

In Search of the Blue Bird – What Is It that You Have Been Looking For?

Part 5: For what use? And how about the children's future?

“This is revenge! Revenge! Revenge! This is revenge against the evil acts the humans have inflicted upon us since old times!”

“This program is being closed due to improper treatment,” “ A Type XX error has occurred....” Apart from these two examples, I suppose you also have the experience of being at a loss because of various errors for unknown reasons while using a computer, such as sudden freezes, incompatibility of application software, etc. Computers were supposed to be a tool for human beings, a means to work more efficiently, but before being aware of it humans are having to take care of the machines, which seem to control / dominate their daily life.... --- **Efficiency for what?**

Serial murders, killings of parents, bus jackings etc., all committed by teenagers.... Recent years have seen such incessant crimes by mad 17-year-olds. What is really frightening is the fact that such incidents are not felt to be unusual these days. What is happening among the underage? Does the cause of criminal acts by teenagers lie with their parents? TV games? Or in the highly spoilt condition of our society? What have we got from the education system, which was called the ‘exam hell’ What sort of ‘good generation’ has such education been longing to see? Inside the schools those who get higher marks in exams are seen as good students, while little importance is given to linking school life with outside society, and the teaching aims at an increase in material gain in the future. At home where the father seldom comes back, children grow up without much conversation. In such circumstances, how can children learn how to judge good from bad? --- **Education for what?**

According to the book *The Elephant's Time and the Rat's Time* (Zou no jikan, nezumi no jikan), as a result of examining their life expectancy and the pulse rate, it was found that the number of pulses beating in a lifetime is almost the same among most mammals. That is, time seems to run faster for those animals with greater energy consumption. Today the average Japanese is said to be consuming some 40 times more energy than necessary just for biological living as a human being. In other words, could this mean that we are promoting aging by consuming energy excessively? What can be seen behind the excessive energy use by the Japanese, while somewhere on the same earth there are people who cannot get even the minimal amount of food... ---**Energy Over-consumption for what?**

After the death of a civilization all that remains is a desert. Is it an inevitable fate, or an avoidable consequence? What happened in ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, on the banks of the Indus and the Yellow River, where old civilizations once flourished, and then faded out? With limited resources and unlimited human greed, will globalization (which aims to make the market economy system prevail on the global scale by completely liberalizing the movements of people, goods and information), really work for better? Wouldn't it just lead to an increasing gap between the powerful and the weak (the rich and the poor) and more environmental destruction...? ---**Globalization for what?**

The ‘sense of stagnation’ which seems to envelope the whole of Japan today, is not unrelated to the collapse of the ‘growth myth’ of an unlimited economic boom, or to a loss of goals in society. Was our goal always materialistic richness? No, mere material abundance cannot make people happy – it has been a while since such a statement started to be heard. But, what do we see in reality? Where is the happiness which is supposed to exist away from the materialistic satisfaction? At a recent meeting on climate change, the US, which saw possible negative impacts on its economy, decided not to ratify the Kyoto Protocol which calls for cooperation in reduction of greenhouse gases. In Japan, which suffers from the 10-year-long economic recession the ‘structural reform with pain’ has been repeatedly called for. However, isn't it still the same society with material abundance as its vested right, which is anticipated to thrive after such pains? If humans continue with their endless greed for material gains and with the development beyond nature's carrying capacity, the final consequence can be expected more or less. Probably it is high time we reconsidered more seriously the education system for the future generations as well as the desirable social system to be built up.

