

The History of Asbestos Industry and Asbestos Disaster

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The purpose of this doctoral thesis is to clarify institutional factor and social structure that cause asbestos disaster. This thesis inquires into the relationship between modernization and asbestos industry, the structure of industry that caused asbestos utilization, the realities and influences of asbestos disaster, the concentration of asbestos companies causing disaster in the region of Osaka Sennan, the international widespread of asbestos industry between Korea and Japan, and the policy action about asbestos use and injury prevention. The introductory chapter examines the achievement in social scientific study of environmental disruption in Japan and Kapp's social cost approach for theoretical analysis about asbestos disasters. It grasps that the complex characteristic of asbestos disasters with occupational disease, industrial pollution, pollution through commodities, stock pollution, and others, and classifies asbestos disasters into social costs.

The first chapter describes the history of asbestos industry in Japan in the high economic growth with modernization. The amount of asbestos consumption in Japan was enormous in the 1950s - 1990s. Asbestos industry grew active in this time and a huge amount of asbestos has been stocked in lot of goods.

The second chapter analyses the relationship between mass asbestos consumption and the industry that demanded and used asbestos. Main asbestos users were construction industry and heavy and chemical industry, specifically, shipbuilding and automotive industry. The activity of these industries directly influenced production level of asbestos industry.

The third chapter considers the occurrence of the injury by asbestos as work-related accident or environmental pollution. A large number of asbestos victims are concentrated in workers exposed to asbestos and citizens near asbestos factories.

The fourth chapter describes the asbestos industrial agglomeration of Osaka, especially the region of Osaka Sennan. The case of Sennan is typical example of the social costs accumulation from asbestos use. The asbestos factories in this region had most of domestic market share in asbestos textile and not a small number of workers they were minority group, namely, the Korean with permanent residence in Japan. The manufacturing process of asbestos textile was one of the most dangerous working conditions in terms of asbestos dust pollution.

The fifth chapter discusses the pollution export problem by asbestos companies between Korea and Japan. The Korean asbestos industry has been developed by Japanese asbestos companies. There are primary two reasons. Firstly, the Korean government attracted foreign businesses by policy measure. Secondly, the asbestos dust control was reinforced in Japan in the 1960s-1970s. The Je-Il Asbestos created by Japanese and Korean joint venture in Pusan caused a lot of asbestos victims in workers and citizens around factory.

The sixth chapter examines the role of government and municipality in policy measures for asbestos disaster. The governmental policy of asbestos has not contributed so much to enforce the asbestos dust control and use prohibition. The current asbestos-related policies for prevention and compensation are still sufficient.

The final chapter reviews the discussion of responsibility in asbestos disaster for next phase from this thesis's contents. The public compensation system for asbestos victims in Japan is an imperfect because it is not grounded on the cause-and-effect relationship in asbestos injury. This discussion remains as a research topic in the future.