

## 20th Asia Pacific Cancer Conference, 12 Nov. 09 Cancer and Culture

Tadao Kakizoe

*National Cancer Center / Japan Cancer Society, Japan*



Tadao Kakizoe

Dr. Akaza, President of the 20<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Cancer Conference, requested me a very difficult task to give a plenary lecture on “Cancer and Culture”.

Cancer is a disease often fatal which causes misunderstanding, occasionally even discrimination among patients and society. Culture is diverse, results of human mental activity and strongly relates with societies’ history and tradition. I would focus my attention to Japanese culture and cancer, composing of three parts; 1) How healthy people and cancer patients look cancer? 2) How society looks cancer patients in terms of discrimination, sympathy and stories of hero regarding special cancer survivors, 3) How researchers look cancer?

I would introduce a couple of examples for each item, suitable for considering the relation between cancer and culture.

Finally, I would mention about the future, ideal relation between cancer and culture or society. Cancer patients and survivors are often prone to become socially weak. Today, almost nobody is immune to cancer. I strongly hope that society will deepen its understanding of cancer and strengthen assistance to cancer patients. I want society to stop regarding cancer as something extraordinary. I believe that whether cancer patients or survivors can continue living quality lives is a key gauze of society’s maturity. In this respect, chivalry or “Bushido” written by Dr. Inazo Nitobe in 1899 is the soul of our culture when we fight against cancer.