

[Kakenhi Essay]

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I have to admit that I was initially somewhat baffled when administrators for the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research program requested that I write an essay for this “*Kakenhi*” column. I had several reasons for that. First, grants for scientific research had occupied an important place in my own professional life and were something with which I had become exceedingly familiar. Beyond that, though, I was also under the impression I would be expected to detail some specific examples of improvements to methods of grant screening and application that I had recommended in the past. Today, the Grants-in-Aid program for Scientific Research that the JSPS administers in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) is of indispensable value to the promotion of science and technology in Japan. Moreover, it has become a benchmark for the acquisition of outside research funding by universities. I myself have encouraged young researchers and individual researchers, including foreign researchers, to actively apply for grants under this program. Furthermore, my own university has applied for and been selected as a recipient of assistance under the Re-Inventing Japan Project, a venture administered by MEXT and the JSPS. As one researcher who has benefited immensely under various circumstances from grants for scientific research, I decided to pen an essay for this “*Kakenhi*” series based on recollections from my own experience.

My earliest involvement with the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research program came over 40 years back, when an undertaking in basic Cold War research on the international environment—implemented as a large-scale project in the humanities and social sciences—was selected as a project in “special research” (FY1973–1975). At that time, I received numerous tips and advice from Akira Tezuka, then director of the Ministry of Education’s Scientific Research Aid Division and, I believe, the same person serving in that role for eight years or so—an unusually long period of tenure for someone in that position. In postwar Japan, opportunities for Cold War-related research in the fields of world politics and international relations had at last begun to take off. For that reason, I decided to consult first with Professor Kentaro Hayashi, then-President of the University of Tokyo, and succeeded in having him serve as Chief Researcher for this undertaking, a large-scale project that would eventually involve a hundred and several dozens of people.

The Project Coordination Team (Secretariat) was set up within the Tokyo Institute of Technology, with the institute's Professor Yonosuke Nagai (in that post at the time and in following references), who attracted attention as a political scholar from the realist school and author of *Heiwa no daisho* ("The price of peace" Chukososhō series, Chuokoron-sha), tapped to serve as team leader. I and the American studies scholar Professor Nagayo Homma of the University of Tokyo assumed assistant leader roles and in that capacity, organized 17 teams for project research and six teams for publicly solicited research, all on separate themes. This venture also had the participation of several scholars that put together teams of their own for intensive research. In the field of American studies, Seikei University Professor Hitoshi Abe joined Professor Homma. For research on the Korean War, we had Keio University Professor Fuji Kamiya. In the field of Southeast Asian studies, we were joined by Shinichi Ichimura, Director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University. Kyoto University Professor Masataka Kousaka led research on Japanese diplomacy while University of Tokyo Professor Shinkichi Eto, Keio University Professor Tadao Ishikawa, and Hiroshima University Professor Seiji Imahori led work on topics in sinology. In addition, Kyoto University Professor Kichitaro Katsuda headed up efforts in the field of Soviet studies while Hitotsubashi University Professor Chihiro Hosoya led research on the history of foreign relations. Additionally, an international symposium held in Kyoto with the assistance of then-Vice-Minister of Education Hiroshi Kida had the participation of two scholars that later became world authorities on Cold War research: John Lewis Gaddis and Walter LaFeber.

This undertaking in "special research" also involved academic surveys abroad. While I served as a research leader for those surveys, Hiroshima University Assistant Professor Makoto Iokibe and Kyoto University Assistant Professor Toru Yano—both highly active scholars in recent years—also participated. The findings of this large-scale research project were published as a "Basic Study on the International Environment" series by Chuokoron-sha. One of the volumes in that series was *Chuso-tairitsu to gendai—sengo ajia no sai-kosatsu* (The Sino-Soviet split and modern times: A reconsideration of postwar Asia), a work that later served as the basis for my doctoral dissertation. At the international level, the simultaneous publication in 1977, by Columbia University Press and University of Tokyo Press, of *The Origins of the Cold War in Asia*, a collection of papers co-edited by Professor Nagai and Harvard University Professor Akira Iriye, had the effect of drawing attention to the high level of Japanese research on the Cold War.

The next research project that received grant assistance on a large scale had to do with the theme, “Higashi-ajia no keizai-teki shakai-teki hatten to kindai-ka ni kansuru hikaku kenkyu (A comparative study of economic and societal development and modernization in East Asia) (FY1987–1990; Abbreviated as “Comparative area study of East Asia”). By the second half of the 1980s, global attention had focused increasingly on economic advances demonstrated by Japan and the Asian NIEs comprising South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Partly because this was a region noted for Confucian cultural ideals that diverged from the model of economic development espoused by Max Weber—the traditional model on which Western capitalism and modernization had been largely based and partly because elements of the academic community and the mass media were interested in pursuing a comparative analysis of the East Asian development model, I decided to apply for a grant-in-aid under the newly established category of “priority area research.” I served as that project’s leader while University of Tokyo Professor Takashi Inoguchi and Tokyo Institute of Technology Professor Toshio Watanabe served as assistant leaders. This was the first instance of priority area research which was selected for grant assistance in the humanities and social sciences field. Professors Chie Nakane, Yoneo Ishii, and several other esteemed scholars were involved in the screening process, and I remember that we were very nervous during the process. In addition to the Project Coordination Team consisting of Nakajima, Inoguchi, and Watanabe, the approximately 70 researchers involved in the aforementioned comparative area study of East Asia were organized into 10 teams headed by Nagoya University Professor Tsuneo Iida, Osaka University Professor Nobuyuki Kaji, and Tokyo Metropolitan University Professor Tatsumi Okabe and others. International Christian University Professor Ryoen Minamoto and some others organized additional 10 teams for publicly solicited research.

Under this arrangement, approx. 70 researchers would be engaged in planned research while an additional 40 researchers would pursue work on publicly solicited research themes, for a combined total of 110. Once each year, a general conference was held at the Oiso Prince Hotel with the attendance of cooperating researchers from abroad. Foreign participants included Columbia University Professor Wm Theodore de Bary, an authority on the history of Chinese thought; University of Paris Professor Léon Vandermeersch, the renowned French scholar and author of *The Age of Asian Cultural Areas*; L. Deliusin, Director of the Chinese Department at the Soviet Academy of Sciences’ Institute of Asian Studies; UK Imperial College Professor Ronald Dore, a leading commentator; Pusan National University Professor Il-gon Kim, renowned for his research on correlations between Confucianism and capitalist economies; and Nankai University Assistant Professor Jiahua Wang, a young scholar on Confucian thought.

Following three years of joint research with an additional year for consolidation, the findings of this project were published as a feature series in the JSPS monthly newsletter, *Gakujutsu Geppo* (Nos. 1 to 3 issues, 1991), under the title, “Higashi-ajia hikaku kenkyū” (Comparative study of East Asia). Additionally, drawing on my perspective as a research project leader, I wrote two related papers: “‘Higashi-ajia hikaku kenkyū’ no mokuhyo to seika” (Objectives and findings of the ‘Comparative study of East Asia’) (1991.1) and “Hikaku kenkyū to wa nanika—sannen-kan no kenkyū o oeru ni atatte” (What is comparative research? —On bringing three years of research to its conclusion) (1991.3). I am also delighted to note that *Higashi-ajia hikaku kenkyū* (Comparative study of East Asia), a JSPS publication that I edited on the basis of installments in the JSPS newsletter, was released in January 1992 with the bookstore Maruzen serving as distributor.

The correlations between economic development and Confucian culture constitute a subject that demands careful discussion and debate. That said, it appears there is a consensus on the view that, in societies that have begun to “take off,” the traditions of Confucian culture and the culture of Chinese characters may actually contribute to modernization as well as economic and societal development.

Another unforgettable benefit of grants for scientific research is that they have facilitated joint Japanese and French research on modern China. In late 1984, a joint undertaking in research on China involving 19 top-level investigators was implemented through academic interchange arrangements under an agreement between the JSPS and France’s National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS). This venture was conducted at CNRS headquarters on the banks of the Seine with a project titled “*Gendai chugoku no seiji to kokusai kankei*” (“Politics and international relations in modern China”). For this undertaking, I assumed the role of research leader in Japan while an old friend, Claude Cadart, the Director of China and Far East Studies at the Center for International Studies and Research (CERI), the National Foundation for Political Science in France, served as research leader in France. Although this project also constituted a continuation of earlier-mentioned priority area studies, it was pursued as a grant-backed undertaking in international academic research, evolved into a six-year program of joint research between Japan and France, and led to a series of projects including “*Gendai chugoku ni okeru seiji-teki shakai-teki hendo ni kansuru nichifuutsu kyodo kenkyū*” (“Franco-Japanese Joint Research on the Political and Social Changes of Contemporary China”) (FY 1992–1994); “*Chugoku-taiwan-honkon no shakai keizai-teki hendo ni kansuru nichifutsu kyodo kenkyū*” (“Franco-Japanese Joint Research on China, Taiwan and Hong Kong”) (FY 1995–1996); and “*Higashi-ajia sho-chiiki no shakai hendo ni kansuru nichifutsu kyodo kenkyū*” (“The Franco-Japanese Joint Research on Social Changes in East Asia”) (FY 1997–1999). These joint undertakings by Japan and France probably rank as some of the finest long-term undertakings in

academic exchange within the humanities and social science fields. US studies concerned with modern China tend to have a policy orientation. By contrast, French-based research on China typically relies on an amassed body of research rooted in sociological perspectives and the traditions of sinology, and as such, has proved to be highly rewarding and a constant source of active discussion and debate. The core French members involved in these joint research undertakings included Chen Ying-xiang (Claude Cadart's wife), a principal investigator from CERI, and Professor Léon Vandermeersch, as mentioned earlier. From Japan, the list included University of Tokyo Professor Katsuji Nakagane, Keio University Professors Tomoyuki Kojima and Ryosei Kokubun, Chuo University Professor Shigeto Sonoda, Obirin University Professor Akimasa Mitsuta, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies Professor Hidenori Ijiri, and University of Michigan Professor Noriko Kamachi.

As one accomplishment of joint Japanese-French research, in 1986, *Chugoku no senryaku to ryu no henshin* (China's strategy and the metamorphosis of the dragon) (French title: *Strategie Chinoise ou la mue du dragon*), a book that I co-edited with Professor Cadart, was published by Autrement of Paris. Later on, I had the opportunity to give an address at a closing reception for the six-year joint research program and have learned that many of the French participants in attendance had tears in their eyes on that occasion. (See the excerpt, “*Nichifutsu gakujutsu koryu o oete*” [On the conclusion of a Japanese-French program of academic interchange], in the Foreword to