

The Development of Social Welfare and the Role of the Japanese Society for Historical Studies of Social Welfare

**NAGAOKA Masami, President
Japanese Society for Historical Studies of Social Welfare**

1. About the Japanese Society for Historical Studies of Social Welfare

(1) The History of the Japanese Society for Historical Studies of Social Welfare

The Japanese Society for Historical Studies of Social Welfare (JSHSSW) is an academic society that has been pursuing historical studies of social welfare in Japan, as well as in other countries and regions. Our research activities have been closely tied to the Science Council of Japan.

In May 1973, we started as the Study Group of Histories on Social Work. YOSHIDA Kyuichi (deceased), a professor at Japan College of Social Work who was well-known as a pioneer of historical studies on social welfare after World War II, started to organize researchers who were also interested in historical studies. Those who helped Yoshida closely were ICHIBANGASE Yasuko (deceased), a professor at Japan Women's College, and TAKASHIMA Susumu, professor at Nihon Fukushi University at that time. In the end 21 researchers joined this Study Group and became the founding members of this organization.

There had been some study groups of this kind before Yoshida organized this society. Some of the researchers who were members of the New Studies on Social Work or the Study Group of Contemporary Social Work had already started historical studies of social welfare beginning in the 1950s. They wanted to develop democratic social welfare activities in Japan, however their activities were limited to local bases. We may conclude that Yoshida's group was the first national organization of this kind.

The purpose of the Study Group of Histories of Social Work was "to contribute to the development of scientific research activities and democratic policies and practices in social welfare in Japan." In the course of its development it was registered as one of the registered academic research organizations of the Science Council of Japan (designated as cooperative science and research bodies in 2005). Then in 1998 it was reorganized and renamed the Japanese Society for Historical Studies of Social Welfare.

We have been strongly encouraging intellectual exchanges among researchers who share interests and responsibilities concerning the development of democratic social welfare. This policy has not changed since Professor Yoshida created this organization in 1973.

Our members numbered only over 300 in 2012. But we believe this small group has been highly valued among the researchers in social welfare in Japan. Our historical studies on democracy, human rights, peace, and welfare have been helping many researchers to profoundly

understand social problems. Our historical analyses have been an indispensable part of studies on social welfare, while our historical studies on thoughts and perspectives could lead to the future development of social welfare.

We hope that we will be able to continue to carry out our mission of encouraging the democratic development of social welfare. We know that our historical studies are needed more than ever because the system of social welfare should be restructured now. The policies, practices, theories, and values on social welfare should be reviewed carefully in order to adjust to the chaotic social and economic changes brought about by globalization.

The focus on our historical studies has been expanding significantly over the course of social changes. We now specialize in historical studies on not only social work and social welfare policies and practices, but also closely related subjects such as living conditions among people, welfare thoughts, theories of welfare, human care, and social security.

The researchers who currently join our society come from the disciplines of not only social welfare, but also special needs education, medicine, and nursing. It is crucial to conduct interdisciplinary efforts in order to analyze the current social problems and put them into proper historical perspectives. We are now producing more interdisciplinary studies on histories of social welfare, as well as philosophies and principles of social welfare.

(2) Our Society's Activities

The fourth provision of statutes of the Japanese Society for Historical Studies of Social Welfare defines our society's activities as follows:

- To have a conference and general meeting annually (usually in May)
- To publish biannual academic journals and other publications
- To find and preserve historical resources
- To develop interdisciplinary studies
- To do the work necessary in order to fulfill the society's purposes

Accordingly, we have carried out our activities as follows

1) We have our annual conference usually in May for two to three days. A typical program for the conference consists of a general meeting, special lectures, symposia, and special sessions dealing with various historical topics.

We also have a special meeting for young researchers during the annual conference. They are encouraged to bring in their research ideas and methods for their historical studies. The discussions and intellectual exchanges they have in the meeting will enable their intellectual growth and raise the academic standards for our society's future.

The themes of the annual conferences over the past 19 years are as stated below:

22nd (1994): "History of Social Services for People with Disabilities" at Aichi Prefectural Social Welfare Center in Nagoya

23rd (1995): "History of the Relationships between Public and Private Social Service Agencies" at Aichi Prefectural Social Welfare Center in Nagoya

24th (1996): "Social Work during the Second World War and its Aftermath" at Aichi

Prefectural Social Welfare Center in Nagoya

25th (1997): “Natural Disasters and Social Welfare” at Aichi Prefectural Social Welfare Center in Nagoya

26th (1998): “History of Child Welfare” at Aichi Prefectural Social Welfare Center in Nagoya

27th (1999): “Social Welfare in the 20th Century” at Hanazono University in Kyoto

28th (2000): “History of Social Services for the Elderly” at Tokyo Metropolitan University

29th (2001): “Religious Activities and the Beginning of Social Work” at Shukutoku University in Chiba

30th (2002): “Establishing the Japanese Public Assistance System” at Chukyo University in Nagoya

31st (2003): “Colonial Administration and the History of Social Work” at Osaka Prefectural University in Osaka

32nd (2004): “The Role of Historical Research in Studies of Social Welfare” at Shukutoku Junior College in Tokyo

33rd (2005): “Preservation and Utilization of Historical Materials” at Nagano University in Ueda, Nagano

34th (2006): “Social Welfare in Japan Before and After the Second World War” at Ryukoku Junior College in Kyoto

35th (2007): “International Comparative Studies on the History of Social Services for People with Disabilities” at University of Tsukuba in Tsukuba, Ibaraki.

36th (2008): “History and Future Perspective on the Social Welfare Movement” at Chukyo University in Nagoya

37th (2009): “History of Policies for Supporting People’s Daily Lives” at Toyo University in Tokyo

38th (2010): “History of Social Welfare Philosophies and Their Future Development” at Kwansai-Gakuin University in Nishinomiya, Hyogo

39th (2011): “Local Histories of Social Welfare and Their Prospective Future” at Notre Dame Seishin University in Okayama

40th (2012): “Confirming and Prospecting Historical Studies on Social Welfare” (with the Special Meeting of Natural Disasters and the Roles of Social Welfare)

41st (2013): “Historical Development of Social Welfare in the Far East” at Shukutoku University in Chiba

2) We publish our biannual academic journal *Historical Studies on Social Work*. (It was published annually from 1973 to 2010, and the current issue is Volume 43. Fuji Publishing Company has been the authorized seller of this journal.)

The editorial committee takes responsibility for editing and publishing this journal, and appoints proofreaders.

We also publish occasional reports of our committees, historical research guidebooks, and newsletters.

3) Our Society gives two kinds of awards annually, both of which are reviewed carefully by

the award committees.

One is the Excellence in Publication Award for Historical Studies on Social Welfare. The Society has given this award for excellence in historical studies published in each fiscal year since 1979.

The other is the Yoshida Kyuichi Memorial Historical Research Award. Yoshida was the person who created and nurtured our society. The first award was given in 2009 when the surviving family members of Yoshida donated the funds for this award. Each year the Memorial Award grants 200,000 yen to each winner (up to three persons). The Memorial Award also chooses one instance of academic research each year and gives a grant for its publication.

4) Currently we have three permanent committees and two temporary ones that are an integral part of our society. The committees are expected to discuss and make recommendations regarding the historical education of social welfare, historical research on social welfare, the preservation and usage of historical artifacts, and international exchanges on social welfare.

① Committee on historical education for social welfare

This committee has conducted research regarding historical education on social welfare. Four official reports have already been published and distributed to the public by this committee. The committee and professional social work organizations have been very active in proposing to install the “history of social welfare” as a part of undergraduate curriculum.

② Committee on preserving historical papers and artifacts

This committee has been conducting research on the conditions of historical papers related to social work and social welfare. *The Guidebook to the Historical Papers for Research on Social Work and Social Welfare* was published as a product of the serious efforts made by this committee. The committee also introduces archives to the public, encourages public awareness on preserving historical materials, and recommends that welfare agencies and groups such as welfare councils preserve and compile historical papers.

③ Committee on international historical studies

We regret that we hardly ever shared our studies with researchers in other countries until recently. However, we did some international comparative studies on social welfare history and studies on social work in the imperial Japanese Colonies. Since 2010, we have been trying to decide what kind of project would be appropriate for international exchanges and which regions or countries we should focus on if we start joint projects. So far, to begin with we have done some research in Europe and North America. We made lists of recently published books and articles whose topics were related to the history of social welfare and social work in these regions, and also tried to identify the academic societies whose foci were related to the history of social welfare. Second, we started comparative studies and international exchanges with researchers in the Far East Region. The preliminary conference was held during our annual conference in 2012. Professor SHEN Jie whose specialty is Chinese social welfare and Professor YOON Jungsoo whose specialty is Korean social welfare were especially active in this project and they both became members of this committee. We set a symposium dealing with historical studies on social welfare in Far Eastern countries as the main program of the annual conference of 2013.

The researchers from Korea, China, and Taiwan in our society are still small in number, but they have been playing very important roles in the conference as well as in other programs. We also have a few young foreign graduate students from Korea, China, and Taiwan. They are expected to lead the international studies on the history of social welfare in Asia in the near future.

④ Our activities in relation to the Great East Japan Earthquake (Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami)

Jointly with the union of social welfare academic societies, we raised some issues in helping people from a historical standpoint. We also created a comprehensive study project regarding natural disasters and social welfare. Next, we started to rescue and preserve historical materials that contained the records of welfare activities and the lives of ordinary people in the disaster areas.

Finally, we had a special session to discuss the problems of the disaster areas during the annual conference in 2012.

⑤ Special committee for 40th anniversary projects

This committee was created to prepare the special projects for our 40th anniversary. It called for papers and collected pictures and records of the activities of our society over the past 40 years. The committee made them available to the members of our society and public during the annual conference in 2012, and did the same thing in 2013.

2. The Role of the Japanese Society for Historical Studies of Social Welfare and Expectations for International Collaboration

(1) Development of historical studies and historical education on social welfare

1) International exchange in historical studies and historical education on social welfare

That social welfare has strong historical influences is a common understanding we share across borders; comprehending the history of social welfare is the very basis of research into and education on social welfare and social work. This understanding is influenced by ideas of how society ought to be and is closely intertwined with politics, economics, and culture. Social welfare has been understood both in aspects of practical efforts to help one another and live together, which have developed into diverse activities as specialized, scientific, social work, and also in management systems for social control by policy-makers and their integrated responses to poverty and various needs.

In what ways have the policies and practices of social welfare and their various elements—institutions, facilities, enterprises, organization and management, movement, values, and thoughts—developed? And in what ways have social work and its professionalization developed to enhance social welfare? Historical studies of social welfare include research into welfare regimes, social policy, and social security, as well as investigations into charity, philanthropy, mutual aid, volunteering, support networks, and social action. By using historical analyses of various fields to clarify what social welfare has been, we can find solutions to today's

problems and strengthen the basis on which to build a universal and sustainable welfare system. The Society's members are working in various fields, time periods, and countries, and making their own respective contributions to the research.

The Society is currently carrying out a trend survey on the current state of research and education on social welfare in various countries, which has already shown vast diversity. This diversity stems from differences in historical background, social systems, poverty, and the specific needs of the peoples in each country and region. We must have a dialogue to examine these differences. However, there are still too few opportunities to discuss historical studies or history even at international conferences on social welfare and social work. International exchange and collaboration in historical studies of social welfare would help develop new angles to study aid and human security. We therefore sincerely hope that networks of social welfare will begin to grow around the world.

2) Development of archives

In addition to historical material related to policies and institutions, vital records in institutions and regions and historical materials on services and aid activities are also important in historical studies of social welfare. Historical materials are important in carrying out international comparisons and in studying cross-border policies and practices in colonies and emigration destinations. We hope to construct a network of archives on social welfare as shared resources by collaborating with colleagues in other disciplines such as history, in addition to collaborating over historical studies on social welfare. Collaboration to preserve historical material that would otherwise be lost requires organization and cooperation. At the moment, some social welfare archives are being developed in Japan—a very important step in comparing primary materials, oral history, and vital records. It is necessary to pass down, unearth, collect, and store records and stories from the social welfare field for the future. We also seek to collaborate to tackle the international challenge of preserving historical records and the premises of research and education, as well as to facilitate the sharing of these records.

(2) Development of social welfare in Asia and the sharing of a historical understanding

1) The situation in East Asian countries and challenges of historical understanding from the viewpoint of social welfare

Peace and welfare are especially important in Asia today. Regarding recent conflicts among East Asian countries and controversies over historical events in particular, examining the history of mutual influence, exchange, shared historical characteristics, and differences of social welfare policy and practice will contribute to deepening mutual understanding. Examining the historical facts of the social work policies of the Japanese government and individual practices that were carried out in subordination or defiance of the government's policies during colonial rule and invasion would not only contribute to the development of social welfare through research in each country and international collaboration, but also go some way toward building a new shared understanding of history from the perspective of social welfare.

The JSHSSW has pursued research into social enterprises in East Asia that were encouraged

during the period of Japanese colonial rule, and also carried out a comparative analysis of the development process of social welfare in East Asian countries after World War II. By engaging in such collaborative work and stimulating research exchanges we hope to face the mistakes of the past with sincerity, to clarify what was done in the field of social welfare, and to promote peace and welfare. This includes highly political issues and the problems of war, regional conflicts, and ethnic conflicts that occur in many parts of the world. We think, however, it should be possible to bring about recollection and reconciliation by deepening historical understanding through mutual exchange and comparative analyses of social welfare history.

2) Historical analysis of the East Asian model

Also important is a historical analysis of the East Asian model of social welfare. Japanese society has developed a unique form of social welfare that draws from its traditional social structure, with influences from Asia in the pre-modern period, and those from Europe and the United States in the modern period. There are also some commonalities with East Asian countries. Comparative studies within East Asia would entail a historical study of development of the field, which has been historically formed by a combination of public sector, voluntary sector, and informal structures in pursuit of social welfare, a product of blending policy and practice. This would enable us to contribute to the discussion of welfare regimes and to clarify typologies of charity and mutual help. Also, analyzing the historical context and professionalization of social work and care work, the development of professional bodies, professional training and education, ideals of institutions, and historical experiences of community development also poses a challenge. By pursuing these analyses, we expect to come to understand diversity and commonality in social welfare in East Asia in the context of each state's sovereignty, autonomy, and international solidarity.

(3) After the Great East Japan Earthquake: Lessons from the disaster

Finally, we touch upon what the Great East Japan Earthquake has wrought. Major disasters have happened in every corner of the globe, and people overcome them to rebuild societies, rebuild their lives, and work for a better system of security and mutual help. Japanese society is still recovering from the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011, and nuclear radiation remains a danger. Japanese society has endured major catastrophes such as earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, and frost damage. During the Edo Period, an enormous number of people died in three major famines (Kyouhou, Tenmei, and Tenpou). And the great earthquakes in the Ansei Era killed numerous people. Modern times have seen the Great Nobi Earthquake of 1891, two Sanriku Earthquakes (tsunamis) in 1896 and 1933 that hit the same area as the 2011 earthquake, the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923, the Ise-wan Typhoon (Typhoon Vera) of 1959, the Great Hanshin/Awaji Earthquake of 1995, and so on.

Furthermore, although Japan has a history of war and aggression, it has also experienced atomic weapons used on its soil. The horrific experiences from Hiroshima and Nagasaki and their prolonged suffering and struggles have been the driving force behind the campaign for world peace and the abolition of war. And we now have Fukushima. These experiences provide valuable

lessons for today's social welfare activities and disaster prevention measures, and contribute to the establishment of welfare, peace and human rights, and disaster preparedness systems. It is vital that we learn the history of disasters and wars so we can draw clear lessons for today from the viewpoint of social welfare. We are fully aware of our obligation to carry out historical analyses of Japanese social welfare and to accumulate accounts of experiences. By doing so, we hope to make a positive contribution to open discussion.

Conclusion

The Japanese Society for Historical Studies of Social Welfare engages in the historical study of global social welfare and international comparative research. To mark its 40th anniversary, the Society is conducting a survey on trends in historical studies of social welfare in various countries led by the International Exchange Committee. We are also initiating research exchanges on the history of social welfare in Asia in order to contribute to enhanced exchange among countries and regions through the historical study of social welfare and world peace. The historical study of social welfare can fulfill its academic obligation when it contributes to the development of mutual understanding between countries and to peace, as well as to continued academic development.

We are determined to maintain our efforts to realize a world of welfare by forming international solidarity with others studying sociology and social welfare through historical studies of social welfare, social policy, and social work. We consider this message to the world to be an important opportunity to pursue our aim.

Current Administration and Board Members (2011-2015)

HIRATA Katsumasa (Nagasaki University), KANEKO Koichi (Toyo University), MUROTA Yasuo (Kwansei Gakuin University), NAGAOKA Masami (President, Nihon Fukushi University), NAKAMURA Makio (Fukuyama City University), NISHIZAKI Midori (Secretary-general, Fukuoka University of Education), TERAWAKI Takao, UTO Eiko (Senshu University), KIKUCHI Yoshiaki (Auditor, Toyo University), UTSUNOMIYA Minori (Auditor, Aichi Prefectural University),

Contact Address

Office of the JSHSSW
c/o Prof. Nishizaki's Office, Fukuoka University of Education
1-1 Akama Bunkyo-cho, Munakata-City, Fukuoka 811-4192, Japan
Telephone: +81 940 35 1683, Facsimile: +81 940 35 1783
Official Website: <http://www.jshsw.cher-ish.net/>
E-mail: nisizaki@fukuoka-edu.ac.jp