最後の言葉で「信仰と希望と愛」だと。で、一番大事なのは愛なんだと言っちゃうんですよ。その時にね、宗教のことを語る本の中で宗教よりも愛だって言っちゃうのは恰好よさを私は感じ

ていて・・・(沈黙) 今、たぶん原理主義で陥っている人たちは信仰で動いちゃっているんじゃないですかね、テロだったりとか、他宗教同士でいがみあうのは、これはお前達と違う考えだから、と。(中略) でも、それを凌駕して愛だっていうのは、すごくそこはもう完全にシンクロできる部分で、それによって私も違う宗教に受け容れられている、って安心感をもってこのコミュニティに居られるし、(中略) お互い思い合うという最初の1歩がここは確かだと思いますね。

インタビューで他の職員は、S がキリスト教信者でないにもかかわらず強靱な精神力と他者への優しさをもって逆境を乗り越えていた姿に励まされた、という。クリスチャンもそうでない職員も、持ちつ持たれつ励まし合うという関係性にあったのである。

アジア学院の創設 40 周年を機に実施された卒業生らへのアンケート調査の結果によれば、卒業生の6割がアジア学院で社会的・文化的に相違のある人々と接した経験が、卒業後、他者との相違を尊重し、他者をよりよく理解するのに役立ったと答えている。初期の卒業生はその多くが同学院をキリスト教の団体だと認識していたのに対し、最近の卒業生は学びの中で、宗教を超えた、多様な宗教性の側面が重要であったと認識しているようだ⁶。このことから、アジア学院の標榜するキリスト教信仰がいかに開かれた性質であるかが推察できよう。

6. 融解する力

ここまで見てきたように、アジア学院のレジリエンスに信仰が大きく影響しているのは明らかであり、その一方で、非宗教的なものからの作用もある。職員Aは、同学院があらゆる苦難を乗り越えて存続できているのは‘unity’があるからであるという。ここで言うところの‘unity’とはキリスト教的なニュアンスを多分に帯びた「一体感」であろう。しかし、こうした感覚は、単に聖書を共有しているところから来るのみならず、インタビューでしばしば言及されていた「土」や「食」を共にするという共同生活にも裏打ちされているように思われてならない。同学院のレジリエンスの背景に非宗教的なものがあるとすれば、有機農業を基盤とした暮らしを共にするという日々の営みから生まれる連帯感、言い換えるなら、相互信頼と言えるのかもしれない。

こうした土に根ざした共同生活はアジア学院ではフードライフと呼ばれている。「フードライフ」とは「食 (food) といのち (life) は共に切り離すことができない」という意味の学院独自の用語であり、そこには、生産・処理・調理・他者との食事の分かち合いという営みが含まれる⁷。

繰り返し強調するが、アジア学院はキリスト教信仰を標榜した共同体であるにもかかわらず、異教徒の研修生も受け容れてきた⁸。しかも、前述のとおり、卒業生の多くは寛容な態度を身につけたことを自覚している。この寛容の文化が培われてきた背景には、フードライフが重要な役割を担っていると思われる。異教徒の研修生に対して排他的にならない理由について尋ねられた職員Kはフードライフが介在することの大切さについて次のように語っている。

鍵はフードライフのような気がします。あの・・・たぶん共に食事をしたり、共に作るっていう、その・・・汗と一緒に流すというところだったりとか、食べ物と命・生活が切り離されていないと

ということが（中略）なんかホッとさせられるということなのかな、と私は感じてます。（中略）フードライフが、そこで食べ物が作られ、それを一緒に作り、ハーベストして、それを一緒に調理して食べるというところの過程が、暮らしがあるからだ・・・。

愛や正義を説く宗教に則った生活ではとかく観念的になる場面もあるが、農業を基盤にした共同生活があると、身体的にも精神的にもバランスがとれる。「ホッとさせられる」という感覚は大事な根っこを日々の農作業という実直な形で共有している安心感から来るのかもしれない。

続けて K は、「土」を愛する生活があつてこそ、特定の宗教の信者である前に一人ひとりの人間であることができる、と語る⁹。

土からも学ぶところがあります。やはりダイバーシティだとか、ほんとに何故オーガニックなのかということも土から学ぶことがあると思うのです。「土と共に生きる」という高見先生のビジョンがそこにあつて、神を愛し、人を愛し、土を愛すっていうその精神もそこにあると思います。私たちが「宗教、宗教、神様を愛そう」みたいな、イエス様だけが大事じゃなくて、人も愛し土も愛すという、その姿勢がたぶん宗教観を薄くっていうか、俗にいう「宗教人」じゃなくしてる、一人の人間にしてくれているのかもしれない。私たちが神様だけは強調したくないし、生きる過程を共有したいという想いはスタッフの中にあると思うんです。

同じコインの両側の一面をあえて強調するならば、アジア学院は暮らしがあつてこそその宗教的な共同体なのである。そこでは観念的なものでさえ日常の暮らし（土着）に溶け込ませてしまうような不思議な力が働いているように思われる。

ここで想い起こされるのは冒頭にかかげた学院創設者、高見敏弘の言葉である。そこには、キリストの教えに則った観念的な正義が大上段にかざされるのではなく、「食卓」という「暮らし」の目の高さで社会正義が語られている。このように自分たちが標榜する観念的な理想と「暮らし」とが融解しているという感覚をどの職員も心身のどこかに抱いているのかもしれない。

アジア学院では、異なる次元同士、または異質な者同士の融解は他にも見出される。先にも触れた学院の40周年を機に実施されたアンケート調査報告書には、多文化が日常化している学院の共同生活を通して自らのエゴが溶けてしまったという卒業生の興味深い言葉が掲載されている¹⁰。

私たちの社会はいつも宗教という色眼鏡を通して物事を見ています。日頃平和に共に生活していても、お互いの文化や信条を100%受け入れているわけではありません。アジア学院では宗教や人種、肌の色といった違いを乗り越え、すべてを尊重することを教えてくれました。またタイやスリランカ出身の仏教徒の友達から話を聞く機会がありました。国家、宗教、信条、伝統の違いとともにお互いを尊敬するのです。共に食べ、祈る暮らしを通じ、わたしのエゴは溶けてしまいました。

この「融解」体験は、インタビューで得た職員Aの鍵言葉を借りれば、「和解」、すなわち「神との和解、人間どうしの和解、自然との和解」にも通じる共存・共生の感覚なのかもしれない。この感覚をもたらしているのは、「共に食べ、祈る暮らし」なのである。アジア学院では、土に根ざした共同生活が「和解」の触媒になっていると言えよう。

最後に、インタビューの中で「アジア学院をひと言で表すとどのような共同体ですか」という問いに一人ひとりに答えてもらったので、回答のすべてを紹介して拙論のむすびとしたい。各々の回答を列挙すると、次のようになる。(カッコ内は、インタビューの中で語られた説明を筆者が要約した添え書きである。)

「together」

「他民族・多文化を目指す共同体」

「共に生きるコミュニティ」

「多様性でみんな認められている共同体」

「多様性」「ダイバーシティ」

(互いに成長し、高め合うコミュニティ)

「インクルーシブな共同体」

(宗教や文化を超えて共存できる場所)

「箱船みたいなところ」

(学院の外には農薬や遺伝子組換え作物、貧困・格差等の問題があるが、それらに抗って存在するアジア学院は端から見ればエキセントリック(尖っている)。でも、かつての箱船を作った人たちがそう見られていたのではないか。そして最終的に生き残った。)

「変容するコミュニティ」

(ひと言で形容できない位、毎年変わる、という。毎年コミュニティの3分の2に当たる学生たちが入れ替わり、変わるから共同体として続く)

「愚直な共同体」

(決して効率的ではないのだけれど、よい意味で「愚直」)

「ポジティブネス」

(共同体として人々や自然のもつよい面を見ていること)

「外の人が夢だということを実際に毎日やっているところ」

「かけ替えのない共同体」

「不思議な共同体」

「不安のないカオス」

「新しい形容詞の必要な共同体」

回答には意外にも信仰にかかわる言葉は少なかった。そもそもアジア学院のモットーは「共に生きる」である。この言葉は、聖書の中の言葉ではなく、創設者の高見自身の言葉であるという。

それは、アジア学院の生活の中心でもあるコイノニアという建物の礎石に刻まれており、また毎年、すべての研修生に配布される「トレーニング・ハンドブック」にも明記されている。そこで表現される共生は、自然との共生であり、人との共生、すなわち文化を異にする他者との共生である。

英文訳は‘that we may live together’である。このフレーズを見ると、‘that’は何なのかと思う人も少なくないであろう。それは、‘so that’の‘so’が省かれた‘that’であるという。その前には、例えば、「耕しましょう（共に生きるために）」や「食べましょう（共に生きるために）」などの文章が様々に挿入できる。

以上、描いてきたとおり、アジア学院は理念としても実践としても「共生のコミュニティ」である。40年以上の歴史で培われてきたレジリエンスは信仰のバックボーンがあるがゆえに相対的に強靱であり、同時に、土と共にある暮らしを慈しむ感覚があるだけに実にしなやかである。当然ながら、そうした性質は創ろうと思ってもなかなか創れる類いではない。それだけに、存続しなくてはならない共同体なのである。

この論文は、科学研究費補助金による助成を受けて実施した海外学術調査の成果に基づく報告書『アジア諸国における教育の持続可能性とレジリエンスに関する総合的研究（平成 24～27 年度基盤研究 B：研究課題番号 24402046）』（2016 年 3 月刊）の中の論考「アジア学院のレジリエンス：「共に生きる」ことを通して培われる強さとしなやかさ」に加筆・修正を加えたものである。

注釈

1. インタビューはすべてアジア学院内の会議室等で行われ、記録として録音された。また、聴き取り調査を補う形で永田は 2015 年度を通してアジア学院に不定期に滞在し、研修生や教職員と交流した。
2. 荒川朋子「震災とアジア学院：放射能被害からの

教訓」『福音と世界』新教出版社、2015 年 1 月 p. 22.

3. アンドリュー・ゾッリ、アン・マリー・ヒーリー (2013)『レジリエンス：あらゆるシステムの破綻と回復を分かるものは何か』（須川綾子訳）ダイヤモンド社

4. 荒川朋子「震災とアジア学院：放射能被害からの教訓」『福音と世界』新教出版社、2015年1月 p. 22.
5. 同上書、p. 23.
6. セラジーン・ロシート (2015), p. 16
7. アジア学院ホームページより
(<http://www.ari-edu.org/about-us/about-us-2/>)
2016年1月10日閲覧。
8. アジア学院が40年間の歴史で受け容れた研修生の宗教別の内訳は、キリスト教徒は76.9% (810人)、仏教徒8.1%(85人)、ヒンドゥー教徒4.7% (49人)、イスラム教徒3%(31人)、その他・無宗教7.1%(74人)となっている。大津健一ほか編(2013)p. 25.
9. アジア学院では、土には価値があり、土に触れながら働く人々もまた価値があると考えられている。(セラジーン・ロシート (2015), p. 4)
10. セラジーン・ロシート (2015), p. 17.

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Texts from ARI ・ アジア学院からの著書

Toshiaki Kusunoki

ARI's ecumenical and interreligious beginnings

Speech given in the ARI Oikos Chapel
on the occasion of ARI's Foundation Day,
September 17, 2016

I am honored to be invited here this morning to share a story of the early days of ARI. It's always good to remember, it seems to me, the beginning of our life project. Quite often in our life we lose the sight, or get carried away to somewhere we never intended to land in the beginning; and complain "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

If my sharing this morning would help excavate something that might not have been commonly shared in this community, yet needs to be remembered in this multi-ethnic, multi-cultural set-up, I should be more than happy.

Before I start, to be fair, I have to remind you that the perspective I employ this morning in looking at the beginnings of ARI is quite one-sided, almost biased, meaning I'm looking at those days through the glasses of the National Christian Council in Japan (NCCJ), with which I worked in 1971 and '72, the dawning period of ARI.

When we talk about a pre-history of this institute, we all know that there was a rural pastors' training program called South East Asia Course in Tsurukawa Rural Institute located in a suburb of Tokyo. Starting from 1960 up to 1972, the year before the foundation of ARI, it successfully trained 116 graduates altogether, mainly pastors and evangelists serving rural congregations. So this is where you find the roots of ARI. That's the mainstream story of its pre-history stage.

I said that I'm going to shed light on the early days from the standpoint of the NCCJ. In order to do that, please allow me to give you a brief introduction of myself and the work of the NCCJ.

Graduating from college in March 1971, I took up a job with a small social welfare-related Christian organization in Tokyo. It so happened that our next door neighbor was the head-

quarter of the NCCJ, and we were supposed to carry out the day-to-day work for one of its sections, the Department of Service, wearing two hats as you may say.

The same year, 1971, Mr. Takami was appointed as Associate-Director of the Department of Service. It was on a part-time basis, since he still served as Director of the Southeast Asia Course, which was originally started as an independent training center but later incorporated into Tsurukawa Rural Institute, which was and is a theological seminary. Towards the end of that year, 1971, East Pakistan got independence and named itself Bangladesh. The new-born independent nation, however, had really no jubilant moments to enjoy. A cyclone hit the country, and it was one of the worst in its recent history.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) made an emergency appeal to its member churches throughout the world to help the cyclone victims and refugees. The NCCJ responded through its Department of Service by launching a refugee relief campaign throughout Japan on the one hand, and on the other, dispatched Mr. Takami to Bangladesh, joined by Mr. Makino, to monitor the real situation on the spot. I, remaining in Tokyo, was busy sending out envelopes stuffed with campaign leaflets, hundreds and thousands of them. It was the only means available to us in those days: No such things as websites or Facebook. It was truly a manual labor, day after day.

Following the refugee relief campaign, the Department of Service of the NCCJ was involved with yet another project, this time in collaboration with the Catholic Church in Japan. It was called Power Tiller Project where 50 young men from Japan were sent to Bangladesh to help farmers operate power tillers. Mr. Takami and Mr. Kikuchi assumed team leadership in turn.

The most significant aspect of this endeavor was that it was a joint project between the NCCJ, a Protestant organization, and CARITAS Japan, a Catholic outfit. There had been many joint programs between the two, of course, such as prayer meetings, music concerts and many others. But they were basically one-evening programs, or maybe one-day events. This Power Tiller Project lasted three months — making it a huge milestone for churches in Japan.

In August of 1972, I had to quit the job with the social welfare office, that is to say, my work with the Department of Service came to an end. Having finished interim reports of both the refugee relief campaign and the Power Tiller Project, I headed for the airport for my new mission overseas.

Upon receiving a telegram, I came back to Japan in June of 1975; it was from Rev. Ueda of the NCCJ, saying “We need you back by July.” Rev. Ueda, by the way, later assumed directorship of ARI.

As you see now, I was absent from Japan when ARI got actually started in 1973. It was only from July 1975, two years later, that I came in direct and frequent contact with the institute.

Mr. Ardhendu Chatterjee of the class of 1976 was an NCCJ scholarship recipient. He used

to visit Rev. Ueda and myself at the NCCJ office in Tokyo to give us reports of the training program he was going through. Although I kept myself very close ever since to what was going on at ARI in the capacity of one of the NCCJ secretaries, I was, therefore, not directly involved in the opening of this institute. I only came to join the staff formally in 1980.

So, why am I here today?

Have you read this booklet published on the foundation day in 2013? On page 4, it says the first opening ceremony took place in May 1973. It further records: "Country break-down of the first class (16 participants): India (1), Thailand (1), South Korea (2), Malaysia (3), Bangladesh (3), Japan (6: 4 of them were consigned trainees from Rissho Kosei-kai)" Then on the next page it continues: "Rissho Kosei-kai, a new Buddhist sect, rendered both financial and in-kind support in the early days of ARI."

This is why I'm here today, to help us remember a friend in need among many that are well-known to us, like YMCAs and overseas churches.

This Buddhist group, Rissho Kosei-kai, may be unknown to most of you. It was founded in 1938, and has "1.2 million households" as its members. They count membership by the unit of household units, not by individuals. The Christian population in Japan, by the way, is said to be 1% of the total population, that is roughly 1 million or 1 point some million people only. You can compare that to the size of this Buddhist sect: 1.2 million households.

They are very keen on peace issues, including nuclear disarmament, and inter-faith dialogues. The late Mr. Niwano, the founder of the sect, actively led his people across those fields of world concerns. For instance, he was invited to the opening of Vatican II in 1965. He was one of the founding members of the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP), holding its first meeting in 1972. And in the following year it was formally recognized as an NGO by and under the UN's Economic and Social Council. As to the Christian representation of Japan, both the Catholic Church and the NCCJ are members of the WCRP. In 1978, the Niwano Peace Foundation was established, and since 1983, according to their website "the foundation has awarded the Niwano Peace Prize to honor distinguished individuals or groups that contribute to world peace through interreligious dialogue, disarmament, defense of human rights, and conflict resolution."

Enough said. For more, please visit their website.

When ARI was just out of the incubation box and trying to begin its first steps forward, this Buddhist sect, Rissho Kosei-kai, favorably responded to Mr. Takami's solicit of support, knowing too well that ARI is based on the Christian faith. The wording on page 5 is very simple, "Rissho Kosei-kai rendered both financial and in-kind support in the early days of ARI." However, their act of concrete support, contribution and solidarity in the spirit of promoting world peace means a lot, a lot more than these 15 or so words here might convey.

This episode might have something to do, I'm only guessing, with the fact that ARI has

been open to people of other religious faiths of the world beyond Christianity. Well, it's true that the Southeast Asia Course's people, i.e., Mr. Takami, Mr. Kikuchi, Mr. Makino, Ms. De Vries and others had a vision of accepting non-Christian participants as well, but it was not easy to do so, if not impossible, because, remember, the course was part of the theological seminary set-up. Anyhow, it's a historical fact that the group of the first year, 1973, did include four short-term participants from this new Buddhist sect. This is significant, to say the least. In the beginning, let us remember, were four participants from this peace-loving Buddhist sect.

That world peace can never be achieved by one single religious group is taken for granted worldwide today, well, except by some fanatics here and there, Christians and otherwise, but to concretely incarnate this vision on earth is again not so easy. Founders of the Asian Rural Institute did it.

Ajia no Tsuchi, the Japanese newsletter from ARI, carried a very interesting article in September 2011. I hope you'll also find it interesting. The short article says, "Ms. Bya Myar is the first Buddhist participant from Myanmar." Well, Myanmar's population is predominantly Buddhist, as we all know. ARI has received so many participants from that country, and it says Bya was the first Buddhist participant. Although not many, yet in past years there have been participants of Buddhist faith from other countries, such as Thailand and Sri Lanka. But she was the first one from Myanmar, it says. News to me, but this is not what I found interesting. The article continues: "It was Ms. Naw Lee Myar, a graduate and one-time staff member of ARI, who recommended Bya with a hope to promote collaboration between Christians and Buddhists who are engaged in rural development work in her area."

Isn't that something? We know many graduates are working with a variety of people beyond religious boundaries. Nothing new in that particular sense. But what I read here is a little bit more than that.

Myar-san—a strong-minded, talented, respected activist woman—holds a responsible position within the Baptist Association, her sending body. ARI has received more than several participants from that organization. That means, let us imagine, and I think we may not be too far from the truth, that the Baptist Association must have multiple candidates on a waiting list who are as dedicated as Myar-san is, and eligible and eager to come to ARI. I can't blame them if they ever approach the graduates within the association one way or the other to be recommended to come to ARI as early as possible, having waited for so many years. In this explosive context Myar-san recommends a Buddhist person instead. She is great. Thank God she was not crucified by those on the waiting list.

We should be as firm as ever in what we believe in. Let nobody jeopardize that in any way. But that very faith-foundation must constitute a liberating force at the same time, more than anything else. Risho Kosei-kai showed an example of it at the start of ARI; Myar-san gives us

a great hint of what it is to work together to be a servant of the cause, not of an organization, "so that we may live together," live together in peace.

Thank you.

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Tomoko Arakawa

A Vision of Asian Rural Institute's Farming as Eco-Just Farming

Speech given at the Asian Christian Life-Giving Agriculture Forum IV that took place in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from November 28 to December 2, 2016. The theme was "Eco-Justice Towards Sustainable Development and Food Security in Asia"

ARI exists for Social Justice

Our founder, Rev. Dr. Toshihiro Takami, said that "Asian Rural Institute (ARI) exists now and into the future to achieve Social Justice." He further defined social justice as "a state where every person in this world, without single exception, can sit at a rich dining table having the joy of sharing."

ARI and reconciliation

ARI was established in 1973 having its root in the training course named "Southeast Asia Rural Leaders Training Course" under the United Church of Christ in Japan's Theological School for Rural Mission in Tokyo. The original request came from the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) back in 1959. I understand that the CCA requested Japanese churches at that time to create a training center where Asian rural pastors would be equipped with necessary practical skills so that they could lead their challenged rural communities. Japanese churches responded to the request, and the "Southeast Asia Rural Leaders Training Course" was created in 1960. At the foundation of the training course, there was a hope of redemption of Japan's sins committed against many Asian countries during World War II. The Asian Rural Institute was born out of this former body of the "Southeast Asia Rural Leaders Training Course" in 1973, but we always remember that there was hope of redemption from Japan's sin.

A former board member of ARI, the late Mr. Paul Fukuda said,

The meaning of ARI's existence as God's vessel is a testimony to the redemption of God for Japanese churches which also points us to so many of the causes of World War II being

a result of seeking greed.

ARI tries to seek reconciliation with other Asian countries by our concrete actions of training and nurturing rural leaders who can lead rural communities in the right direction. We believe that this work should be done with servant leadership, practicing sustainable agriculture and community building where people can enjoy the joy of sharing.

So we state the purpose of ARI as follows:

To nurture skillful and qualified grassroot rural leaders who serve rural people and who would willingly take up challenges of poverty and food problems that prevail throughout Asia.

For uplifting rural folks in Asia, the work of creating a peaceful and just world has to be done by Christians. So, let us take up this work humbly, with joy.

In 1973, at the creation of Asian Rural Institute, Rev. Dr. Takami said,

We sincerely hope that people will participate in God's work of building a just and peaceful world. In order to achieve this, we try to grasp and understand the situation in Asia with all our effort and abilities, and we happily choose the way to devote our whole souls to the strictly concrete and absolutely necessary work; that is "to nurture rural leaders who serve rural people." And we are grateful to be given such an opportunity.

The situation of Asia that occupies more than half of the world population will affect the future of all human beings. The majority of those more than 1 billion people are the villagers in the rural areas in the so called "developing countries," and they are in very vulnerable and unjust situations being oppressed by an increasing social gap. Our Lord Jesus Christ is a friend of the weak first of all, and sacrificed his own life to such people. Remembering this, we as well live together with such people and make an effort to be saved together with them. There is no bigger joy than this.

The majority of people in Asia are still captured by the power of evils such as poverty, hunger, diseases, illiteracy, population explosion, customs, exploitations, etc. We, relying on God's power, fight for the freedom of those people including us. We nurture the leaders who work for the salvation of the whole human race by choosing to live together with such people. We find an image of such a good leader in Jesus Christ, a good shepherd.

Our motto is "That We May Live Together"

This is our means and end. We try to find the way to live together with other people, with nature and with God. And we try to achieve it by living it every day in our Community Life.

Organic Farming and Reconciliation

ARI was not doing organic agriculture from the beginning. When staff members thought of a more appropriate farming method which would go with our purpose and motto, they changed their farming way from conventional farming to organic farming. So our farming is one form of realizing our motto, "That We May Live Together." So it has to contribute to the achievement of our mission: Reconciliation with people, nature and God.

Organic farming was introduced by one farm staff person in 1976. (Actually, the staff member moved to Thailand and worked in the Mackeen Rehabilitation Center for the rest of his career life.) In 1979, a special compost-making space called "step style compost area" was invented on the ARI campus. It used a sloping area, dividing it into four sections, dumping compost materials from the top section and shifting it to the lower section when it decomposed. It dramatically reduced the labor of human beings in doing organic farming. Finally we were able to practice farming without any chemical inputs from 1981 for vegetable production, and from 1988 for rice production.

ARI Eco-System Vision

In 1982, the idea of an ARI Eco-System was introduced, to work toward the achievement of our motto "That We May Live Together." There were 9 principles.

1. Making all the 6 hectares of campus land a community that has a good balance with nature.
2. Allocating forest, fields, livestock sheds, school buildings, sports ground and roads in an appropriate way.
3. Utilizing natural energy at a maximum level.
4. Utilization of rain water and gray water by purifying, reserving them underground and in ponds. Trying not to pollute land with our gray water.
5. Aiming at high food self-sufficiency.
6. Practicing organic farming.
7. Planning work so that every one on campus has an appropriate amount and kind of work.
8. Making efforts to share this kind of lifestyle with other people.
9. Promoting worldwide networking with those who share the same vision.

Foodlife

Then the concept of Foodlife also became more solid. The *ARI Training Handbook* states,

"Foodlife" is a special term used at ARI to express the reality that food and life cannot be separated; both are essential for each other. Nature is a gift from God given to us to sustain our lives through

producing food. Human beings cannot survive without food, so we work to sustain life through a healthy relationship with nature. At ARI we are making an effort to create Foodlife in which the soil becomes richer as we produce food and human relationships become more beautiful.

ARI Foodlife involves activities such as producing, processing, cooking and eating food and sharing with others. Foodlife provides learning opportunities to deepen our understanding of organic farming, the importance of food, dignity of labor and the importance of food self-sufficiency for self-reliance of people.

Appropriate Technology

Promoting farming technology and methods that can sustain human life, nature and social environment in appropriate manners, the idea of Appropriate Technology also became important.

Appropriate Technology is not about introducing new technology and transferring it from the old one. We believe that technology does not have any positive meaning unless it may be well utilized in a social and economic structure and context that were built for centuries by local people. Appropriate Technology should also improve human activities, regardless of where it is introduced. Based on this belief, we set the direction of our organic farming method in relation with appropriate technology:

1. Developing simple and time saving techniques without depending on big or high-tech machineries.
2. Developing chemical-free farming technology.
3. Developing methods to utilize local materials inside and outside the campus.
4. Developing marketing methods that can reduce waste in production and foster mutual understanding with consumers.
5. Developing methods to make farming fun and interesting.

At the base of all these policies and the direction of ARI Foodlife and Appropriate Technology, lies Christianity. A note from a 1970s ARI recrod says, “The world’s trend is centered on money-based values. It requires tremendous courage to make a judgment based on other values different from these. Moreover, organic farming is the voice of a minority and still immature in terms of an economic point of view. However, we try to have a value of differentiating “an important thing” out of the voices of the minority and hope to hold such a value.”

Attitude and behavior towards conventional farmers

In promoting organic and sustainable agriculture, it is important to remember that we should not just criticize chemical farming, imposing the “Justice of Organic Farming.” Rather, we should first humbly listen to these farmers, their voices and their problems, with an attitude

and mind of Servant Leadership. If our attitude of imposing organic farming becomes a reason for people to fight against each other and divide people, the approach will fail. It is difficult, but we need to find a creative way to bring people together toward a common goal of creating a sustainable society through a sustainable agriculture.

5.5 Years from the Massive Accident of the Fukushima Dai-Ichi Nuclear Power Plant

By the leak of radioactive substances from this terrible accident, farming in Japan and neighboring countries was threatened. Especially the farming that depends on circulation of organic materials in the eco-system was greatly threatened by the intervention of radioactive substances in the eco-system. Now, after 5.5 years of hard efforts of decontamination and repeated measurement of different kinds of food, soil and farm inputs, we at ARI can produce as we did 5.5 years before except for mushroom culturing, mountain vegetables and wild animals in the forests.

After all these experiences, some questions came to my mind: Is our enemy TEPCO (The Tokyo Electric Power Company, Incorporated, the owner of the nuclear power plants)? Do we really need to “fight “against radiation? I had to think deeply about these questions because I found myself/ourselves not just victims but assaulters as well. I and we (ARI) had not resisted national energy policy in Japan, especially opposing the direction and emphasis on nuclear energy. We committed a sin of ignorance. We realized that we are part of a target we need to focus on in asking ourselves this fundamental question: How does God want us to conduct our training program of rural leaders in this nuclear age ?

What we need to do now are the following:

1. Realizing that we are part of the assaulter who caused the accident of the nuclear power plant.
2. Continuing the training of rural leaders of the world, putting more emphasis on the efforts of showing problems of development, and figuring out what true development should be.
3. Doing all these things in walking a path of Christ's peace.

Activities for eco-justice should bring about peace, not hatred and conflicts, among people. True peace will be created not by threatening to fight, but by trusting Christ and practicing the love of Christ. It is the same with agriculture. Not trying to change others' farming methods by brandishing a sword of organic farming over someone's head, but by trusting Christ and practicing Christ's love in farming, true peaceful farming is created.

Lastly I would like to introduce an example of peaceful collaboration toward sustainable agriculture on Sadô Island in Japan

Sadô Island, located 40km off the shore of Niigata Prefecture, is characterized by a variety of landforms and altitudes. In 2011, Sadô Island was recognized for the first time in

Japan as “GIAHS – Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System” for its efforts to make Sadô's *satoyama* (Japan's traditional agricultural landscape) in harmony with the Japanese crested ibis. Sadô City has started “the ibis-friendly farming method” with a certification system for the creation of a homeland for the Japanese crested ibis, to rebuild the *satoyama* for the local economy and biodiversity. This is one good example of peaceful collaboration of different kinds of people working together toward environmental and social sustainability of the locality.

For example, Sadô City has been studying the technologies, based on traditional knowledge, that nurture small living creatures, such as loaches and worms, to be eaten by ibises in order for them to live and propagate in and around rice paddies.

One traditional technology is a ditch called “E”. “E” was created around the paddy fields when irrigation channels were made in the past. In “E,” water always remained as a safe haven for aquatic organisms and bio-topes, as well as a perfect feeding ground for the crested ibis. So they promoted creating “E,” again.

Another technology is winter flooding of the paddy field.

Due to the shortage of agricultural water in the past, paddy fields were filled with water during winter to save water for rice planting in spring. This is called “winter flooding.” Flooded paddy fields can function as a habitat for aquatic creatures to survive through winter and as a feeding ground for the Japanese crested ibis during the snowy season. Winter flooding can dramatically increase midge larvae (*tubifex*) which help make the soil ooze, so that seeds of weeds will sink into the soil and kill weed seeds, resulting in herbicidal effects.

Fish passes in paddy fields were also revived: In areas where a large-scale paddy development is conducted, a fish pass is made to preserve the conditions in which loaches and other creatures can move from a creek to paddy fields.

Sadô city started the “Certification for the homeland to live with the Japanese crested ibis”

All of the following conditions should be met in order to be certified as an ibis-friendly farming method:

1. The ibis-friendly farming method should be practiced to secure marsh areas in paddy fields and to also secure a habitat for other living creatures
 - (a) Creation of “E” and conventional technologies like winter flooding
 - (b) Creation of fish passes
 - (c) Creation of biotopes and connections with paddy fields
2. Certification of eco-farmers
3. Reduction of agricultural chemicals and chemical fertilizers by over 50% from the local standards
4. Implementation of “bio-assessment” twice a year

The declaration of Bio-Assessment Day

Sadô City specifies the second Sunday in June and the first Sunday in August as a “Bio-Assessment Day,” a day set aside to practice it.

Conclusion - Impact on the ARI Graduates and their communities

From 2014 to 2015 we researched 229 graduates in 12 countries (about 17 % of all graduates). The results showed that many of the ARI graduates successfully integrated the idea of true peace making with their farming activities, church and NGO activities and into their family life. The ARI training program that comes along with servant leadership, sustainable agriculture and community building is resonant with eco-justice and it helps people to realize true peace and to take action on the way to building peaceful societies.

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“In promoting organic and sustainable agriculture, it is important to remember that we should not just criticize chemical farming, imposing the “Justice of Organic Farming.” Rather, we should first humbly listen to these farmers, their voices and their problems, with an attitude and mind of Servant Leadership. If our attitude of imposing organic farming becomes a reason for people to fight against each other and divide people, the approach will fail. It is difficult, but we need to find a creative way to bring people together toward a common goal of creating a sustainable society through a sustainable agriculture.”

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