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Women Today

After Beijing + 10 —The Road Ahead

Patricia B. Licuanan, Ph.D.
President of Miriam College,
Philippines
Co-chair of South East Asia
Women Watch (SEAWWatch)

The road toward Beijing and the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 was rough and bumpy. After more than 10 years of imperfect and inadequate implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, after the Beijing +5 and Beijing +10 reviews, I daresay that the road ahead from Beijing +10 is even rougher and bumpier. The environment is less friendly, even hostile. Our institutions weaker and our goals more diffused. Our favorite strategies have begun to show their flaws. Finally, there are serious issues that have emerged since Beijing that we now have to face.

We must confront the new conservative backlash from governments that were champions of women's empowerment in Beijing. New right-wing governments have withdrawn major support for women and have been exerting pressure to revisit commitments made. The moral authority and effectiveness of the United Nations is in serious question. The participation of civil society in UN meetings has been severely diminished. There are major global trends that have important impacts on women's lives, such as, religious and ethnic fundamentalisms, growing armed conflict, and the rise of terrorism.

It is time to review favorite strategies that over time have begun to reveal their serious flaws. By far, the favorite post-Beijing strategy for gender equality has been gender mainstreaming. Recent voices have pointed to disturbing developments in the name of gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is suffering from lack of conceptual clarity and from possible misuse in the hands of those whose commitment to women's empowerment and gender equality may be suspect. At the very least, some recent moves in the name of gender mainstreaming may be premature. It is time that we confront these issues on gender mainstreaming. We need to systematically assess how gender mainstreaming is being interpreted and implemented. We must consider what are the results of these issues. We must not allow gender mainstreaming to be co-opted and wrenched away from the goals of gender equality and empowerment of women.

We must face the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as both a challenge and an opportunity.

With countries, the whole UN system and international financial institutions focusing on the MDGs, there is need to strategically link the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) with the MDGs' goal of engendering all eight goals. It must be affirmed that gender equality is central to the achievement of all MDGs. Development policies and actions which fail to address gender inequality will have limited effectiveness. Country level targets for MDGs have to be expanded to cover all major domains of gender equality and women's empowerment.

CEDAW must be seen as the most important international agreement concerning women's human rights. Alternatively, BPFA, the document which was intensely negotiated and then ratified by consensus at the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, contains a comprehensive set of strategies and actions to concretize and enhance the goals of CEDAW. The MDGs in turn, for all their current limitations represent a significant expression of measurable time-bound goals and targets.

Finally, we must get involved in the UN reform process and fight for the appropriate gender architecture in the UN. Namely, we should be placed high enough in the structure to influence system-wide policies and to monitor implementation; exact accountability as well as ensure coherence and synergy of strategies/activities for maximum results. Of course, sufficient human and financial resources to carry out this mandate is also needed.

The challenge of gender equality and women's rights and empowerment requires much work under conditions far less favorable than when we started this journey in the '90s and earlier. But the rough and bumpy road ahead must not deter us. We must stay the course. Staying the course will require work in four major areas: political, professional, partnerships and personal.

The political work required is continued advocacy for women's rights.

While we pragmatically work with the MDGs we must ensure that the rights framework of Beijing and CEDAW and even the Millennium Declaration remain paramount. Professional and technical

work particularly on data and indicators is necessary if we are to engender the MDGs. More work has to be done at the country, regional and global levels to develop gender indicators that relate to all of the MDGs as well as to analyze the "quality of equality" i.e. the process that brings it about, the nature of the outcomes, and women's own sense of agency and power. We must build, nurture and strengthen partnerships: partnerships with men; with other women inside or outside the women's movement; with technocrats and activists; with mainstream NGOs and other social movements. We must seek as well the revitalization of the women's movement through regeneration of our networks and coalitions by seeking younger women to take our place. We should review our partnership with the UN and stake our claim in its reform.

Finally, it is necessary that we work on ourselves. While in general, our commitment to our cause has remained strong, we must admit moments of discouragement, weariness and even boredom. Over the years, women activists have begun to reflect upon and turn to the spiritual dimension of their lives---the transcendent, the spirit within us which will help strengthen our movement and help us continue the work. So let us care for and nurture ourselves.

Indeed the road ahead is not strewn with flowers. But we must stay the course. Despite our disappointments with Beijing, despite our reservations about the MDGs, despite frustrations and setbacks, a better world is still possible for women and we must all do our part to achieve it. More power to all of us!

Profile

Patricia B. Licuanan is a social psychologist, educator and women's empowerment activist. Her teaching, research and practice in social psychology focus on human factors in the national development process, education and educational reform, social issues, human resource development and gender issues.

She was Chair of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) as the preparatory commission for the UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China in 1995. At the Conference she chaired the Main Committee which negotiated the Beijing Platform for Action. She has headed regional women's networks such as the Asia Pacific Women's Watch (APWW) and South East Asia Women Watch (SEAWWatch) which are involved in advocacy for and monitoring of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

JICA Seminar on Gender Mainstreaming Policies for Government Officers

In fiscal 2002, the Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women (KFAW) organized the Seminar on Gender Mainstreaming Policies for Government Officers for the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). This seminar fosters the ability of governmental officers to create effective and comprehensive policies which mainstream gender-based perspectives to address various problems in developing countries.

▲Ms. Masako Ota, KFAW senior researcher lectures seminar participants.

This year, seven trainees from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Nepal, Peru, Senegal and Uruguay, participated in KFAW's 4 week seminar (June 16 - July 14, 2006). Trainees attended various programs designed to help create gender-equal societies.

Seminar programs included lectures on economics, education, health promotion, environmental protection, administration and human rights, etc. In addition, participants were given opportunities to learn firsthand about both the national and local governmental systems in Japan as well as the work of governmental officers. While introducing Japan's situation to the trainees, we organizers, by executing this seminar, were able to learn about comparative situations in each trainee's country.

On the final day, we opened a country report presentation meeting to the general public. Trainees gave reports on education, administration and gender issues in their respective countries. Despite limited time for each presentation, the audience was able to learn about various issues in all seven countries.

▲At Kitakyushu Airport on the way back from KFAW seminar sessions in Tokyo

The Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake (3)

Women's Participation in Disaster Reduction and Post-Disaster Reconstruction

Ms. Reiko Masai
Representative,
Women's Net Kobe

At the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR), held in Kobe in January 2005, the Japanese government announced its Initiatives for Disaster Reduction. The Initiatives' basic policies are to promote gender-sensitive perspectives. Specifically, the Initiative stipulates as follows: "Women are more vulnerable to disasters than men are because of existing gender-related imbalance in various aspects, including the levels of participation in policymaking and economic activities, along with access to information. It is therefore essential to support women in every aspect of disaster reduction from gender-sensitive perspectives." In July 2005, the Japanese government revised the Basic Disaster Prevention Planning to incorporate gender-sensitive perspectives. A Cabinet Office taskforce to study the "Basic Plan for Gender Equality" will also initiate studies of gender equality within the context of disaster reduction and post-disaster reconstruction.

●Operation of Shelters immediately after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake

Of the 310,000 victims, whose houses collapsed or were damaged by the earthquake, 180,000 took shelter at school buildings. Although various surveys have been conducted regarding the roles of shelter leaders. Few of these surveys reported on the gender ratio of the same leaders. According to the only extant record, which was prepared by Ashiya City, only two female leaders out of a total of 25 leaders for 25 shelters in Ashiya. This kind of gender imbalance is partly attributable to the automatic selection of men, who are community and or local volunteer group leaders, as shelter representatives. Another factor involves the majority of women not being able to fulfill a leader's responsibilities due to their family obligations.

Although many study reports were prepared on disaster and post-disaster situations, few such reports contain gender-based data or analyses.

Although natural disasters hit everyone at the same time, the damage men and women they receive and the speed at which they recover respectively is different. When a tsunami attacked the coast of Indian Ocean on December 26, 2004, it again proved this point.

●Participation of Women in Disaster Reduction and Post-Disaster Reconstruction Planning

The image of women as only victims or vulnerable people is also biased. Immediately after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, I saw many women running to collapsed houses with hand saws to rescue victims trapped under the houses; exerting leadership by cooking hot meals to share with other victims; and organizing volunteer groups dedicated to washing laundry. Such women were amazingly powerful and energetic. They knew exactly what other victims needed and allocated limited resources adequately by organizing groups and networks with great flexibility. Women's knowledge and abilities are essential for various post-disaster programs.

The earthquake destroyed a lot of communities. This situation still impacts heavily on our daily lives and discourages recovery from mental stress. Presently, mostly women support daily life in these local communities. However, men in their prime engage in reconstruction programs which emphasize the rebirth of big cities above local communities. If women participated in local reconstruction programs, how important the rebirth of local communities is would be emphasized.

In this context, I believe that the national and local governments must execute the following measures: (1) select women as members responsible for decision-making regarding disaster reduction and post-disaster reconstruction planning; employ women as leaders of reconstruction programs, (2) adopt concrete measures to ensure women's participation in decision-making by clearly publicizing numerical targets and the target period, (3) seek and use women's knowledge and expertise accumulated through their participation in community and NPO activities, (4) provide training on gender issues for staff members who will be dispatched for rescue and relief activities as well as to post-disaster reconstruction; and (5) dispatch women to disaster sites when this is deemed as appropriate.

Disaster reduction is deeply related to daily efforts. Residents should constantly review whether or not the town they live in has advanced welfare programs; whether or not the town authority is actively promoting gender-equality; and people in their society respect human rights. A society where women are overly "protected" in the name of "respect of femininity" is a society where inequality between men and women is deeply embedded. Moreover, such a society is extremely vulnerable to disasters. Although in Japan most social services are currently provided to households, rather than to individuals, this system should also be revised so that both single and married women can access such services. Every woman has a right to lead an independent and secure life even if she is not married or does not have children.

KFAW College
An Analysis of Iraqi Issues

This year, KFAW College organizes seminars on the Middle East, inviting specialists on various countries in the region, including Jordan, Pakistan, Iran and Iraq. Although we hear news daily about the Middle East, many Japanese people feel incidents taking place there are not their immediate concern. This is attributable to the psychological, rather than geographical factors. With this in mind, KFAW College decided to hold seminars on the Middle East, hoping that these events will help audiences develop a deeper understanding of and greater affinity for this region.

For the seminar held on July 17, 2006, we invited Ms. Keiko Sakai, professor of the Graduate School of Area and Culture Studies, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. Her academic career has focused on politics in Iraq and other Middle East countries. During her lecture at KFAW College, Ms. Sakai discussed Iraq's political situation in the context of national reconstruction after the announced termination of the Iraq War in May 2003; deployment of the Japanese Self Defense Forces and the current situation in the Middle East at large.

In addition to the Japanese Ground Self Defense Forces (GSDF), other countries' troops are now withdrawing from Iraq, including many that were part of the multinational forces. Hearing such news, many Japanese feel that Iraq has stabilized, with the enactment of its Constitution and the establishment of Iraqi Parliament and government. Despite such an image, Ms. Sakai asserted that Iraq remains unstable. Since the bombing of the Golden Mosque in February 2006, the death toll of Iraqi people has been rapidly increasing, due primarily to conflicts between different religious and ethnic sects. According to Ms. Sakai, in the past, Iraqi society was basically free from these kinds of armed conflicts. Before May 2003, individuals with outstanding abilities held governmental posts. In the context of post-war reconstruction, posts (and power) have become closely aligned with religious and ethnic sects. According to Ms. Sakai, religious and ethnic conflicts have become severer because every sect desires posts and power.

In July 2006, the Japanese government withdrew its GSDF troops which were stationed in Iraq for two and a half years. According to polls conducted by news agencies, throughout the past two and a half years, a high percentage of local residents in Iraq continued to support the presence of the GSDF.

If we evaluate services provided by the GSDF alone, Ms. Sakai maintained it is difficult to assert that their activities have boosted the economy of Iraq or Samawah, where the troops were stationed. The GSDF troops purified river water and supplied clean water to households in Samawah. Ms. Sakai suggested that instead of deploying these forces, Japan could have allocated its funds for reconstruction through ODA. Through the latter means, she believes, Japan could have helped Iraqi people more efficiently. She also suggested that underlying Iraqi people's "support" for the presence of the Japanese Self Defense Forces reflected their expectations for increased Japan's ODA.

In tandem with the withdrawal of troops, many countries decided to stop aiding Iraq. In this environment, the Japanese government will continue its aid which basically consists of yen loans. Ms. Sakai believes continuing such aid is vitally important to prevent the rise of the radical religious and ethnic groups due to failed economic reconstruction by the government. Individual citizens cannot live alone in hunger and poverty. They all need support from the government. If the government fails to provide sufficient services to its people, radical religious and ethnic groups are likely to provide charity care instead. In this way, these groups are likely to gain poor people's support, increasing these groups' membership and power.

According to Ms. Sakai, the best way to avoid disruqtions caused by such groups is to help reinforce the administrative functions of the Iraqi government. In other words, international aid for economic reconstruction is essential for the stabilization of Iraqi society.

Expressive Arts Therapy Applied Research Method

Dr. Akihiko Morita

Professor, Tokyo Institute of Technology / Visiting Researcher, Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women

1. Quest for a Research Technique that Is Reliable, Valid and Non-coercive

I have been engaged in activities aimed at the eradication of human trafficking[1]. Through this experience, I realized the importance of conveying victims' voices to policymakers. Subsequently, I thought about holding interviews with victims of human trafficking, primarily women from developing countries who are employed as sex workers in Japan. At the same time, I pondered how to interview victims fairly and equally. Namely, this would involve the application of a method that is non-coercive and non-exploitative from the victims' view points. At the same time, this method would maintain the reliability and validity of interviews.

The very act of interviewing human trafficking victims is influenced by the disparity of power between interviewer and victim. In this situation, the former is more powerful. Occasionally, the act of interviewing can be seen as "exploitation" of the victims. When a researcher interviews a victim, telling her that his purpose is to clarify the reality about human trafficking, can he use the information gained in such an interview for his academic paper? If that paper is written solely for his own academic achievement, and not as a form of support for the victims, is he "exploiting" them?

The most common answer to this question is "no." This is because many believe that scientific studies are necessary to gain objective knowledge about human trafficking. Many people believe that researchers should be objective, rather than sympathetic, since they should provide non-biased and accurate knowledge that is absolutely necessary for seeking solutions. The public expects that anti-trafficking policies should be determined based on rational, scientific studies by specialists, such as, scientists and therapists[2].

However, I cannot help but ask myself whether or not we may ignore victims' mental trauma and pain. Interviews and "objective" surveys often aggravate such a negative impact on the part of victims. Is there any survey method that ensures reliability and validity, while avoiding harm or "exploitation" of victims who are already suffering from mental trauma?

In the case of human trafficking, many "trafficked" women often oppose inspectors regarding official recognition of such women as "victims" of human trafficking. According to Japan Network Against Trafficking in Persons (JNATIP) and International Labor Organization (ILO) Tokyo Office surveys[3], there are only a few typical, or indisputable victims of human trafficking. As indicated by interviews carried out by the JNATIP, many "victims" believe that they came to their destination country of their own free will. Even after recognizing that they were deceived by traffickers, many often choose to stay in the destination country. This is because they believe they could never return home until they make sufficient money. Moreover, as long as they can send some money to their families, many victims tend to endure as much as they can. Accordingly, there are many "trafficked" women who are not officially recognized as "victims." Since official recognition as a victim impacts significantly on an individual woman's future life, the definition of victim status should seriously be considered by all related parties.

There are two different views or approaches to this gap between women's personal perceptions and a more objective judgment of their situation, i.e., whether or not they are truly "victims" of human trafficking. Advocates of the first approach suggest that even if women decided to go to destination countries to work as sex workers of their own free will, in actuality, they were forced to make that decision because of the economic disparity between developing and advanced countries. Accordingly, advocates of the first approach believe that the women should be regarded as victims of exploitation, even if they made their own decisions. On the other hand, advocates of the second approach argue that higher priority should be placed on women's own will and perceptions of their own situations.

If we take the first approach, it becomes easier to rescue trafficked women whose human rights are being badly violated, irrespective of their intentions. This approach is effective and valid when in actuality women were forced to decide to go to destination countries, without even knowing that they were forced to, and believe that they voluntarily decided to go there. The second approach, on the other hand, is essential for distinguishing human trafficking from illegal entry/departure to/from countries. However, in the case women originally agreed to go to destination countries but were then

exploited violently, these women have become victims of human trafficking after illegally entering their destination countries. Another problem with this approach is that we must determine whether or not these women were given sufficient information before making their own decisions. I found that many women were aware that they would have to work as sex workers. However, it was only after their arrival in Japan did they learn that they had incurred fictitious debts of millions of yen. In such cases, we cannot support the argument that the women are responsible for their present situations. However, this second approach demonstrates effectively that many women are subject to exploitation and violent acts, even when they do not fully meet the criteria for human trafficking victims.

Further discussions, however, may lead us to the recognition of the fact that these two approaches do not opposite, but complement each other. Whomever these women explain their experiences to, whether it is police, immigration officers or counselors, what they tell is "fiction" rather than fact. When they talk about their experiences, they tend to select, intentionally or unintentionally, what to tell and what not to. As indicated by Chizuko Ueno, vulnerable people who are questioned by inspectors tend to create stories that their listeners (inspectors) would like to hear[4]. Accordingly, however "objective" the police reports might appear to be, they are likely to be stories embellished by the storytellers to please the listeners.

In questioning victims of human trafficking, it is essential that inspectors ensure that victims feel completely free to describe whatever they had experienced. In this sense, finding a survey technique that allows victims to talk freely with self-confidence and peace of mind is therefore essential for objective inspection. Such a technique can support objective survey, which is primarily based on the second approach but at the same time complemented by the first approach.

1 As a staff member of UNICEF in Japan (1997 to 2004) as well as a steering committee member of the Japan Network Against Trafficking in Persons (JNATIP), I have been combating the problem of human trafficking.

2 S. McNamee and K. J. Gergen, *Therapy as Social Construction*, Sage Publications Ltd, 1992.

3 ILO Office Japan: Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation in Japan, 2004.

4 Chizuko Ueno, *Nationalism and Gender*, Trans Pacific Press, 2004.

2. Preparatory Discussion of a Research Technique employing Expressive Arts Therapy

My next question is what types of survey techniques allow victims to talk freely, with self-confidence and peace of mind, while concurrently maintaining the reliability and validity of the stories they tell. I am currently exploring one candidate for such survey methods; namely, a research technique using "expressive arts therapy."

Expressive arts therapy means not only the so-called arts therapy that uses visual arts (painting, sculpture, clay molding, collage, etc.), but also dance and movement therapy (expression through body movements), music therapy (expression through music, sound and voice), writing therapy (expression in forms of poetry, verse and prose), and drama therapy (expression through acting and performance). In short, expressive arts therapy is a comprehensive type of arts therapy, using a diverse media of arts. Expressive arts therapy was developed by Natalie Rogers, the daughter of Carl Rogers, who is well known for his Person-centered Approach. Natalie Rogers developed this therapy based on her belief that only in a psychologically safe environment where we are assured of not being analyzed or criticized by others, can we discover our inner self. And then we can express this inner self with full creativity and vitality, using non-verbal media (visual arts, movement and dance, music and sounds, voice, drama, writing, etc.).

According to Carl Rogers, there are three conditions that therapists should meet: (1) unconditional positive regard, (2) empathic understanding and (3) congruence. The expressive arts therapy has been developed by assimilating these concepts. I believe that vulnerable people, such as victims of human trafficking, are likely to tell their life stories more openly and freely if expressive arts therapy is provided by a therapist who satisfies the three conditions listed by Carl Rogers. In other words, as suggested by Chizuko Ueno, vulnerable people never tell their real experiences unless they believe that listeners share and respect their feelings[4].

Expressive arts therapy also shares features with a form of play therapy for children[5]. Use of various arts media enables victims to express their emotions and experiences that they cannot express in a single medium. Moreover, use of multiple media brings about synergy, enabling deeper contemplation of self and greater self-expression. In this sense, we can consider the theatrical play performed at the workshop, we held in the Philippines in December 2005, as a type of research using expressive arts therapy technique. The play was performed with the cooperation of the Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA) and Development Action for Women Network (DAWN)[6]. Based on the results of the play, we believe that theatrical and other artistic expressions using expressive arts therapy can help heal victims of human trafficking.

5 Play therapy is a psychotherapy for children, in which various media of arts are used including drawing; *hakoniwa* (sand play technique); playing games; singing songs; playing musical instruments; dancing, performing ceremonies and storytelling.

6 Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA), a private theatrical company established in the Philippines in 1967, has thus far performed at least 300 original plays in Tagalog. At the same time, PETA holds workshops on drama making children, students, teachers, women, farmers and NGOs. Development Action for Women Network (DAWN) was established in 1996 to support Filipino women working in Japan and Japanese Filipino Children (JFC) in every way.

3. Theoretical Analysis of Research Employing Expressive Arts Therapy

(1) Research employing Expressive Arts Therapy as a Qualitative Survey Method

Sociological surveys dealing with people as study targets are generally classified into quantitative and qualitative surveys. In quantitative surveys, a fixed pattern is employed for both questions and survey methods so that the same survey can be conducted repeatedly. Similar survey results can be obtained irrespective of researchers who conduct the survey. In short, the quantitative survey is designed to ensure objectivity. In contrast, a qualitative survey is not designed to gain the same results. As typically evidenced in life story interviews, even the same speaker may tell different stories at different interviews by the same interviewer, or they may tell new stories to different interviewers.

According to definitions by Atsushi Sakurai, the "reliability" of a survey refers to the rate of gaining similar results from multiple surveys conducted by different researchers. "Validity" refers to the rate of correct results gained from a survey, or in other words, the fulfillment level of survey goals and the researchers' expectations. In addition, Sakurai suggests that if we standardize conventional quantitative survey patterns so that we can use the same pattern repeatedly, such surveys will have higher reliability. If we have higher reliability, he assumes that this naturally leads to higher validity. On the other hand, Sakurai argues that such a standard for reliability is not applicable to qualitative surveys, such as, life story interviews. As an alternative standard, Sakurai proposes that researchers engaged in qualitative surveys should seek "transparency" of basic survey processes, ranging from data collection to analyses.

Among the qualitative survey methods, there are what we call the "realism approach" and "narrative approach." Sakurai interprets the former as an interpretative and objective approach; the latter as an interactive and constructive approach. Researchers supporting the former approach collect life stories of many people, assuming that the life story of each individual represents one aspect of objective reality. Through inductive inferences of accumulated data, advocates of this approach believe that they can develop a theoretical model. They may modify this model to fit actual cases that they learn through life story interviews. Using this method, these researchers believe that they can clarify social reality.

One research method representing the realism method is the Grounded Theory Approach (GTA), which is currently attracting keen attention. As a qualitative survey method, the GTA was developed during the 1960s by the American Sociological Association. According to Yasuhito Kinoshita, GTA is a qualitative survey method designed to induce an original theory from data analyses. Essential conditions for analyses comprise coding methods such as ① open coding and ② axial and selective coding, together with ③ constant comparative analyses, ④ theoretical sampling, and ⑤ theoretical saturation (which indicates time to terminate analyses). Of those, the constant comparative analyses are the most important. "Coding" refers to a process of compiling data systematically while categorizing them. "Theoretical saturation" refers to the moment when important concepts are no longer generated from constant comparative analyses. In addition, it means no further issues need to be confirmed by collecting additional data for theoretical sampling. Generally, GTA is believed to effectively explain and predict human behaviors and direct human interactions within limited boundaries. On the other hand, researchers using the narrative approach consider that life stories should be an outcome of the collaboration between interviewers and speakers. From these researchers' perspectives, life stories should not always be consistent. Instead, these researchers respond positively to the addition of new aspects to previously told stories. Researchers of the narrative approach are fully aware that in addition to the above life stories related by the speakers according to specific plots, there can be other stories created through metacommunication that reflect social relations between the speaker and the interviewer.

Returning to the discussion of my own research method employing expressive arts therapy for interviews with human trafficking victims, I believe that this approach is close to the narrative approach or what Sakurai called the interactive and constructive approach. Whereas questioning by police and immigration officers shares similar characteristics with the realism approach or the interpretative and objective approach, research using expressive arts therapy is designed to deepen understanding of the perception of human trafficking victims regarding their own experiences.

On the other hand, in the GTA data collection process, researchers also collect non-quantitative images and drawings. Accordingly, we can analyze expressive arts data by GTA and induce a theory from such data, at least in theory. Accordingly, I believe that we should also employ GTA to analyze data that we obtain through research using expressive arts therapy.

(2) Research employing Expressive Arts Therapy as a Non-linguistic Survey Method

Through the qualitative survey method, interviews are conducted using language. Moreover, reports on interviews convey precise information to readers, if such reports are written logically and precisely. In this sense, linguistic survey methods, such as, interviews ensure higher clarity and objectivity. On the other hand, victims' stories expressed through non-verbal media, such as painting or dramas, are less objective, since an audience can interpret them more subjectively.

In this chapter, I would like to discuss differences between data expressed in verbal and non-verbal media.

Charles Taylor, a contemporary Canadian philosopher, suggests that expressive linguistic theory represents the current view of languages, which underwent a linguistic turn during the first half of the 20th century. He argues that "language" refers to all means of expression, including prose, verse, music, painting and dances because there are no longer any logical grounds for distinguishing a conventional concept of "language" from other media of expressions[7]. Masakuni Kitazawa defines human beings as animals that think using symbols. He suggests that although people use linguistic symbols to express abstract ideas, the majority of such ideas evoke concrete images or emotions, whether or not people become aware of the facts. He criticizes the current tendency of evaluating only conscious thinking and its product, writing (*ecriture*). Writing, he believes reflects dualistic thought established in modern Western society.

In my view, however, it is not clear whether or not René Descartes, father of modern rationalism, referred only to logical and rational thinking when he stated, "*Cogito ergo sum*[8]." In a paper written by Sigmund Freud during his final years, he admitted that highly intellectual operations, such as deep contemplation and ethical judgment, are conducted preconsciously. Accordingly, we must not generalize that modern Western dualism is based on the opposition of reason and emotion; body and mind; and consciousness and unconsciousness.

In any case, I do believe that there are no theoretical grounds which consider verbal expressions superior to non-verbal forms of expressions. In this context, I would like to discuss features and advantages of non-verbal over verbal expressions. Kyoko Ono, for instance, proposes that through non-verbal expressions we can convey more information than through verbal expressions. She also suggests that literary works, such as, poetry and stories are different from straight and direct languages used in daily life. Specifically, she maintains, the former can convey rich spiritual images and symbols. Artistic works can impress both artists who created them and their viewers alike. This indicates that artistic expressions have inter-subjective and universal character. Related to these concepts, art therapists commonly recognize that symbols and images, which are called the language of arts, can express the world of the unconscious, which cannot be explained by verbal media. What is more, paintings that show a specific emotion, anger for instance, have a universal character, transcending the diversity of expressions by individual artists[9]. Furthermore, as Natalie Rogers emphasizes expressive arts therapy is a means to discover our inner selves.[10]

What is more, expressive arts therapy can be used either in group therapy or a face-to-face session with a therapist, or even by oneself, depending on the mental situation of the individual client.

(3) Conclusion

In conclusion, in comparison with interviews using language, research using expressive arts therapy enables researchers to approach victims without causing the latter deep trauma. This research technique also has the advantage of using various art media depending on individual situations. On the other hand, this research technique is not suitable for a survey designed to confirm objective facts. We must study about the technique employing expressive arts therapy to determine whether or not it enables data-based theorization, as in the case of the GTA.

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7 Charles Taylor, *Philosophical Arguments*, Harvard University Press, 1995.

8 Benjamin Libet, *Mind Time: The Temporal Factor in Consciousness*, Harvard University Press, 2004.

9 For example, the picture shown below was collectively drawn by children at the workshop held in December 2005 in Manila, the Philippines, for children of former entertainers working in Japan. In this picture, a pregnant woman is standing in front of a pachinko (Japanese pin-ball game) machine. Many bills are also depicted. According to the children who drew this picture, the bills show that the woman is provided with financial support, and that "someone" loves gambling. Another child in the group said that her mother used to go to a pachinko parlor whenever her Japanese father was away from home. Once her mother was beaten by her father when he found her playing pachinko. She promised her father to stop playing pachinko after she was nearly arrested by the police at the pachinko parlor. The children explained that the heart marks in the picture represent the love between the parents.

10 A method in which different arts media are used consecutively is called "creative connection."

Natalie Rogers, *The Creative Connection: Expressive Arts as Healing*, Science and Behavior Books, 1997.

Report

Theme : Women and Disaster

Access to other foreign correspondents' reports at http://www.kfaw.or.jp/english/correspondents.html

A Women's Double Hardships

Mr. Hisashi Ogawa (Thailand)

The Indian Ocean tsunami of December 26, 2004 caused tremendous damage to Thailand and other areas. In spite of recovery efforts, there are still many victims who have yet to recover from this disaster. Ms. Y, whom I met in a stricken area of Trang Province in the southern part of Thailand, is one such person.

When the tsunami hit, Ms. Y's husband was working by himself with his fishing nets on his boat, which was moored on the beach. While many villagers fled, for some reason, Ms. Y's husband continued working rather than running for safety. Consequently, he was caught in the tsunami and died. Shortly after, she learned, from those who got away, that her husband had died.

The Thai government gave Ms. Y THB80,000 (1US$ = approx. 37THB) in consolation for loosing a husband who had provided for her. However, the money had to be divided equally among Mr. Y's four children, whom he had with a previous wife who had passed away. Ms. Y spent part of the THB16,000 she received to build a new house. The rest she invested in a trade to replace her husband's fishing. She started making and selling confectionaries, which was one of the few things a woman without a husband could do in a village that offered few jobs other than fishing. Consequently, a few months after the loss of her husband, Ms. Y finally started working.

However, business did not go well. Competition in the confectionary business was high between those who had been doing it a long time and newcomers like Ms. Y, who started up after the tsunami, trying to establish a new source of income. Moreover, village demand had its limits. As a result, some people had to unavoidably fold up shop. At first, everyone sympathized with Ms. Y and her sales grew smoothly. However, Ms. Y, with her in experience in business, was one of those who later had to withdraw. She used to energetically make the rounds selling her wares, but as sales dipped, she left the house less and less until she completely avoided her neighbors. Having no relatives in the village or any children of her own, Ms. Y became a recluse. Her situation is unchanged today. She lives basically without an income, making ends meet with what little help she gets from relatives.

Ms. Y has yet to heal from the "double hardships" caused by the tsunami. People like Ms. Y lack sufficient financial aid and mental care from the government or outside groups. How harsh a state Ms. Y lives in without her husband in a stricken area where there is no work outside of fishing has been ignored. Recovery support problems, which have become evident one-and-a-half years after the tsunami, urgently need to be resolved.

Bangladeshi Women Key to Post-Disaster Rehabilitation

Ms. Munima Sultana (Bangladesh)

In this disaster prone country, women, along with children and elderly people, become victims first due to social, economical and cultural status. Research shows that many socio-religious norms and values also work as a death trap for them. For example, women's long hair or five metre long sarees (traditional dress) put them in the difficult position of running or swiming whenever they face calamities like a cyclone, storm etc. It is also not easy for women to climb any tree to prevent them from washing away or running several kilometers against strong winds to reach the nearest shelter homes due to social and physical weaknesses. The *purdah* practice forbids them to leave their homes for shelters without being accompanied by their husbands. The latter, however, are often working during any calamity. It is a well-documented fact that men in times of a disaster have easily abandoned their wives and families to save their own lives first. Women, on the other hand, always try to save their children first. It is also difficult for men to abandon their homes, livestock and the very few possessions they have during disasters.

Bangladesh has earned recognition for its disaster preparedness and management which has lessened the number of victims greatly. At the same time, it still faces the challenge of minimizing the number of women and children victims. Bangladesh, an ideal breeding ground for tropical cyclones and other natural disasters, is struggling with typical development problems, such as, illiteracy, high population growth and poor health. In spite of many frustrating views, Rokeya Kabir, Executive Director of "Nari Progati Sangha", a women development organisation, points out that women are not just helpless victims. She maintains they play a central role in saving lives and providing relief through their strength and realism. For example during a 1991 cyclone, they cared for the children, the elderly and surviving livestock. They fetched drinking water from miles away; took the initiative to plant trees during the rehabilitation programme; and became involved in community development. Rokeya further emphasized, "When they are allowed to do so, they play a major role in the planning and implementation of disaster relief and rehabilitation. Their contribution to the household income often keeps the whole family alive."

▲Threatened by the erosion of the Padma river, a group of women were moved with their belongings under the supervision of their male family members from their village to another area.

Women and Disaster Management in Nepal

Ms. Bhawana Upadhyay (Nepal)

Gender-based inequalities in rural Nepal interact with social class, race and ethnicity, and age, which put some women and girls at high risk. In turn, they become more vulnerable before, during and after disasters. There are many casualties among women in disasters, in particular, as women do not normally receive timely warnings or other information about hazards and risks. Women's relative longevity, for example, compared to men's and women's reproductive roles can create mobility and health constraints. In addition, women, especially, the eldery, the disabled, the pregnant, and those with small children, are most often at risk. These groups are frequently left behind or the last to leave in cases of emergency due to a lack of knowledge, mobility and resources. As women do not seek or receive timely care for physical and mental trauma experienced by disasters, gender-biased attitudes can also complicate and extend women's recovery process.

Thus, there is a need to empower women at all stages of disaster management programs as an integral strategy of reducing community vulnerability to natural disasters. Women, along with men, already play a crucially important role in emergencies. For example, during the time of a flood, women take on the role of preparing and storing food items, which can be the source of energy and nutrition for the family for days. Besides, they ensure that their belongings are stored in such a way that they can be easily removed when flood water rises. While male members of the family take the livestock to protective places and arrange for their fodder, women make preparations to take care of the children, the valuables, and the cooking utensils. It is the women who make provision for food to support the family during the floods, and preserve seeds for the next cultivation season. However, this is only one part of the overall picture.

If mitigation, relief, and reconstruction policies do not benefit women and men equally, economic and social rights are violated in disaster processes. When relief efforts do not meet the specific physical and mental health needs of women, the right to adequate health care is violated particularly in the event of trauma. Security rights are violated when women and girls become victims of sexual and other forms of violence while in relief camps or temporary housings. Civil and political rights are denied if women cannot act autonomously and participate fully at all decision-making levels in matters regarding mitigation and recovery.

Case studies from rural Nepal indicate that women are very often highly affected by hazardous conditions and resulting disasters, for example, due to increased family and community work; loss of working space and tools; intensified care-giving responsibilities; and heightened risk of domestic and sexual violence. As caregiving roles expand, and their access to resources for recovery is constrained, women's work expands greatly during disasters.

In conclusion, integrating gender concerns into risk reduction and management is very important for the respect and sustainability of human rights, especially those of women, throughout the disaster process and beyond.

THE FORUM WINDOW

Self Awareness about Body and Health

The Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women (KFAW) co-organized with the Japan America Women Political Scientists Symposium (JAWS) a panel discussion entitled "An International Comparison of Reproductive Rights Policy -South Korea, Eastern Europe, the United States and Japan" at Kitakyushu Municipal Gender Equality Center on July 13, 2006. Four researchers invited from Japan and abroad held lively discussions, which provided the audience with an opportunity to reflect on reproductive rights. The audience also learned about differences in related laws, social systems and customs among the three countries and one region.

In Japan, contraceptive pills and devices are easily available. Moreover, abortion is relatively accessible. Through organizing the panel discussion, however, I began to question whether or not Japanese people truly have sufficient knowledge about contraception and abortion. For instance, I was translating presentations of the panelists to compile proceedings. I asked people around me what the Japanese term was for the "morning-after pill." I found that none of them knew what the pill itself was. During the panel discussion, Professor Misako Iwamoto of Mie University, who served as the coordinator, pointed out that few Japanese mothers talk with their daughters about sex. Although professor Iwamoto told her own daughter about contraception methods and the way to use tampons, this is more of an exception than the norm among Japanese mothers.

"Reproductive health/rights" is not a term familiar to Japanese people. Although it is most frequently used in arguments for or against abortion, we need to understand the concept of reproductive health/rights from broader perspectives. For both men and women, in particular women, therefore, reproductive health/rights are essential to controlling their own health. In order to make our own decisions, it is important for us to obtain accurate knowledge about reproductive health/rights.

Ms. Masako Ota
Senior Researcher
Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women

■INFORMATION

Q&A Corner

Question

Japan's current fertility rate (1.25) represents a new low. It is thought that the tendency to marry later; the high cost of raising a child; the difficulty of juggling career and family are some of reasons. How about your country? What do children mean for your society or family?

Ms. Mayumi Nishimura, Fukuoka, Japan

Answer

Ms. Bhawana Upadhyay, Nepal

Nepali society, guided by patriarchal norms, places a high value on boy children than on girls. In the rural areas of Nepal, giving birth to more babies is seen as a way to provide surplus labor for household and outside jobs. The belief that children are also considered to be gifts of God also contributes to a higher birth rate in poor rural areas. Consequently, Nepal has a high national birth rate (4.1) and the highest maternal mortality rate (539 deaths per 100,000 live births) worldwide.

Mr. Fairoz Ahmad, Singapore

Like Japan, Singapore is experiencing a low birth rate. In 2005, our total fertility rate was around 1.24. The reasons for such low rates are almost similar to Japan. However, this is a problem faced by almost every developed country, not just only Singapore or Japan alone. The Singapore government has recently introduced pro-family measures like increasing maternity leave for expecting working mothers. It is hoped that such positive measures may help increase Singapore's fertility rate in the future.

COVER PROFILE

Ms. Shiho Yamamoto
Firefighter

Ms. Shiho Yamamoto, one of the very few female firefighters in Japan, works for the Fire Prevention Section, Kitakyushu Fire and Disaster Management Department. She teaches citizens and firms how to use fire hydrants and extinguishers. In addition, she also instructs them on evacuate procedures in case of emergencies.

When Ms. Yamamoto was a child, her mother was taken to the hospital by an emergency and rescue team. This incident helped to influence her decision to become a firefighter. As firefighters always work in teams, Ms. Yamamoto does not forget team play, remembering the spirit of mutual aid.
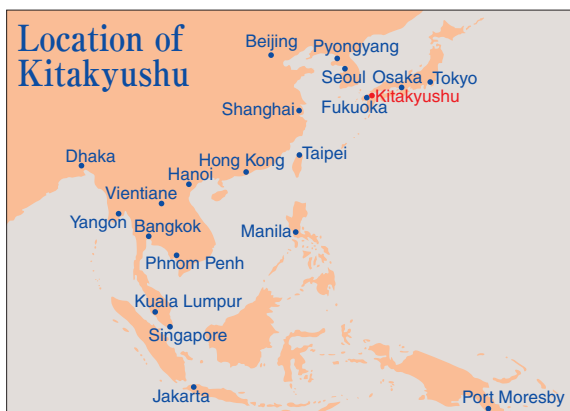
Asian Lifestyles
～Photos from KFAW Readers～

Thanh Xuan Peace Village of Hanoi (Vietnam)

KFAW members conducted interviews in Vietnam in order to produce an educational video for international mutual understanding. Thanh Xuan Peace Village of Hanoi, a non governmental organization supports challenged children who are victims of dioxin used during the Vietnamese War. This NGO gives medical treatment, rehabilitation and education suitable for each child's intellectual ability. It also carries out simple job training such as sewing, embroidery and computer for victims in their daily lives. Hanoi Peace Village also has an accommodation. We saw about twenty children who live there. They are lively and cheerful in spite of their handicaps. We enjoyed eating Japanese snacks and doing origami together.

Location of Kitakyushu

Beijing, Pyongyang, Seoul, Osaka, Tokyo, Kitakyushu, Shanghai, Fukuoka, Dhaka, Hong Kong, Taipei, Hanoi, Vientiane, Yangon, Bangkok, Manila, Phnom Penh, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Jakarta, Port Moresby