When Oases dry up

-Messages from arid-semiarid regions in Central Eurasia

Jumpei Kubota
(Research Institute for Humanity and Nature)
Map of irrigation canals in the 17th Century
Sacred water; “Spring of spirits”
Long-term Change in river discharge

Year


Annual Discharge (x10^8 m^3)

0 5 10 15 20 25

YLX(input)

In-Out (index of water consumption)

The 4th World Water Forum: Water and Cultural Diversity
The 4th World Water Forum: Water and Cultural Diversity
Sensitivities of nomad peoples for water living in the lower desert reaches

- Place-names
  - water-related place-names: over 30%

- Orientation beliefs
  - strong wind
  - river position
  - relocation from west
Causes of desertification
1. Overuse of water for Agriculture
2. Overgrazing
3. Deforestation

“Environmental migration policy”

Forced relocation of peoples for preserving areas/ecosystems
Messages from Oases regions;

- Who possesses water?

- Loss of concern by agriculture peoples for sacred water

- Countermeasures or policies cause loss of cultural diversities under an umbrella of preserving area/ecosystems

“Cultural values invested in water cannot be converted into money.”

“Culture is not a short-lived flower to the real economics world, but the root of life deeply embeded in people’s mind.”
The 4th World Water Forum: Water and Cultural Diversity

National Institutes for the Humanities

National Museum of Ethnology
National Museum of Japanese History
National Museum of Japanese Literature
International Institute for Japanese Studies
Research Institute for Humanity and Nature
Research Project
Water and People
The 4th World Water Forum: Water and Cultural Diversity

Research Project

Water and People

- Water and Human Body
- Water and Ritual
- Water and Society
- Water and Global Environment

- Water and Animal
- Water and Plants
- Water and Landscape
- Water and Subsistence