

Report on “Radiation Disaster Recovery Studies”

Course Radioactivity Social Recovery

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○Regarding “Radiation Disaster Recovery Studies”

(Describe your thoughts, the process you engaged in and your research progress regarding Recovery from Radiation Disaster.)

In 1945, the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, which caused catastrophic damage to the City. Many people perished before the end of the same year as a result of the bomb. Hiroshima University supported Hiroshima City’s recovery from the radiation disaster in its role as a comprehensive research university located in the first city to be devastated by an atomic bomb. Then, on the 11 of March of 2011, radioactive material contaminated the Fukushima region in the Great East Japan Earthquake and the consequent Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plant Accident. Hiroshima University again contributed to the reconstruction of Fukushima by supporting the suffering resident of the region, as well as by investigating the environmental contamination caused by the disaster.

Based on the above experience and supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan (MEXT), Hiroshima University inaugurated the Phoenix Leader Education Program (Hiroshima Initiative) for Renaissance from Radiation Disaster in 2011. In this program, I gained much knowledge and skills related to recovery from radiation disasters through lectures and practical seminars conducted by global experts, fieldwork in disaster areas, and internship activities in Japan and overseas.

As a result of my short-term fieldwork in Fukushima, I came to understand that radiation disasters consist of three aspects from the perspective of damage to human beings. Firstly, radiation disasters directly affect the human body such as acute radiation sickness and long-term effects of low dose radiation. Secondly, radiation disasters affect the mental and psychological aspects of people because many people suffer from anxieties about the future damage that might be caused by radioactivity. Thirdly, radiation disasters destroy the community and society. Therefore, an interdisciplinary approach consisting of medical,

environmental, and social fields are required for promoting recovery from these disasters. The Phoenix Leader Education Program has developed three courses with this objective. These include courses on Radiation Disaster Medicine, Radioactivity Environmental Protection, and Radioactivity Social Recovery. The students in these programs, which are based on the interdisciplinary approach, can study different subjects from each course related to radiation disasters.

As a student majoring in history, I was interested in how radiation disasters affect human society over the long-term. Therefore, for my doctoral research, I investigated how students from Southeast Asia that were victimized by the atomic bombing in Hiroshima were chronicled and remembered in the postwar Japanese society. The short-term internship in Hiroshima City Archive was very useful for conducting this research. I learned about the basic tasks of a city archive, how to find, catalog and maintain historical documents and records, as well as the process of restoring Hiroshima city. Through this internship, I acquired basic skills of cataloging documents and photos, developing databases, and making item-lists. I could also read the original documents regarding the restoration of Hiroshima, which was launched soon after the atomic bomb was dropped. Undoubtedly, my fieldwork and internship at the Phoenix Leader Education Program significantly contributed to the progress of my doctoral research.

○Title of Doctoral Thesis

Study on Foreign-Student Policy of Japan during the War and the Postwar Period

○Summary of Doctoral Thesis

(Describe so as to be easily understood, by relating it to “Radiation Disaster Recovery Studies”.)

My doctoral thesis consists of two sections. Firstly, I investigated the influence of the Program for Special Students from Southeast Asia (Nanpo Tokubetsu Ryugakusei) on postwar Japanese policy on foreign students. Secondly, my thesis examined the relationship between students from Southeast Asia that suffered the bombing and the postwar Japanese society, which is the primary focus of this report.

(Objectives and the Analysis)

I analyzed how Special Students from Southeast Asia or Nanpo Tokubetsu Ryugakusei that experienced the bomb have been remembered in postwar Japan. There have been few occasions to remember foreign atomic-bomb survivors in Japan because they were forgotten in the process of nationalizing the memory of the bomb damage in Japanese society. In my research, I focused on the period from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s, and analyzed when Southeast Asian students that suffered from the bomb were first remembered.

(1) Process of Remembrance by Hiroshima University

In 1957, an elder brother of the late Mr. Syed Omar, a Southeast Asian student and a bomb victim, wrote to the President of Hiroshima University to ask for his death certificate. As a result, Hiroshima University began investigating the situation of students that suffered from the bomb. I have reviewed the process of this investigation.

Major historical documents: Documents on Nanpo Tokubetsu Ryugakusei held by the Hiroshima University Archive

(2) Building Graves and Organizing Visits of Victims' Relatives to Japan

In the early 1960s, graves were built for two bomb victims, Mr. Syed Omar and Mr. Nick Yusof, respectively at Enkoji Temple in Kyoto and Kozenji Temple in Hiroshima through the effort of citizens of these cities. Moreover, the Asian Student Cultural Association (ABK), which is a private foundation supporting Asian students, invited the victims' relatives to Japan to pray at their graves in Hiroshima and Kyoto. I analyzed the process of building their graves and inviting their relatives to Japan.

Major historical documents: Documents on memorial services for Nanpo Tokubetsu Ryugakusei held at the Asian Student Cultural Association (ABK)

I clarified characteristics of the above process and explained its background by considering the international situation of Japan at the time.

(Conclusion)

Eight Southeast Asian students suffered injury or death from the bomb. The media reported their suffering relatively quickly, compared to other foreigners that were victimized by the bomb. In response to these reports, the Hiroshima University investigated how the bomb had

victimized them, and how the citizens of Hiroshima and Kyoto built graves for them. Moreover, the Asian Students Cultural Association invited their bereaved relatives to visit these graves. It was emphasized at the time that these events took place through the good intentions of Japanese citizens. However, the governments of Japan and Malaysia also played an important role in promoting these efforts. Furthermore, the international situation of Japan at the time influenced the realization of these activities.

○Other papers published in academic research journals

(1) Yuji Hirano (2018). Special Students from Southeast Asia (Nanpo Tokubetsu Ryugakusei) Victimized by the Atomic Bombing, and Reaction of the Postwar Japanese Society in the Mid-50s to Mid-60s. *Review of Historical Studies (SHIGAKU-KENKYU)*, No.299, 1-24.

(2) Yuji Hirano (2019). Formulation of the Postwar Foreign-Student Policy of Japan and the Establishment of the Japanese Government Scholarship Program. *Review of Historical Studies (SHIGAKU-KENKYU)*, No.302, 1-25.