

## Thoughts upon Retirement

SHIRAHATA Yōzaburō (Professor Emeritus)

## 定年退職の弁 白幡洋三郎 (名誉教授)

I retired from Nichibunken in March 2014, having served on its faculty for 26 years, since its founding. Over these years I have received the help and support of many people and would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude.

At Nichibunken, I enjoyed to the utmost the freedom to pursue my research. Perhaps the most enjoyable years were the first decade or so; we had very lively and heated discussions about the construction of the Research and Administrative Wings, including the Common Room, the faculty offices, and the joint research room, as well as on how they would be used. I pursued my individual research, led team research projects, and held seminars and symposiums inviting various scholars from overseas. I often traveled overseas to attend symposiums, deliver lectures, and do some research. Every day was exceedingly busy, but it was all enjoyable and fulfilling.

The last 10 years, however, since the incorporation of national universities in 2004, have been quite different. The incorporation has shaken the values of research and scholarship, especially in the humanities, to its very core. Encroachment on research time in the name of “administrative duties” is becoming the new normal. I frankly feel that we have entered an era that is not conducive to serious scholarship. It is an era when people, while not seeing the further layers of supervision and organizational realignment as necessary, follow along with the tide.

My understanding is that Nichibunken was founded for the purpose of pursuing international, interdisciplinary, and integrated *research* on Japanese culture. The purpose cannot possibly be international, interdisciplinary, and integrated “PR and propaganda” or “education.” Healthy competition in research and scholarship makes great sense, but much damage and little benefit will result from competition in education or self-promotion.

The overall purpose of inter-university research institutes is probably to allow concentration on research that cannot be done elsewhere. I hope that Nichibunken will treasure its tradition of providing a research environment that allows for ambitious, challenging research topics that are seminal, venturesome, and even a bit risky.

この3月末日を以て日文研を定年退職しました。在職期間は創設時から26年にわたります。その間多くの方々には助けられました。この場を借りて心よりお礼申し上げます。

日文研では自由な研究生活を満喫させてもらいました。最も楽しかったのは初期の10年あまりでしょうか。コモンルームや研究個室、共同研究室など、研究・事務棟の建設とその利用のあり方を考え、熱く議論しました。また、実際に個人研究、共同研究を進め、海外から次々に研究者を招いてセミナーやシンポジウムを催しましたし、よく海外にも出かけました。毎日が忙しく、しかし楽しい充実の日々でした。対照的なのがこの10年、国立大学法人化以後の時代です。法人化は、とくに人文学の分野にとって研究・学問の価値観を揺るがせました。「業務」の名による研究時間の蚕食が常態化しつつあります。私の率直な思いは、研究にとって喜ばしくない時代に入ったな、です。屋上屋を重ねる管理体制や組織再編は不要だと誰もが感じながら、誰もがそれにながされる時代。

日文研は日本文化の国際的、学際的、総合的な「研究」を推進する目的で創設された、というのが私の理解です。国際的、学際的、総合的な「宣伝（広報）」や「教育」が、主目的にはなり得ない。学術研究は競い合いに大きな意義がありますが、学術の宣伝や教育は競い合っても害あって利少ないです。共同利用研の大目的はよそでは実現できない研究への専念でしょう。萌芽的、冒険的、そしてときには危うさも含んだような野心的、挑戦的テーマが許されるおらかな研究環境を日文研では大事にしてほしいと願っています。（原文：日本語）



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