

# “Conflict and Coexistence between Rivers and Humans: Volunteer Report of the Suspended Niu Dam Construction Site”

August 8, 2022.

Kobe International Sustaining Organization  
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The theme scripture: Ecclesiastes Chapter 11 verse 3

“If clouds are full of water, they pour rain on the earth. Whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where it falls, there it will lie.” (New International Version)

## <Introduction>

Kamo no Chōmei [鴨長明 1155-1216]<sup>1</sup> proclaimed “The flow of the river never ceases”, who experienced a great fire, a *tsujikaze* (tornado), the relocation of the capital, a great famine, and a great earthquake. When I was in school, I didn’t even study, but ran around in the fields and was obsessed with insects. Therefore, only the beginning of this song I can remember. It was after my 60th birthday that I learned that natural disasters were written in “*Hōjōki* (方丈記)”. Since 2011, the Kobe International Sustaining Organization has been taking quick responses to the site even in the disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, river floods, debris flows, landslides, and mudslides. We don’t have much of a track record. Our priority has been given to helping elderly people living alone who were affected by disasters, immigrants from overseas, and orphans. Therefore, there are only a few reconstructions works for damaged religious facilities<sup>2</sup>. It is different from the world-wide Christian volunteer organization in the United States, which has enough funds, achievements, and scope of action. We have consistently provided support on a one-to-one basis to isolated victims.

Through my activities so far, I have become to feel that the analysis of weather forecasts and knowledge of wind and rain cannot be underestimated in my bones.

On August 4 (Friday), the evacuation order was issued<sup>3</sup>. Three years ago, at 22:22 on Tuesday, June 18, 2019, an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.7 occurred in Murakami City. It is the same place. From Miyagi Prefecture where we were doing the 97th Tohoku Volunteer, we loaded food on our Toyota HiAce and headed to Niigata Prefecture<sup>4</sup>. We rushed to Yamakita General Gymnasium in Fuya, Murakami City<sup>5</sup>. On August 3, 2022, the gymnasium became an evacuation site for the flood disaster. We prepared to help while remembering the faces of people who had evacuated to the gymnasium three years ago and people who we did door-to-door visiting as listening volunteers. The evacuated high school students at that time on the website must have graduated and are now having university life. Just because we have been to the field doesn’t mean we can demonstrate special skills as an expert. Being with victims in need. And we serve for emergency “*θεραπεύω* (*therapeuo*)”<sup>6</sup>, listening volunteers, debris removing, mud removing, and tatami-matt replacement.

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<sup>1</sup> Kamo no Chōmei. A poet and essayist from the late Heian period to the early Kamakura period, who wrote “*Hōjōki* (方丈記 1212)”.

<sup>2</sup> The 1st Tamba Flood Volunteer (August 29, 2014. Sōtō Zen Temple Sekizou-ji. Tamba City Hyogo Prefecture).  
The 2nd Kuma River (Kumamoto heavy rain disaster) Volunteer (July 10, 2020. Konkokyo, Hitoyoshi City Kumamoto Prefecture).

<sup>3</sup> At 5:20, Shimonoseki, Sekikawa Village in Niigata Prefecture experienced a breaking-record heavy rainfall of 560.0mm, and Takane in Murakami City reported 410.0mm. At 23:00 on the previous night, 8,882 households and 25,622 people were ordered to evacuate due to the river flood.

<sup>4</sup> 2019. Y. Iwamura. *Niigata-Murakami & Yamagata-Tsuruoka Earthquake Volunteers*. June 18-20. Kobe International Christ Church.

<sup>5</sup> 2019. *Chugai Nippoh*. June 21.

2019. *Christian Press*. April 20. <https://christianpress.jp/murakami-city-imamura-yoshio/>

<sup>6</sup> “*θεραπεύω* (*therapeuo*)” is the Greek word for “cure, treat” that derived to the word “therapist”. It corresponds to

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### (1) Launch to the disaster affected area

#### a. After serving food.

On August 3, one of our friends had not come to the food distribution, so I went to Itami City to check whether he was sick sleeping alone or not. In Itami City, there is Koyadera Temple (Kōyasan Shingon-shū) built by the respected *Gyōki* [行基 668-749]. *Gyōki*'s maternal side “*Hachida* (蜂田) clan” is a family of “*hachida Yakushi clan*”. “*Yakushi* (薬師)” is what we call “pharmacist” or “doctor” today. It is recorded in “the Shoku Nihongi” that “*Hachida Yakushi clan* is from *Baekje* (百濟)”. Therefore, they are originally is an immigrant family. He devotedly built bridges, water ponds, and medical stations for the weak. (Chronology of *Gyōki*. 6 bridges, 15 water ponds, 4 moats, 9 relief facilities.)

Since April 2014, I have been doing meal distribution every Thursday at Higashi Yuenchi (next to Kobe City Hall). A voice rose up from the university students participating in Tohoku volunteers. Whether it rains, snows, or typhoons, human need to eat. That's why, whether it's New Year, or at any other time, I've continued doing it without a single break. Therefore, I have been postponed to attend events, talks and programs that overlap on Thursday. Through this activity, Hori Koichi became a leader and currently leading this meal distribution. He also plays an indispensable role as a leader of rice planning and harvesting to grow “*Fukoumai* (復幸米: Restoration-happiness-rice)” of “Resurrection of Rice Field, Mountain, and Bay”. Thanks to years of accumulated experience in Higashi Yuenchi, it has also been useful in providing meals in sudden disaster areas. Especially in 2017, natural disasters in HakiMasue Asakura Chity, Fukuoka Prefecture (the heavy rain on July 5, 2017. 41 people died and 1 person is missing), we were able to build relationship with the victims through the meal support at the Haki Junior High School gymnasium. Masue, a marginal community that suffered from depopulation, aging population, low birth rate, and high death rate, was far away from being restored, reconstructed, or rebuild, it has disappeared from the map of Japan. I learned that those disasters are human-generated disaster, not natural disasters. After that, it became clearer that the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism had been trying to destroy natural rivers and construct numerous sand control dams<sup>7</sup> for the profit of constructors. Therefore, the reason why we try to reach disaster affected area before anyone else is not only

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“taking care of”, which is the basis of the *Volunteer-dō* (The principle way of volunteer).

2016. Y. Iwamura. *Christianity and Volunteer-Dō (The Principle Way of volunteer)*. The 26th Japan Religion Coordinating Project for Disaster Relief (JRPD). Tokyo University.

<sup>7</sup> *Seasonal Journal. Shien. No.39. The 26<sup>th</sup> Kuma River Volunteer.*

humanitarian support and reconstruction, but also to reveal the deception of the authorities<sup>8</sup>.

Going back to the original story, while driving, turn on the radio to get traffic information. Then, we heard that there was a forecast of a linear rainband was likely to affect the Tohoku region.

#### **b. A linear rainband (線状降水帯: *Senjyo kousuitai*)**

It is a term often used in forecasts in recent years.

It refers a condition in which cumulonimbus clouds<sup>9</sup> that brings rain form a series of rows. In English, “*senjyo* (線状)” is “a linear [líniə]” and “*kousuitai* (降水帯)” is rainband. It can be said that it is “extending in a straight line” + “rain line, rain band”. “The clouds pour down their moisture and abundant showers fall on mankind. (Job 36:28)”

The linear rainband is a phenomenon of series of highly developed rain clouds, “cumulonimbus clouds”<sup>10</sup>.

In Japan, the word “a linear rainband” began to be used 15 years ago for the first time. The Meteorological Research Institute of Japan became the center and has worked together with 14 institutions, including universities, to seek the cause. According to Mr. Kato Teruyuki from the Meteorological Research Institute, Department of Typhoon and Severe Weather Research, he said that the term was first used around year of 2000 by a group of the Meteorological Research Institute that was studying linear rainfall areas caused by topographical effects in the Kyushu region.

Cumulonimbus clouds appeared one after another at the same area on the sea, at three places Sanin (Yamaguchi Prefecture to Shimane Prefecture), Hokuriku (northern part of Fukui Prefecture), and Tohoku (northern part beyond Niigata Prefecture). There is no topography such as mountains on the surface of sea. The Japan Meteorological Agency is confused that it cannot be called as a frontal rainband.

By current technology, it is difficult to accurately forecast the linear rainband. Large-scale phenomena such as seasonal rain fronts and typhoons can be figured out to some extent. However, it is not easy to predict the linear rainband because it is small in scale, with a width of several 10km and a length of several 100km. Moreover, the mechanism of its occurrence has not been fully elucidated.

Thousands of years ago, it was said; “Who can understand how he spreads out the clouds, how he thunders from his pavilion? (Job 36:29)” Nonetheless, it cannot be said that we should give up on researching the mechanism of the natural world.

Based on past examples the accuracy of the linear rainband prediction is not necessarily high as the accuracy rate is about once every two times nationwide, and about once every four times for local areas<sup>11</sup>.

Year of 2014 was the year when Kobe International Sustaining Organization started full-scale activity to deal with landslide disasters<sup>12</sup>. I had dealt with typhoons, strong winds, high wave damages, on a one-off basis. However, the activities of the groups as a whole, such as removing mud, cleaning up debris, carrying out unusable furniture, preparing meals, and listening volunteer, coincided with the time when the term “a linear rainband” became publicly accepted.

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<sup>8</sup> *Seasonal Journal. Shien. No.40. The 29<sup>th</sup> Kuma River Volunteer.*

<sup>9</sup> 2021. A, Kentaro. *Weather Encyclopedia*. KADOKAWA. 36-39

<sup>10</sup> 2007. Y, Masanori. K, Teruyuki. *Meteorology of Heavy Rain and Snow*. Asakura Publishing. 56-57.

<sup>11</sup> 2022. *NHK*. June 16. 4pm.

<sup>12</sup> From the report “Tanba Flood Volunteer (August 15-8, 2014). I kept contacting with Ms. Kojima Fumiko from Hiroshima, who participated in the Tohoku Volunteer. Regarding the flood damage that occurred simultaneously at residential areas in Asakitaku and Asaminamiku, we decided that the main unit head to the Ichijima area in Hyogo Prefecture.

<http://kisokobe.sub.jp/article/6030/>

The world view of Spinoza [1632-1677]<sup>13</sup>, a Dutchman, would be a stimulus to those who serve *the Volunteer-dō* (The principle way of volunteer).

Spinoza said, “I may sum up the matter by saying that the method of interpreting Scripture does not widely differ from the method of interpreting nature - in fact, it is almost the same. For as the interpretation of nature consists in the examination of ‘the history of nature’, and therefrom deducing definitions of natural phenomena on certain fixed axioms, so Scriptural interpretation proceeds by the examination of Scripture, and inferring the intention of its authors as a legitimate conclusion from its fundamental principles.”

“Scripture does not widely differ from the method of interpreting nature” indicates that for Spinoza the attitudes of interpreting the Bible and deciphering weather forecasts are essentially the same.

Therefore, we should sharpen our minds about the differences in weather forecasts.

### **c. Heavy rain fall. August 4, 2022 (Friday)**

After loading preserved food for meal distribution, we headed from Kobe to Fuya in Murakami City, Niigata Prefecture. Only myself, and Brother Noda Kenji was possible, so two of us headed to. My breakfast always starts at 6am consist of natto, miso soup and brown rice, so I can finish it quick. I also finished doing laundry at 7am. Brother Noda arrived at 7:15am, so I offered him a cup of coffee to wait for my preparation. We could finish packing relief materials for 800 people in about half an hour.

Before entering the Chugoku Jyukando Expressway, the rain was lashing down the Kita-Kobe line, and the cars in the adjacent lane were sliding down the road like a slid, and the road was like a river. Sometimes, big splashes happened as if jumping off a 10-meter-high diving board. Splashes hit the windshield of the car next to me. If the balance beam of the competition is on the mat, you can walk without fear. But with a balance beam 10-meter-high, you can’t walk without fear. Just a same, if you are driving normally, you will be fine, but if the water splash is so strong that it covers your car, you will be afraid to drive. Water splash from the car next to us crossed the lane and covered us. We could not see anything in our front. If I apply the sudden brake, the car would slip, so I felt so nervous.

I stiffen my body so as not to let the pressure of the heavy rain take over the steering wheel control. I slowed down and kept driving. I was worried whether I can manage to concentrate on driving without taking turns until Murakami’s turn. During Typhoon No.19 in September 2019, we moved from Mera, Tateyama City Chiba Prefecture to visit Ryushima Kyonanmachi in the same city, and visited Kanda xx & Yoshie family’s house. At the road along the coast of Ryushima was making a huge sound like the big wave rock crashing, and it attacked our Toyota HiAce. The color of the clouds was also dark, it was dark even though it was daytime, and it seemed like a undersea tunnel without light. The profile of secretary-general Honda Hideyasu who was driving, was looking stern.

On August 9, 2021, Typhoon No.9 landed in Kagoshima Prefecture from the night before. We could not use the Sanyo Expressway and the Kyushu Expressway to go to the 13<sup>th</sup> Volunteer in Hitoyoshi City, Kumamoto Prefecture. We had no choice but enter Hitoyoshi City by using local road through from Yamaguchi Prefecture, Fukuoka Prefecture, and Miyazaki Prefecture. The typhoon had knocked down trees on the road. One person died in Okayama Prefecture after falling into a swollen river. Representative Murakami Hirotaka also proceeded cautiously on the road drive in the darkness.

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<sup>13</sup> 2021. Y, Iwamura. *Christianity and Restoration*. Kansei Gakuin University Chapel. 4-5.

<http://kicc.sub.jp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/a45396e87042453db96ec9be6be0fd85.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> 2017. Y, Toshihiro. *Transformation of Geocosmos: Earth Theory from Descartes to Leibniz*. Edited by Hiro Hirai. Keiso Shobo. 209.

“Ask”, as from “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. (Matthew 7:7)” is originally from the Greek present tense. It contains nuances of English “repetition (always, continuously, habitually keep doing so)”<sup>15</sup>. The motive for rushing to the victims of the typhoon, like searching of the one sheep in need, is a continuous action. Of course, it is no need to say that we should avoid reckless dangers. The year of 2022 is the tiger. Our action without sitting on the sideline of challenges, which are like “Nothing ventured, nothing gained” or “Risk all and gain all”, means that we are practicing “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. (John 15:13)”



Yatabe Bridge over the Takatoki River. August 5.



Sasohira Bridge (Nagahama City, Shiga Prefecture). There was a lot of driftwood on the road. On the way to Nakakawauchi on the border of Fukui Prefecture. August 5.

## (2) Expressway disconnection

### a. Drive on local road, Route 8.

On August 4 (Friday), we arrived close to Nagahama Shiga Prefecture, on the way to the second Murakami disaster volunteer in Niigata Prefecture via the Hokuriku Expressway. The express way between Kinomoto Interchange (Nagahama City, Shiga Prefecture) to Tsuruga Interchange (Tsuruga City, Fukui Prefecture) is closed. We had no choice but to drive to Echizen City in Fukui Prefecture through the local National Route 365. That is an area near the discontinued construction side of the Niu Dam. The Takatoki River, which is the northernmost part of the Yodo River water system related to Kobe’s tap water and has a width of less than 2 meters, ran wild.

The rain was heavy and our vision became blurred, so I had to grip the steering wheel tightly. The boundary between the river and the rice fields was lost. At 7am, the status was not emergent level, but after 9am, the amount of water increased rapidly. Mr. Takahashi Toshiharu (age 72) from Kaminyu said the rainfall was only 20 to 30mm at first. He strained his voice and told us that it was his first experience in over 70 years of his life. Around 9am, the narrow Takatoki River overflowed and rushed toward his house. It is easy to tell that the overflow water rushed through the road in front of his house since the asphalt was covered by mud and it is hard to see the surface of it. Mr. Takahashi told me with his languidly voice that he could no longer live in his house since his house and warehouse were damaged severely by the flooding, and he had no choice but moving to

<sup>15</sup> There are two forms of the imperative form in Greek. “The aorist (aoristic) imperative form” and “the present imperative form”. The first one is an order with the meaning of prompting the other party to make a decisive decision. There is a nuance of “immediately” in its meaning. On the other hand, the present imperative form is an imperative that includes the meaning of “keep doing”, that is, “always, continuously, and habitually keep doing”. (*Intermediate Greek Teaching Methods.* By Iwamura Yoshio. 1998. Stanley E. Porter. *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*. Supervised by Niwa Takashi. Translated by Ito Akio. Nazareth Kikaku. 36, 217, 296.)

Nagahama City. A sudden misfortune described in *Hōjōki*, same as “As often as it comes it will carry you away; morning after morning, by day and by night, it will sweep through. (Isaiah 28:19)”, happened to him.

**b. Damages in Nagahama City.**

At the confluence of the Takatoki River and the Ane River, which flow into Lake Biwa, in Nagahama City, heavy rainfall of more than 50mm per hour caused flood over the roads and embankments. In the lower area, there was a ground for relaxation on the riverbed, but it was covered with water like the sea. Cars were also stuck in the water. On the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup>, a record-breaking short-term heavy rain was announced in the northern part of Shiga Prefecture. Evacuation orders were issued to the entire Yogo area of Nagahama City (1196 households, 2808 people). In the northern cities, Komatsu and Hakusan in Ishikawa Prefecture, around 9:50pm on Thursday, March 3, 150,000 people were ordered to evacuate due to the record-breaking heavy rainfall. The river overflowed, turning the road into a river, and the muddy water flowed back into the river where it came from. The fields were covered in muddy brown debris, and we could not see any green field. We could not know the boundaries of rivers, roads, and the rice fields.

After 8am on Friday, August 5, 2022, the Takatoki River in Nagahama City Shiga Prefecture, overflowed. At the water shed of the Takatoki River, the river got wild in both Fukui Prefecture (north side) and Shiga Prefecture (south side).

2022年(令和4年)8月7日(日曜日) 第 1 2

滋賀 中日

大津支局 大津市京町西丁1 1F 059-9446 077(524)44 FAX 077(524)44 津 津支局 津市南町1-1-1 1F 059-2007 077(22)122 FAX 0749(24)511 (広報) (47)53 興南通信局 0749(82)042 FAX 0749(82)042 東近江通信局 0748(13)348 FAX 0748(13)348 伊賀通信局 0748(82)034 FAX 0748(82)042 東近江通信局 0748(22)033 FAX 0748(24)075 本之木通信局 0749(82)302 FAX 0749(82)302 ニュース上の電話 読者センター 052(22)0800

高時川越水、一夜明けた長浜

道路、家財道具 泥との闘い

高時川は水はかな低下したものの、茶色濁った水が勢いよく流れていました。道路は一部で泥が堆積したり倒木があったり通行できないう場所も一か所、ボラライアが泥で埋まっていた。土間の家財が床に...

長浜町の高時川が越水、道路が浸水し、夕方の被害が出た。大雨から一夜明けの6日、被害のあった集落では水につかった家財や車を運び出し、道路に堆積した泥を住民総出で取り除いたりする復旧作業に汗をかいた。伊東浩一、増村光徳

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浸水被害は高時川上流部に集中した。床上浸水は余呉町上丹生三戸、木之本町大見二戸、床下浸水は余呉町上丹生十戸、中河内四戸、木之本町大見三戸、余呉町檜坂、下丹生各一戸の計二十四戸だった。

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五日に被災地入りしたという社団法人神戸国際支線機構の岩村義雄理事長は、アルファ米や飲み物、パンなどの非常用食品を用意。「八百人分ほどを持参、これまでに約百十八分を配った」などと話した。

浸水した家財から家具などの搬出に奮闘する地域住民ら。高時川上流部で...

2022. The Chunichi Shimbun. August 7.

Nakanokawachi village is located in the northernmost part of Shiga Prefecture. There is a central

drainage divide, north side is Echizen City Fukui Prefecture and Nagahama City Shiga Prefecture on the south side. When we went through National Route 365, the Tochinoki Pass was closed even though it was not a heavy snowfall in winter. We had no choice but giving up going to Murakami Niigata Prefecture. The road was covered by accumulated sediment due to the flowing from the Takatoki River, the upper stream. According to the Nakanokawachi village observatory, rainfall level reached 305mm in the 24 hours from 10am on August 4. At Nakanokawachi village, we heard from Mr.Sato Toshihiko (age 85), the president of the neighborhood association of 16 households, that the flood had stopped under the floor level. We engaged cleaning the house of Ms.Sano Fusae (age 95) who lives alone.



Ms. Sano Fusae from Nakakawauchi. August 6, 2022.

Kada Yukiko [1950-] is one of the researchers who not only studied the theory of the relationship between rivers and humans, but also verified and put it into practice. She is also an agronomist. When she was governor of Shiga Prefecture, she realized her pledge to freeze the dam project.

I believe that the reason of no one died in Nagahama City on August 5, was her courageous determination that she kept her chin up even though she was disturbed by pressures from both above and below.

We visited Shimoniu, Kaminyu, and Suganuma villages along with Prefectural Route 285, and residents said was the worst rainfall they had ever experienced. We visited there with supporting supplies. We were not known in advance that a disaster would occur in the area.

While we were going to Murakami City Niigata Prefecture, we happened to be in that area in that time. At that time, no other volunteers, social welfare councils, or relatives had arrived yet. It was right after being attacked by a tremendous amount of muddy water. The water started to recede. Mr. Azai Kiyoki (age 63) is the president of the neighborhood association of 97 households of Kaminyu. After 9am on Friday, he called on residents to evacuate to the community center and made it sure. On the next morning, he was working with his members who returned to each house to restore the area. The damaged numbers of “inundation above floor level” were; 2 houses in Kinomotochoomi, 4 in Nakanokawachi, 1 in Tsubakizaka, 10 in Kaminyu, and 1 in Shimoniu. As a scale, it can be said that damages are small considering the huge amount of water flood.

In Suganami Village, which is the closest place to the Niu Dam planned site, Mr. Arashi Tatsuo (age 67), the president of the neighborhood association, was taking care of 20 residents. Mr. Tanii Hirotsugu (age 70) told me while he was doing volunteer work that even relocation of submerged house due to the dam was carried, but after stopping the dam construction in 2016, the road from Fukui Prefecture to the lower area and the road from Suganami to the higher area have been still disconnected.

I just asked others why the Niu Dam construction was canceled. They told me that the construction

would not be effective in stabilizing the water level of Lake Biwa, which has been suffering from depletion, and contrary to the plan, the water demand in Kyoto-Oosaka-Kobe area is much lower than planned. So, the dam construction was stopped halfway through for such reasons.

I heard vociferous opinions at Nakanokawachi, Kaminyu, Yogo-chō, such as “Damages increased because the dam construction was canceled”, “It doesn't matter if there is a dam or not, but if there was, this area would be more vitalized”, and “Probably, the former governor has a responsible that she stopped the Niu dam construction”. On the other hand, innumerable majority voices were the following; “It's the most comfortable place to live in Japan no matter how I old, and the nature is beautiful”, “It's a gift from our ancestors, so we can be proud of it for our descendants”, “We don't have dam in this area, so the scenery of this hometown is irreplaceable”. I wonder the reason why those voices were a lot. There is the same confrontational composition as the Kuma River (Kumamoto heavy rain disaster) two years ago. Those who advocate the necessity of dams should also face up to the fact that even with the Ane River Dam in Nagahama City, which was completed in March 2002, it was impossible to escape from cautionary zone this time<sup>16</sup>. There is a view that the flooding occurred because road maintenance was neglected after the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transportation and Tourism (here by the MLIT) decided to suspend construction of the Niu Dam on January 16, 2014. There was a fuse, which led to the disaster, that the MLIT didn't fulfill its promise to drill the Kuma River just after the decision of cancellation of the dam construction. Either way, everything can say to be human-generated disaster.

The Kuma River (Kumamoto heavy rain disaster) Volunteer planted “*Fukoumai* (復幸米. Restoration-happiness-rice)” twice and had enjoyable times with kindergarten children. What do the residents of the affected areas think about the construction of the Kawabe River dam? When public opinion was solicited on the draft of the Kuma River improvement plan, 70% of people responded that they were against the dam<sup>17</sup>. In article in “Kumamotonichinichi Shimbun”, it is reported as “Its no use talking about the dam construction” on the attitude of Kabashima Ikuo, the Governor of Kumamoto Prefecture, agreed to the national Kawabe River dam project<sup>18</sup>. There are similarities between Nagahama City and Hitoyoshi City. Mikazuki Taizo [1971-], Governor of Shiga Prefecture, changed his mind in April 2019 to approve the construction of the Daido River dam (Otsu City). And Kabashima Ikuo, the Governor of Kumamoto Prefecture changed his mind as well. Were they swallowed by the dam business that the MLIT persists?

### c. Flood damages in An Thới area, Vietnam.

I recalled my memories of driving at 10 km per hour while pushing through the water like a sea at An Thủy in Quảng Bình Province where takes about an hour from Đồng Hới in Vietnam. We were heading to An Thủy Elementary School. It is located on the mountain side more than 50 km inland from the seaside. Year after year, there is a lot of flood damage. Agricultural products are also heavily damaged<sup>19</sup>. Since that was our second visit, there was no one to guide our volunteer group from Japan. No one came to rescue us because nobody know we were stuck. We could not make an emergency call to like Japan's JAF (The Japan Automobile Federation). First of all, we don't understand the local language. Even we tried to drive a car in reverse gear, the way we came was the bottom of the water, and there were no traces left. If a tire slides into the agricultural ditch

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<sup>16</sup> At the Nanbabashi Observatory in Ane River, the water level reached 4.9 meters, exceeding the level of flood risk (3.9 meters) by 1 meter.

On the Kyoto Shimbun's headline on August 5 said, “The level of flood risk of the Ane River temporarily exceeded.” (2022. *The Kyoto Shimbun*. August 5.)

<sup>17</sup> 2022. *Hitoyoshi Press*. July 22.

<sup>18</sup> 2022. *Kumamotonichinichi Shimbun*. July 30. (Director Nakamura Katsuhiko). Under the headline “Objections and confusion from Istuki Villagers”, it was reported that Istuki Village Assembly Chairman Okamoto Seiji said, “Neither the village nor the assembly have agreed to a running-water dam at this point”.

<sup>19</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> Vietnam Flood Disaster Volunteer. November 15, 2016.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PS6kTm0xJE>

beside the road, all would be over. It was a reckless attempt to drive with only intuition and courage in the 15 cm deep sea. The surface of the road could not be seen by our eyes because it was just a brown muddy stream. The width of the road was less than 2 meters. It was too narrow so that it was impossible to pass by oncoming vehicles. We didn't even see a local people's car. There was a feeling of loneliness that thrown out into the vast ocean. God himself also puts his ray of hope in the Scriptures, which says that "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you. (Hebrews 13:5)" It took us about 5 hours to get out from the muddy waters, normally it is a 45-minute distance, and when we escaped, there was no energy left in us and were in blank out.

The landscape of 5 years ago, the heavy rain on July 5, 2017 (41 deaths, 1 missing) in Harazuru hot springs area at Hakimasue Asakura City Fukuoka Prefecture, were the same. As far as I could see, the green field had disappeared, and it was all brown.

Volunteer activities from 2014 to the disaster affected sites<sup>20</sup> have taught us that we cannot ignore the momentum of water.

### **(3) Human-generated disaster**

#### **a. The Japan Meteorological Agency was unable to issue forecasts on unexpected situation.**

A world where the greenery of plants has vanished from the ground. Muddy water covered mountains, buildings, and utility poles from all directions. This time, not only residents of Ishikawa, Fukui, Niigata, Yamagata, Shiga Prefectures but also the Japan Meteorological Agency did not expect the disaster. For example, in Kanazawa City, Ishikawa Prefecture, had 133.5 mm rainfall over a 24-hour period from the previous day to August 5. Railroad crossings were covered with mud, and trains such as the Thunderbird and the Shirasagi (both are limited express trains) from Kansai to Ishikawa area were suspended.

The 24-hour rainfall in Minamiechizen on the Fukui Prefecture side was 405.5 mm, the highest in recorded history.

It has been 15 years since the linear rainband began to be said. Record-breaking rainfall often occurred without announcement of the occurrence of the linear rainband. Therefore, from June 1, this year, the Japan Meteorological Agency has started to forecast the possibility of heavy rain due to the linear rainband, targeting local forecast areas (regionally divided into 11 blocks across the country) such as "Shikoku region", and started to providing information about half a day in advance. They put "the linear rainband forecast" into operation. However, the hitting ratio is only about one-fourth. On July 15, the Japan Meteorological Agency called for caution in Kyushu and Yamaguchi Prefecture area for the first time since the start of operations, citing the possibility of a "linear rainband". Although it rained heavily until the morning of August 16, no "the linear rainband" was confirmed<sup>21</sup>. In present situation, it is difficult to make accurate predictions. The calculation model of the Japan Meteorological Agency does not predict a linear precipitation area half a day earlier. They said that the resolution of the calculation model is insufficient. This is because that the accuracy of forecasts is not yet sufficient, and the mechanism of how

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<sup>20</sup> Places of disaster affected areas where the Kobe International Sustaining Organization rushed over:

Tanba Flood Disaster (August 15, 2014. Death 2), Kinugawa River (September 10, 2015. Death 14), Mashiki Kumamoto Prefecture (April 14, 2016, 9:26pm – M6.2 / April 16, 1:25am – M7.3. Death 270 [disaster related death 218]), Hakimasue Fukuoka Prefecture (July 5, 2017. Death 41. Missing 1), Mabi Okayama Prefecture (July 6, 2018. Death 224 [disaster related death 59], Missing 8), Koyaura Hiroshima Prefecture (July 6, 2018. Death 20), Tarumi district Kobe City (July 6, 2018), Atsuma Hokkaido (September 6, 2018, 3:07am – M6.7. Death 43), Murakami Niigata Prefecture (June 18, 2019), Omachi Saga Prefecture (August 27, 2019. Death 3/ August 14, 2021), Mera Chiba Prefecture (September 15, 2019. Death 16. Missing 2), Iwaki City Fukushima Prefecture (October 12, 2019. Death 7), Marumori Miyagi Prefecture. (October 12, 2019. Death 10 [disaster related death 1]), Kuma River Kumamoto Prefecture (July 4, 2020. Death 50), the 2021 Fukushima earthquake (February 13, 2021. M7.3. Death 1 [disaster related death 1]), Atami (July 3, 2021. Death 27 [includes disaster related death]. Missing 1), Natural disasters on August 9, 2021 (Death 2. Injured 41) and on August 3, 2022 (heavy rainfall damages).

<sup>21</sup> 2022. NHK. July 16. 4pm.

cumulonimbus clouds form over the sea is still not elucidated<sup>22</sup>. It is unclear why cumulonimbus clouds occur when there is no topography on the sea. Furthermore, even if there is a stationary front, it has not been clarified where on the front the linear rainband occurs and what would determine its position. At this stage, there is nothing we can do about the linear rainband that occurs over the sea. It is not scientifically proven. Just to tell you, the number of top papers in the natural sciences in Japan has fallen to 12<sup>th</sup> in the world (3,787 papers), overtaken by Spain and South Korea<sup>23</sup>.

Professor Honda Akiharu of Niigata University says; “When there is heavy rain, we often hear things like ‘I’ve never experienced anything like this before’, ‘I’ve lived here for a long time, but this is the first time I’ve seen such heavy rain’, ‘This land was safe and people lived generations’”. However, those stories won’t work anymore. We are facing that something we haven’t experienced is occurring, and it keeps occurring from now<sup>24</sup>.” In other words, we human beings are surprisingly ignorant about the phenomena occurring on the earth. Even though a computer can complement the calculations beautifully with the help of artificial satellites, it cannot grasp the sea, the North Pole, and the South Pole, which are places where there is not enough data. New information cannot be derived from a state in which observation is not possible. In truth, meteorologists put model into computers, but they don’t really know anything<sup>25</sup>. There are territories beyond the reach of human intelligence as; “Have you entered the storehouses of the snow or seen the storehouses of the hail.” And the mystery, energy, and harmony of creation can be said to be inviolable. (Job 38:22)

At 2pm on July 6, 2018, a special heavy rain warning was issued for Hyogo Prefecture. The railroad between Sanyo electric Railway Sumaura Koen Station to Sanyo Shioya was covered with mud and sand, it made impossible to operate trains. Since Shioya Elementary School in Tarumi area had become an evacuation shelter, I went to check on the numbers of people who were preparing food. The neighborhood roads were closed for cars. All I had to do was deliver meal to a woman (age 68) who was evacuated. After that day, special heavy rain warnings began to appear frequently on “YAHOO News” on smartphones. However, over the past four years, the gap between weather warnings and reality has remained unimproved.

On July 4, 2020, 52 people died due to the flooding of the Kuma River in Kumamoto Prefecture. After about 6,100 households, about 1,020ha were damaged by mud flood, Mr. Torigoe Norio<sup>26</sup>, who has been experiencing a frustration for delaying of restoration from disaster damages and he is the owner of Matsuya Onsen Business Hotel at Hitoyoshi City Kumamoto Prefecture, was angry and said in disgust that the Japan Meteorological Agency’s evacuation orders are full of lies. This is because that accommodation and reservation cancellations happened one after another<sup>27</sup>.

Professor Oikawa Yasushi of Toyo University analyzes on “failures”<sup>28</sup>. The number of people that have stopped making decisions according to the orders, are increasing because they have repeatedly betrayed by the evacuation orders. Meteorological information is required to be aware of technical

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<sup>22</sup> 2019. F, Takehiko. *How are weather forecasts made?* Beret publishing. 19.

Experts frankly say that even the presence of clouds is closely related to weather forecasts, but it is impossible to predict their individual occurrence or movement with current observational technology and computer resources.

<sup>23</sup> 2022. *Mainichi Shimbun*. August 9.

Ranking of noteworthy papers published by the National Institute of Science and Technology Policy of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. For your information, China (407,181 papers) is far ahead of the United States (293,434 papers) and maintains the top position in the world.

<sup>24</sup> Professor Honda Akiharu, Niigata University. *Researches Meteorology*, etc. (“YAHOO! JAPAN News”. August 5, 2022.)

<sup>25</sup> 2014. H, Masakate (Coauthor). *What we do know or don’t about extreme weather and climate change?* Edited by Fudeyasu Hironori and Kawase Hiroaki. Beret publishing. 144-146.

<sup>26</sup> Mr. Torigoe Norio (age 71) was the first in Japan to open his hotel as a free accommodation shelter for the Kuma River (Kumamoto heavy rain disaster).

<sup>27</sup> 2021. Y, Iwamura. *The 5th Saga Flood Damage Volunteer Report*. 1.

“The Gospel for the least of these” Lecture. Kobe Kinro Kaikan. August 20, 2021.

<sup>28</sup> [https://www.toyo.ac.jp/nyushi/column/video-lecture/20170111\\_01.html](https://www.toyo.ac.jp/nyushi/column/video-lecture/20170111_01.html)

limitations and to prevent viewers' blind faith. Professor Oikawa is appealing to stop giving evacuation orders and transform to the direction of informing the notification of the opening of the evacuation shelter. Humans should become humble by the fact that human overconfidence in technology is causing disasters. Religious literacy (knowledge and judgment ability)<sup>29</sup> is required.

“When he thunders, the waters in the heavens roar; he makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth. He sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses. (Jeremiah 10:13)” As “The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness (Romans 1:18)”, it is described that God judges. Who is causing the disasters? In Isaiah chapter 45 verse 7, “I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the Lord, do all these things”, it is said that God create disaster. The “disaster” רוּחַ [ruwach] does not come from Satan as the fundamentalist of dualism think<sup>30</sup>. It is attributed by God. Why does the God of Love bring ruwach? I don't want you to misunderstand me. Unlike Uchimura Kanzo [1861-1930] and Yamamuro Gunpei [1872-1940], I do not affirm the theory of “Tenkenron (天譴論 Wrath of God)”<sup>31</sup>.

The neoconservatives claim that the plagues are caused by Satan and the end of world is near. Since the first century of the Christian Era, Christians who have prompted fears of this and encouraging people to believe and join that they are the truth. Our church was born from the ruins of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. Since that, we drawn a line with the apocalyptic fanaticism of the fundamentalists. The reason is that as it is written, “Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! (Romans 11:33)”, the judgment of God is difficult to realize it. As a follower of Christ's path, I desire to constantly meditate, ponder, and put into practice the words of Christ. Jesus himself asked “why have you forsaken me” in “About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, ‘Eli, Eli, lemasabachthani?’ (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”) (Matthew 27:46)”. There must be a reason why God did not immediately end slavery in Africa and America, and did not kill Hitler soon after he was born. ruwach has also become a humbling device for people.

It could be thought that water disasters, earthquakes, and disasters as a red signal for the overconfidence that mankind has advanced technology and science would bring happiness, tranquility, and peace.

Even in areas where heavy rain does not usually fall, flooding above and below the floor that more than we expected can be occurred anywhere in Japan. At Tohoku and Hokuriku areas, the “information about a record-breaking deluge in a short period” was too late. Precipitation forecasts were also weak. “The Chunichi Shimbun”, which has many subscribers in the Nagahama City area Shiga Prefecture, reported the truth by their headlines on August 5 that “Unable to forecast the linear rainband. More than expected”<sup>32</sup>. Kawamura Ryuichi, a meteorology professor of Kyushu University, pointed out the current technical limitations. Humans have no choice but to raise the white flag before the wonders of nature. Mr. Kato of the Japan Meteorological Agency said it was because “the resolution is not enough”. The public should be aware that it is currently impossible to accurately predict when, where and with what intensity torrential rainfall will start and end<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> 2022. *Kobe Shimbun*. August 6.

Shimozono Susumu said, “All citizens need to improve their religious literacy (knowledge and judgment ability).

<sup>30</sup> 2003. Y. Iwamura. *Eye Drops. Magazine*. No.29.1-11.

Sovereignty dispute. Why are there so many disasters? רוּחַ [ruwach] appears 299 times in the Old Testament.

<sup>31</sup> 2011. *The 1st “Think about the ‘death’ together” lecture*. Kobe Shimbun Kaikan. April 11.

<http://mamowth.com/kouza/3104/>

<sup>32</sup> 2022. *The Chunichi Shimbun*. August 5.

<sup>33</sup> 2020. M. Yasutaka. *Knowledge and practice of weather disaster prevention*. Asakura Publishing.

This book was edited by three of people, Nitta Takashi (former Director-General of the Japan Meteorological Agency), Nakazawa Tetsuo (former Director of Meteorological Research Institute, Department of Typhoon and Severe Weather Research), and Saito Kazuo (former Director of Meteorological Research Institute, Department of Observation and Data Assimilation Research).

## **b. Canceling construction of the Niu dam was the right decision.**

In recent large-scale flood disasters, it has been started to say that flood damage has become more severe because floods have exceeded the capacity of dams, and that dams constructed in recent years have had little effect on flood control. For example, on July 7, 2018, an emergency release of water from the Nomura dam was the cause of the 80 km long flood on both sides of the Hiji River<sup>34</sup>. How has public engineering in the United States changed? Enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century, they started to focus its works on environmental sustainability and the restoration of ecosystems in coastal areas and inland waterways<sup>35</sup>. On the other hand, Japan is still holding the dilemma of being unable to get out of its “dam-dependent constitution”. Okuma Takashi, a professor emeritus of Niigata University (hydraulic engineer), also appeals. “I think we learned a lot about the shortcomings of dams this time. If there is more than rainfall than expected, we have to conduct an emergency water releasing of dams, so in the end, it is useless. Dam construction should be stopped in an era when it rains heavily due to global warming, but the state's mentality is not easily changed<sup>36</sup>.”

The fact that “global warming” is the cause of extreme weather cannot be denied. However, there are unexpected pitfalls in adhering to rigid global warming culprits. We should carefully consider how global warming is related to the relationship among mountains, rivers and human beings.

The amount of water that flows into rivers depends greatly on the amount of snowfall in river streams, such as rainfall on mountains and plains, and snowmelt water from mountains. However, not all rainfalls flow into rivers. Approximately 15~55% of rainfall is lost through evaporation from the ground / water surface, evapotranspiration from tree leaves, etc., and permeate into ground. The river discharge is determined by the complicated balance of rainfall (snowfall to snowmelt) – evapotranspiration – permeate – runoff.

Global warming<sup>37</sup> not only causes future temperature rise, but also has the negative effect of increasing evapotranspiration and reducing river water flow. On the other hand, it is thought that the amount of water vapor contained in the atmosphere will increase due to global warming, and it means that increasing the amount of river flow. For disaster prevention, it is necessary to switch to dam elimination.

Concrete Sabo dams (Sediment control dam) are constructed by clearing forests and river works. Both sides of the river and the bottom, three dimensions, will be covered by concrete. In a composition in which three dimensions (both river sides and bottom) are protected by concrete, the water flow is accelerated and it cause “flash flood”. On the other hand, instead of concrete, the masonry dam (earth dike) has the function of slowing down the flow velocity even after the inside of the dam is full of sediment and rocks. Therefore, it is possible to prevent the debris flow

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Page 27: It must be said that it is impossible with the current observation system and prediction technology to accurately predict the exact location and time of rapid development of the linear rainband, also called “carrot-shaped cloud”, more than two hours in advance.

Page 97: The large increased number of rain gauge system and weather radar due to the deployment of AMeDAS (Automated Meteorological Data Acquisition System), and to avoid flood damage caused by localized heavy rain in urban areas, the scope of warning announcement has narrowed. As a result, the rainfall condition in the upper stream of river is no longer taken into consideration, and the accuracy of flood warnings has deteriorated. If this situation continues, detailed precipitation information based on analytical rainfall cannot be fully utilized in warnings, and we no longer can expect much improvement in the accuracy of heavy rainfall and flood warnings.

<sup>34</sup> 2019. *Science*. December issue. Iwanami Shoten. 11118.

<sup>35</sup> 2022. K, Masayuki. *Marine ecosystems after the Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami*. Yuzankaku. 143.

EWN (Engineering with Nature: Nature utilization method) has a background that they have been criticized by local residents, national citizens and environmental groups for its method that may lead to destroy the natural environment and ecosystems, and was asked reflecting on that their natural disaster prevention, which is the project to cover the ground by concrete for a long time by USACE (US Army Corps of Engineers), was not useful.

<sup>36</sup> 2019. *Shyukan Asahi*. November 4.

<sup>37</sup> 2014. S, Yasushi (Coauthor). *Global Warming – Its Mechanism and Uncertainty*. The Meteorological Society of Japan, Committee on Global Environmental Issue. Asakura Publishing. 95.

attacking to the downstream area straightly<sup>38</sup>.

The Japan Meteorological Agency, which is established in 1887 as the Central Meteorological Observatory, is under the jurisdiction of the MLIT.

In 2001, “the Japanese government reformation (reorganization of ministries)” was implemented. As a result, the National Land Agency, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Construction were combined into the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism<sup>39</sup>. It also includes the Japan Meteorological Agency, the Water and Disaster Management Bureau. MLIT is in charge of infrastructure<sup>40</sup> development. They have a role to construct dams, river maintenances, and make hazard maps. As a result, it cannot be denied that the function of “research” declined<sup>41</sup> as the Japan Meteorological Agency moved in the direction of a “disaster prevention agency”.

The MLIT has not attempted to address the damages caused by inadequate disaster prevention facilities, the limits of dams, emergency discharges, and insufficient flood control measures<sup>42</sup>.

### c. Resurrection of Rice Field, Mountain, and Bay.

As expressed in the elementary school song “*Haru no ogawa* (春の小川: The Small Brook in the Spring)”, the river was flowing smoothly, flowers were blooming on the riverside, crucian carps and killifish were swimming, and it was the enjoyable world to look.

Above all, water is an essential existence that supports human life. In this way, rivers or water are deeply related to the spirit of the Japanese people. Ishikawa Takuboku wrote these relationship as, “*Nagaku nagaku wasureshi tomoni afugotoki yorokobiwomote mizu no oto kiku* (長く長く忘れし友に 会ふごとき よろこびをもて 水の音聴く: Listening to the sound of water is like a joyful reunion with a long-forgotten friend)”, and he intuitively expresses his affinity to the water by the sound of water<sup>43</sup>.

Private ownership of farmland was established by *chiso-kaisei* (地租改正: Land-tax reform) in 1872. Before that, there was no private ownership of the fields. This is because the farmland owned by individual households had the character of the village as a collective community. Those answers were, “surface of the land belongs to individual”, “inside of the land belongs to village”, and “bottom of the land belongs to heaven”<sup>44</sup>.

On November 20, 2012, in commemoration of the restoration of Watanoha Ishinomaki City Miyagi Prefecture, we held a concert at the Watanoha Kominkan, the music festival “Resurrection of Rice Field, Mountain, and Bay, Watanoha no Matsuri”. I kept a hope that “In old Japanese houses, if you look under the porch, you can see the think pillars that firmly support the house. Let’s become one of these pillars and support the bonds of people from below forever”, in my mind<sup>45</sup>. At that time, I unintentionally cried with the participants from Kobe. Victims were pleased to hear the song “*Furusato*”<sup>46</sup>. I was forced to think about what to do in a land where a disaster attacked area to be restored the scenery like this song and people start singing it. Even after returning to Kobe, I could not forget that tears. Even if it wasn’t a disaster area, that melody was a different world from the city. There is a sense of nostalgia that high-rise buildings, convenient trains for commuting to works and schools, and laughter of variety shows in the living room don’t have. I was urged to work

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<sup>38</sup> 1969. T, Kiyoshi. *Cut Mt. Rokko*. The Mainichi Newspapers, Kobe branch office. 185.

<sup>39</sup> 2018. M, Akira. *Encyclopedia of the work of Japanese ministries to know the political structure. No.8. Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism*. Iwasaki Shoten.

<sup>40</sup> Infrastructure. The purpose is to develop a country protected from disasters and to create a comfortable living environment for residents. Its includes roads, bridges, water supply and sewage systems.

<sup>41</sup> 2019. W, Yu. *Research on the history of Japanese meteorological administration – Bureaucracy and society in weather forecasting*. University of Tokyo Press. 292.

<sup>42</sup> 2021. N, Kihachiro. *Why 7.4 Kuma River Heavy Rain Disaster was happened?* Kadensha. 67.

<sup>43</sup> 2012. T, Hiroyuki. *Water and the Japanese*. Iwanami Shoten. Introduction VIII.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.* 45.

<sup>45</sup> *Seasonal Journal. Shien. No1*. Introduction by Mizugaki Wataru.

<sup>46</sup> The song “*Furusato* (故郷: Hometown) by Okano Teiichi [1878-1941].

like a pillar under the young and old Japanese people who have forgotten their “*furusato* (hometown)”.

The overconcentration of Tokyo is different from Tohoku. The sleepless cities like Shinjuku, Shibuya and Harajuku have a glittering flair. But its fragile. Why is that? This is because it is nothing more than a device of those who yearn for power and authority (*exousia*) for forgetting, which are inorganic building streets, the foamy human relationships, and the impersonal rush hour.

The place (*τόπος [topos]*), which far from such central *exousia*, is the scene of the “*furusato*”. Both the Edo Shogunate and the government after the Meiji Restoration treated “*furusato*” as stinking one, because they are poor and many people move to the city to look for work. At “*furusato*”, “*yamazato*” (山里: mountain village) was alive there.

Fresh water was gushing out. As the economic value of timber increased, the power of Tokugawa shogunate strengthened its control over the mountains. On the other hand, although sometimes the Tokugawa shogunate collected taxes from the fishermen as “*komononari* (小物成: miscellaneous tax)”, so the authorities seldom intervened to rivers directly. Most of the relationships were public work to take caring, such as constructing waterways, irrigation waters and flood control managements. This is probably because that the value of products from the river are little. In other words, rivers have historically been spaces with unstable property rights. Even in Tokyo, when I was in the lower grades of elementary school, I still vividly remember losing myself in the beauty of damselflies in a pond. One of the evils that has been dominated<sup>47</sup> and promoted from neoliberal economic *exousia*, Kasumigaseki and Nagatacho, is flood damage.

In the Middle Ages, rivers were “*mushyuchi* (無主地: nobody's land)”<sup>48</sup>.

During the Kamo no Chōmei [1155–1216] era, the forest was dense and virgin forest, and it was dark even during the day, so people must have felt like *tengu* (天狗: a supernatural creature / god) or *yōkai* (妖怪: a strange apparition) popping out of the trees. The image of Chōmei’s childhood time that walking around the Tadasu no Mori (糺の森), listening to the sound of small river’s smooth flow, catching insects, and doing a forest bathing, come up to my eyes.

Let’s think that the river is the essence of the Japanese mentality.

For example, it still alive in *enka* (演歌: Japanese ballad).

In the song of Misora Hibari<sup>49</sup>, “*Kawa no nagare no youni* (Like the Flow of the River)”, the sensibility of the Japanese people seems to have been inherited uninterruptedly; “Seasons change like the river flow, while waiting for the snow to melt. And I still just listening the smooth sound of the river”. No matter how old you are, whether you live in a big city surrounded by high-rise buildings, or you stop at a foreign port, there is the nostalgia for your hometown that you will never forget.

When disaster strikes, volunteers stand up. At the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake, people from all over Japan entered the disaster-stricken areas of Tohoku. After three years passing, the continuing volunteer groups from Kansai are were decreased much. The Christian pastors who were close to me also stepped in volunteer activities. Their motive must have been a desire to contribute to recovery, restoration, and reconstruction. However, it is rare or almost zero to continue serving in the field. I wonder why. It should be reasonable to assume that religious people who preach love for their neighbors are more likely to make actions. They must now live indifferently to the isolated deaths of people living in restoration housings, the radiation problem in Fukushima, and the absurd death of family’s breadwinner. However, they stop entering to the disaster affected area. First of all, the sense of calling that prioritizes the expansion of their church scale. Secondly, there is a self-centered ministry that abandon the half-dead without any hesitate like in the parable of the Good

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<sup>47</sup> Even in the old River Law, which was enacted in 1896, rivers are stipulated as “exclusion of private right”. Any ownership of the river has been not established.

<sup>48</sup> 2006. T, Hiroyuki. *The possibilities of Stokawa*. Shinyosha. 224-225.

<sup>49</sup> Misora Hibari [1937-1989] Singer and actress. “*Kawa no nagare no youni* (Like the Flow of the River)” was released in 1989.

Samaritan. Thirdly, although it cannot be said to be common to all religious people, there is a unique “eschatology”. It is a historical view that interprets catastrophic extraordinary natural phenomena as a sign of the judgement day and only evangelism is directly linked to the salvation of mankind. “*Tenkenron* (天譴論: Wrath of God)”, which I mentioned before, is also included.

The disasters mean not just only earthquakes. We need to emergency entry into the field, and you will be required your will, responsibility, and perseverance how far you can be involved in recovery, restoration, and reconstruction. Weather forecasts are not only for quick action against disasters, but also related to agriculture, forestry and fisheries, says, “Resurrection of Rice Field, Mountain, and Bay”. After the Great East Japan Earthquake, we were engaged in rice cultivation in rice paddies. Typhoons, storms and dry weathers directly affected our work. We have to be aware of food shortages due to famine. Meteorology cannot be ignored in the study of ecosystem restoration. As part of the structure of the cyclone, I have been developed an ability to be sensitive to detect whether it is a “wide rain area” or a “narrow linear squall”.

Thanks to this, I was heard from local residents directly about the harmful effects of bureaucratic leaderships.

### <Conclusion>

Is it fine to let the place, which retain the original scenery of Japan’s “*furusato*” as water villages, to disturb by using heavy machinery and construct the straight the rivers that easily produce flash flood? “The desolate land will be cultivated instead of lying desolate in the sight of all who pass through it. (Ezekiel 36:34)”

Natural recovery that you can enjoy delicious water without using a water filter, is essential for a healthy body. You can eat the harvest from safe and secured farmland. It is the “place” where children can be familiar with soil, insects, and small animals. The countryside is not a place to withdraw. We have a responsibility to restore the life cycle of “nature + people + agriculture”. “All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again. (Ecclesiastes 1:7)” God has incorporated the work of circulation. However, “*exousia*” destroyed nature, and coexistence of humans and nature, interdependence among different species called symbiosis<sup>50</sup>, reciprocalness, and mutual benefits have been undermined.

In Germany, by 2050, covering vacant land with concrete for roads and housing construction will be banned. Lighting in the night will also be limited to prevent insects from becoming disoriented. Japan, which has been pursuing economic growth, now has an opportunity to think together about the path that it has taken wrongly through repeated disasters.

Dam is waste. Even you pour in money, you cannot beat heavy rainfalls, the linear rainbands, and typhoons. What is more important is to protect the river. The circulation of “*okuyama* (奥山: mountain recesses)” – “*satoyama* (里山: undeveloped woodland near populated area)” – “*satogawa* (里川: river coexisting with aquatic life)” – “*tanbo* (田圃: pesticide-free fields)” – “*kasen* (河川: limpid river)” – “*satoumi* (里海: algae, seaweed ranch)” – “*kaiyou* (海洋: ocean)” will be the restoration of “*furusato*”.

This is the real beginning, origin, and starting point of “Resurrection of Rice Field, Mountain, and Bay”. Let’s be drenched in sweat together.

My appreciation to Mr. Murata Michiya, the executive board of Kobe International Sustaining organization, for his proofreading this manuscript of the sermon. Also, member of the secretariats, translator Ms. Tokudome Yumi, Mr. Murakami Hirotaka, and Ms. Sasaki Miwa, thank you for

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<sup>50</sup> The English word “symbiosis”, meaning co-existence), is derived from the Greek word *σύμβιωσις* (σύν <together>+βίος <alive>).

Murata Michiya, a sociologist, replaces “*Kyosei* (共生: Life together)” with “support in death” and insisted it. 2017. M, Michiya. *Between Christianity and sociology*. Koyo Shobo. 240-243.

2022. Y, Iwamura. *How religion aims for a post-coronavirus society*. MCRP Peace University course. March 10.

clarifying unclear points.

\* Some of the Japanese books in the notes are provisionally translated.