



世界と日本の COVID-19 の推移

新型コロナウイルス感染症 (COVID-19) 拡大防止のため、在宅勤務やテレワークなどによる stay home 状態からほぼ 1 年になりました。ひとけも少ない地球研の周りも、梅の花や早咲きの桜も見られ、春の訪れを感じさせる季節となりました。

世界の COVID-19 のパンデミックは文字通り世界中に拡大し、3 月 8 日のデータで、感染者数約 1 億 1 千 7 百万人、死者は約 260 万人にのぼっています。この約 1 年間で感染者は約 100 倍、死者は約 50 倍の増加です。国内では東京など大都市圏を中心に拡大し、感染者数が約 44 万人、死者は約 8300 人です。約 1 年前と比べ、感染者は約 100 倍、死者数は約 30 倍です。ただ、今年に入ってからの 2 回目の緊急事態宣言は、関西圏では 2 月一杯で解除されましたが、首都圏ではあと 2 週間をメドに、ということで続いています。昨年 2 月から今日までの全国と京都府の感染者数の推移の図を図 1 に示していますが、第一波、第二波、第三波という波が明瞭にあることと、波の大きさ自体は、益々大きくなっており、コロナ禍は、衰えるどころか、勢いを増しているとみることができます。

コロナ禍 の推移ー最初の緊張感はどこへ

昨年 4 月に 7 都道府県で緊急事態宣言、引き続き全国に宣言が拡大された時の状況を思い出してください。安成通信 No.55 (2020/05/28) にデータも含めて示していますが、京都では、1 日の感染者数が 10 人を超えるということでハラハラし、宣言中だった木屋町や先斗町界隈にほとんど人がいなかったこと、そして、京都府・京都市などからの外出や商業活動への強い自粛要請も功を奏して、5 月半ば頃に感染者数がようやくゼロ近くになったことを述べています。

しかし、第三波のピークがきた今年 1 月は、連日の感染者は全国では 5000 人前後で推移し、京都府でも 100 人~120 人のレベルでした。2 回目の首都圏を除いて緊急事態宣言が解除された京都では、減ったとはいえ、連日 10 人前後であり、第一波のピーク時の値と実はほぼ同じ程度なのです。第一波にくらべ、ほぼ 10 倍の感染者数なのに、市内を覗いても、あの時の緊張感はみられません。確かに外国人観光客がほとんどいないこともあり、人出は少ないですが、第一波の時のゴーストタウン的な状況ではまったくありません。それどころか、第 2 波が収まったばかりの 10 月から、政府が進めた GOTO トラベル事業によるキャンペーンが人の移動や飲食店利用や人の集まるイベントを促進したことが、第 3 波の大きな波が生じたことに、強く効いていると私は思っています。コロナ禍の対策としては、GOTO 事業よりも、緊急事態で事業・営業の縮小や休業をせざるをえなくなった非常に多くの商店や事業者の支援を、より強化すべきなのです。 コロナ禍を克服して、よりすばらしい「新たな日常」を創るためには、まず現在の危機に対する持続的な緊張感と想像力です。それはまず、為政者がもつべきであり、そして私たち研究者も共有すべきなのです。

身近な地域と地球と将来世代のために

このようなコロナ禍がまだ続く状況の中で、地球研所長を退職する時期を迎えてしまいました。8 年間は私にとって長くもあり、短くもありました。コロナ禍も気候変動や生物多様性問題、水・食糧問題などと同様、地球規模の健康の問題として、人類の生存のために克服すべき地球規模課題そのものです。これらの地球環境問題や自然災害への対処は、研究者と社会のさまざまな階層の人たちとの協働・共創で行わねばなりません。その時に必要なのは、身近な地域から地球をまたぐ視点と、今を生きる私たちのためではなく、これからの地域と地球を担う人たち、すなわち、将来世代の視点を大切にすることで

はないか。私は、そのことを、志を同じくする多くの地球研の仲間の人たちと議論し話し合う中で、学ぶことができました。地球研はこれらの問題に真摯に向き合っている、日本でも、いや世界でも数少ない研究所だと改めて痛感しています。

退職にあたり、8年間、所長という重職を支えてくださった、すべての職員みなさんに、改めて深く感謝いたします。

Yasunari Tsushin No.60 2021/03/09

Amidst the COVID-19 Related Crisis - For the Regional and Global Communities, and Future Generations

Transition of COVID-19 in the world and Japan

Plum blossoms and early-blooming Sakura can be seen around the quiet Chikyu-ken neighborhood, and it reminds us that spring is just around the corner. It has been almost a year since we started to stay home by teleworking to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus infection (COVID-19).

The global COVID-19 pandemic has literally spread all over the world, and as of March 8, the number of infected people has reached about 117 million and the number of deaths has reached about 2.6 million. In the past year, the number of infected people has increased 100-fold and the number of deaths has increased 50-fold. In Japan, the disease has spread mainly in Tokyo and other large urban areas, with 440,000 people infected and 8,300 people dead. The number of infected people is about 100 times higher and the number of deaths is about 30 times higher than they were about a year ago. The state of emergency declared for the second time since the beginning of this year was lifted at the end of February in the Kansai area, but it still continues in the Tokyo metropolitan area for another two weeks or so. Figure 1 shows the changes in the number of infected people nationwide and in Kyoto Prefecture from February last year to today. The figure clearly shows that the first, second, and third waves, and the range of the waves themselves are getting larger and larger and the COVID-19 related crisis seems to be gaining momentum, not waning.

Transition of the COVID-19 related crisis - Where has the initial sense of urgency gone?

Remember the situation in April last year, when seven prefectures declared a state of emergency and the declaration was extended nationwide. As shown in Yasunari Tsushin No.55 (May 28, 2020) with the data, Kyoto was on the brink of exceeding 10 cases per day and there were few people out in the downtown of the Kiyamachi street and the Ponto-cho areas during the declaration period. The strong request from Kyoto Prefecture and Kyoto City to refrain from going out and engaging in commercial activities was also effective, and as a result, the number of infected people finally dropped to near zero around the middle of May.

However, when the third wave peaked in January this year, the number of infected people hovered around 5,000 nationwide every day, and the number in Kyoto Prefecture also hovered between 100 to 120. In Kyoto, where the state of emergency has been lifted, the number has decreased, but still around 10 people get infected every day, which is actually almost the same as the peak value of the first wave. Although the number of infected people has increased tenfold compared to the first wave,

there is no sense of urgency we felt at that time in down-town of the city. There are not so many people out in the street due to almost no foreign tourists, but the city is not a ghost town as was during the first wave. On the contrary, I believe that the GOTO Travel project promoted by the government since October, when the second wave had just subsided, has boosted the movement of people, use of restaurants, and events that bring people together, and has led to the creation of the third major wave. As a countermeasure to the COVID-19 related crisis, rather than the GOTO projects, more support should be given to the many stores and businesses that were forced to reduce their operations or close their businesses due to the emergency. What we first need in order to overcome the COVID-19 related crisis and create a better "new normal" is to keep up a sense of urgency and imagination for the current crisis, which are the senses that the politicians should possess in the first place, and so should we, the researchers.

For the sake of the regional and the global communities, and future generations

In the midst of the COVID-19 related crisis, the time has come for me to retire from Director-General of RIHN. The past eight years have been both long and short for me. The COVID-19 related crisis, as well as climate change, biodiversity, and water and food issues, is a global challenge as part of global health issue that must be overcome for the survival of the human race. Dealing with these global environmental problems and natural disasters must be done through collaboration and co-creation between researchers and various stakeholders of society. What we need to do, then, is to have a perspective that spans the globe from the regions around us, and to value the perspective not just of those of us living in the present but of those who will be responsible for the community and the earth in the future, that is, future generations. I could learn this through discussions and debates with colleagues and staffs who share the same aspirations at RIHN. I keenly feel that RIHN is one of the few research institutes in Japan, or even in the world, that is sincerely addressing these issues.

Finally, on the occasion of my retirement, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the staff members who have supported me in my heavy duties as Director-General for the past eight years.

図 1 : 全国（上）および京都府の感染者数の推移

Figure 1:

(upper) transition of number of infectious people in the whole of Japan

(lower) the same but for Kyoto Prefecture

