

# What Ethics Framework for Global Governance of Biomedical Research ?

- From Japanese and Asian Perspective -

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# Introduction – Setting the Scene

“Global Governance”

1) **What kind of the Globe?**

Diversity of culture, social system, spirituality,  
power = diversity of values

2) **What kind of values ?**

Community of values, is it possible?  
human life, human dignity,  
fundamental rights and freedoms

3) **How to build up a global governance?**

Find universality in diversity

# Respect for Cultural Diversity

## **UNESCO Declaration on Bioethics, 2005**

Art.12 : Respect for cultural diversity and pluralism

“The importance of cultural diversity and pluralism should be given due regard. However, such consideration are not to be invoked to infringe upon human dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms, nor upon the principles set out in this Declaration, nor to limit their scope.”

This article clearly shows the dialectics of the universality of and cultural diversity.

# Diversity in Asia

- Social values
  - Family, Community, Ethnic group
- Religions and spiritualities
  - Big religions (Buddhism, Christianity, Hindu, Islam, Confucianism)
  - Local traditional spiritualities
- Cultures and civilizations
  - Three among four great civilizations are born in Asia.
- Traditional values
  - Various traditions live in our daily life.
  - There are differences of values on human life and death

These differences give difference of relevant conceptions of bioethics.

# Common Features in Asia relating to Bioethics

Regulatory framework of bioethics :

Law < guidelines

Legislations or regulations on bioethics have been made after 2000.

Responsible authority varies. Min. Health; Science; Biotechnology,  
Nat. Inst. Health, Nat. Medical Council or alike, etc.

Public awareness of bioethics

Generally low

Science and technology are deemed as “GOOD” *per se*.

The value of the “Society” or “Community” prioritized. (Asian HR)

Influence of Western bioethics

Dominant

Many bioethics experts are trained in Western countries.

Basic international instruments of HR and BE with Western concepts and terminologies

# Japanese Examples seemingly based on Cultural Particularities

## 1. Individual autonomy v. family in organ donation

Requirement of double consent

## 2. Human dignity in reproductive human cloning

Paraphrased into 3 elements (instrumentalisation of human being, denial of identity, social disorder on human birth)

## 3. Status of embryo as germ of human life

Not “thing”, nor human being

## 4. Human being and Nature in enhancement

Human being is a part of Nature.

Question “How far may we depart from the nature ?”

The ideology of “as it stands.

What framework ?

In quest for universality in this diversity

Key Concepts to reach the goal

*International Dialogue*

*Harmonisation*

*Uniform Standardisation*



# International Dialogue

## Understanding the difference

Japanese values on human life and human body may be different from Korean ones, Chinese ones, or other Asian ones, so may be different from Western or African ones.

## Avoid to lead to one particular value system

Coexistence of different values, cultures, ethics, etc.

Division of labour : International Dialogue – Global Summit

## Search of the community of values

We use the same word. = Clue for community of values

Human dignity, human being, human body, life, family, etc.

Same terminology, different interpretation, but same core value

=Community of values in diversity

There should be **different elements and evaluation** in substantial conception and their application in each of cultural context.

# Harmonisation

Each state has **its own system of ethical evaluation and regulation**

Difficulty of international multi-center or joint research

**Dialogue is not sufficient**

Search for common core elements in each country

What are crucial, what are secondary?

**Japanese example for the import of ES cells**

**Regulatory requirements for national derivation**

**frozen, surplus embryo + double ICs(30days)**

**Import requirement**

**surplus embryo + IC (only once)**

# Uniform Standardisation(1)

## Step to standardisation

### Importance of soft law

International convention is not possible for the moment in this diversity of ethical values

**1<sup>st</sup> step**=Declaration of core general principles

**2<sup>nd</sup> step**=Declaration of principles of particular fields

**Parallel step**=Harmonisation of national practical rules and procedures

**3<sup>rd</sup> step**=Framework convention of basic principles

**4<sup>th</sup> step**=Uniformisation of national rules and standards

# Uniform Standardisation (2)

## Actors of standardisation

### States

through competition and harmonisation  
through cooperation (like F-G-UK )

### International Organisations

UNESCO, WHO, CoE, others

### Scientific community

Several frameworks already existing  
Ex. International Stem Cell Forum  
P3G (Public Population Project in Genomics)

### Others

#### Ethics Community?

International Bioethics Association (IBA)?

NGOs : Patients organisations others

# Conclusion

The process of realising global ethical governance is a complex task

- No royal road, no easy way
- Long and spiral steps
- Requires will and efforts

But the biomedical development cannot wait for the establishment of the global governance

Ignorance of and unpreparedness to new conflict and infringement of values will give harm to the human being and to each of human person

Multiple and multidimensional efforts are required to accelerate the task of establishment of global ethical governance

*Gracias !*

ありがとうございました。