

Preface: To Understand the Different Side of Problems Faced by Each Civil Organization

Keiichi SATOH

People align and form an organization when they have to resolve a problem or face a reality that they want to change. Established organizations, in turn, draw more people to them, and their interactions together become movements.

After the severe accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant caused by the earthquake in Tohoku region in 2011, Japan witnessed a sudden explosion of social movements that focused on nuclear- and energy-related issues such as antinuclear demonstrations, grassroots activities for spreading renewable energy, citizen-based radioactivity measuring stations, and helping nuclear-related evacuees.

However, it is not always easy to name this phenomenon in a single word. Current social movements do not always share the same goals. For example, some organizations stress the need to abolish nuclear plants, while others maintain a neutral stance. This is because each organization is facing different problems even though it has originated due to the same nuclear accident. What then is the context of the problems that each organization faces? What is the background of each organization's activity? Can we look beyond their superficial differences and see the underlying commonalities in these movements in the post 3.11 civil society?

Distance from the Fukushima Daiichi plant is a significant factor to identify in the context of each organization. People who live near the plant must first face how to live in a radiation region. On the other hand, people who live far from the plant must

consider the risk in the future. Based on this idea, we can categorize Japanese territory into roughly three areas: areas that were severely affected, weakly affected, and almost unaffected by radiation (typically the Fukushima, Kanto, and Kansai regions, respectively). Corresponding to this classification, we conducted interviews with key organizations in each area during the summer and fall of 2012. This series reports the results of each interview.

Keiichi SATOH, Doctoral Student, Graduate School of Social Sciences, Hitotsubashi University, Research Fellow, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (DC1)