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Global Collaborative Learning and Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Social and Ethical Challenges

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As Chief of the Study Abroad Support Section at the International Affairs Office / International Exchange Center, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your participation in this international seminar, “Exploring Global Collaborative Learning,” organized by the International Affairs Office of the School of Letters / Graduate School of Humanities at The University of Osaka. This seminar seeks to examine the concept of global collaborative learning as a transformative framework for education, research, and academic exchange across cultures and national borders, through the integration of perspectives from a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. By approaching this theme from an interdisciplinary standpoint, we aim to deepen our understanding of its complexities and challenges and to contribute to the development of new scholarly approaches. We are committed to providing young researchers with opportunities to present their work to international colleagues and to receive feedback from diverse academic perspectives. We believe that such engagement supports the refinement of their research and the further development of their scholarly contributions.

From my own research perspective, I consider it increasingly important to foster opportunities for collective learning and to address issues that extend beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries. My research focuses on questions arising at the intersection of science, technology, and society, with particular attention to the social and ethical challenges associated with the development and diffusion of reproductive medicine, as well as the regulatory frameworks designed to address these challenges.

Within this field, the right to know one’s origins has emerged as a significant and increasingly prominent issue. Advances in reproductive technology now enable individuals to have children through sperm or egg donation, as well as through surrogacy. The right to know one’s origins encompasses both disclosure of the circumstances of one’s conception through assisted reproductive technologies involving third parties and access to relevant information about donors.

Individuals born through assisted reproductive technologies enter the world without having had any opportunity to receive information about, or to consent to, the procedures that led to their birth, including whether gamete donation was involved, the identity of donors, or the conditions of anonymity. While this is a fundamental aspect of the human condition, assisted reproductive technologies introduce a distinctive layer of complexity by creating circumstances in which genetic, gestational, and social parenthood may not coincide. In such cases, the provider of genetic material, the individual who gives birth, and the person who assumes the role of parent may be different, resulting in highly complex family structures. Parents may exercise choice; however, children themselves do not.

Perspectives among individuals born through assisted reproductive technologies vary. In recent years, however, critical perspectives have become increasingly visible, particularly among those conceived through anonymous sperm donation¹. For many years, sperm donation operated under strict conditions of anonymity, and individuals were often not informed about the circumstances of their conception. Some became aware of these circumstances only incidentally, or in the context of significant life events, such as parental separation. Such experiences have given rise to critiques of regulatory systems that are perceived as concealing aspects of biological heritage and as having been designed without sufficient consideration of the perspectives of those born through donation.

In response to these developments, and in parallel with the rapid advancement of genetic testing technologies, legal frameworks recognizing the right to know one's origins are emerging in a growing number of jurisdictions. To design systems that effectively serve the interests of individuals born through assisted reproduction, an interdisciplinary and cross-border perspective is essential.

I believe that it is increasingly important to establish and sustain spaces in which such challenges can be identified, examined, and addressed, and in which knowledge and insight from diverse academic and cultural perspectives can be brought together. It is my privilege to contribute to the creation of such a space with all of you.

¹ Kermalvezen, Arthur avec de Dinechin, Blandine, 2008, *Né de spermatozoïde inconnu...*, Presses de la Renaissance ; Kermalvezen, Audrey, 2014 *Mes origines : une affaire d'État*, Max Milo Éditions ; 非配偶者間人工授精で生まれた人の自助グループ・長沖聡子編著、2014『AIDで生まれるということ 精子提供で生まれた子どもたちの声』萬書房; Brès, Vincent (dir.), 2019, *Je suis l'une d'entre elles La première génération de personnes conçues par PMA avec don témoigne*, L'harmattan ; ディングル、サラ（渡邊真理訳）、2022『ドナーで生まれた子どもたち 「精子・卵子・受精卵」 売買の汚れた真実』日経ナショナルジオグラフィック