

## Summary Report of the 11th Inter-College Symposium on Changing World <sup>1)</sup>

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Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for a kind introduction of me. My name is Kiyokatsu Nishiguchi. I am Professor Emeritus at Ritsumeikan University. I would like to present a summary report of this international symposium. However, in addition to Professor Nakatani's keynote speech and Professor Yabunaka's special speech in the extra session, we have had nine papers altogether in these two days. So, it is very difficult to give a report that summarizes everything due to the diverse themes, time restrictions, and above all, my limited abilities.

Therefore, I would like to prefer to focus on the following two findings of this symposium that can be considered most important.

The first one relates to the paper presented by Professor Kwang-Yeong Shin at Chung-ang University, South Korea, "Dynamics of Income and Wealth Inequality in the Post-crisis Period in South Korea" <sup>2)</sup>. It was Lenin who said that "The road to hell is paved with good intentions" <sup>3)</sup>. And, it was John Toye, Director of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex in the UK, who made a pun, "The way to economic hell is paved with good assumptions" <sup>4)</sup>. The reason why John Toye, a left-wing Keynesian economist, was sarcastic about "good assumptions" was the rise of neo-classical economics in the field of development economics as a counterrevolution to Keynesian

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theory, and it was needless to say that the ideology that supported it was neo-liberalism. The main reason why he said such a thing was that he could not overlook the fact that many people were pushed into economic hell when neo-classical economic theory was actually put into practice.

East Asia has still not broken the curse of these neo-classical economics. I believe that there are three subjects that East Asian researchers specializing in economic, sociology and related disciplines should be working on : 1) debunking the fabrication of “good economic assumptions” (theoretical research), 2) explaining the reality created by neo-classical economics and social policy (empirical research), and 3) formulating and presenting prescriptions for escaping from “economic hell” (policy research).

With respect to the second point (empirical research) above-mentioned, Professor Kwang-Yeong Shin presented an excellent paper that explained the current situation of poverty and divide in South Korea after the global economic crisis, using basic data published by the Korean government. He showed us the fact that wealth inequality is far more serious than income inequality as well as the fact that wealth inequality is making income inequality more serious in South Korea. I think these are very important empirical findings.

It is common knowledge even in Japan that the young peoples of South Korea call their own country as “Hell Korea”<sup>5)</sup>. Because of rampant low-paid temporary works with no rights and the environment in which they cannot afford housing or get married, it is easy to imagine the context that led the young peoples of South Korea to say that. This can also be said about young peoples in Japan. I believe that the findings of Professor Shin will be pathbreaking for comparative studies between South Korea and Japan.

The second one is related to the paper presented by Professor Yabunaka,

“Japan’s Path in Changing East-Asia Theatre”<sup>6)</sup>. I digress into a personal aside when I listened to his special speech. I recalled a speech of a senior official of Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as same as Professor Yabunaka. Some decades ago when I was a student at graduate school, I watched his speech on a television program..

The senior officer was Mr. Koichirou Asakai, a most distinguished Japanese diplomat. In that speech, he stipulated and explained that the international status of Japan was clearly “quasi-independence”. I myself did not doubted then that Japan regained its independence from the post-war occupation by the Allies (in practice, the US) through the Peace Treaty of San Francisco in 1951. After that, Japan evolved into the world 2<sup>nd</sup> largest economy due to the high economic growth. Mr. Asakai asserted his view that Japan was not yet a completely independent country but a dependent one. I was so shocked by his speech. However, if we take a good look at the path of Japan in the years that followed, I think that his view hit the mark, and we have to say that it comes even more truer today.

One clear example is the issue of US military bases in Okinawa. We had a tragic incident on 4 September, 1995 that three US servicemen attacked and raped a young girl, still at elementary school. However, the Japanese side came up against the wall of the US-Japan Status of Forces Agreement, and it was not only difficult to arrest them but also to take them into custody for interview. This incident triggered a great rage among people of Okinawa, and caused a sharp rise of opposition to the bases. On 21 October, 1995 a people action assembly for complaints was held in Ginowan city with 85,000 participants, and decision to confirm the island-wide demands to review the US-Japan Status of Forces Agreement and to decrease US bases was adopted. In the midst of the opposition rally, on 28 September,1995, Masahide Ota, Governor

of Okinawa Prefecture at that time, declared his refusal to sign by proxy on the continued use US military bases at the Prefectural assembly. In due course, at the summit talk on 12 April, 1996 between Prime Minister then, Ryutarou Hashimoto and the US Ambassador, Walter Mondale, it was agreed that Futenma Base would be restituted to Japan. However, over 20 years have passed since then, Futenma Base has still not been restituted <sup>7)</sup>.

We have to point out the fact that Japan is requested to shoulder entirely the huge cost amounting to approximately 2.5 trillion Japanese Yen to build a new base in Henomo in exchange for the restitution of Futenma which will be transferred free of charge to the US military in Okinawa. This is the height of subordination to the US, and Abe administration is continuing to enforce it despite the strong opposition of peoples of Okinawa and many Japanese <sup>8)</sup>.

Based on the current situation of Japan being subservient to the US, Professor Yabunaka contended, “Japan must not be a country that follows the US”, and “Japan will become self-reliant on the foundation of peace”, in his speech yesterday. I think that his view is connected at a fundamental level with that of Mr. Asakai that I mentioned earlier.

The reasons why I think so are following;

- 1) What Professor Yabunaka means by the remarks, “Japan will become self-reliant on the foundation of peace is that Japan must keep self-reliance founded on the peace constitution.
- 2) Japan would lose the trust of the countries and regions in East Asia if the peace constitution would be revised.
- 3) We must remind ourselves of the acts of barbarity and damage perpetrated by the Japanese army during the World War II . If not, Japan would become the “orphan” in East Asia.

Professor Yabunaka also emphasizes the importance of RCEP (Regional

Comprehensive Economic Partnership). RECEPT is composed of 16 countries (the ASEAN 10+6: Japan, China, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, and India). I would like to recall you that the construction of an EAST Asian Community was proposed as the main theme by Japan at the 1<sup>st</sup> East Asian Summit in 2005. In other words, RCEPT is the modern version of an East Asian Community, and the proposal from Japan demanded collaboration and cooperation between the various countries in East Asia. I believe that this direction is precisely the new direction that Japan is aiming for<sup>9)</sup>. Current relations between Japan and South Korea and Japan and China are very strained at the state level, but I believe in the contributions to improvements in these relations through the collaboration and cooperation at the university and researcher levels such as this Inter-College Symposium on Changing World and so on. This is the notion that I would like to conclude with. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

## Notes

- 1) This summary report was presented on the second day (24th March) of the 11th Inter-College Symposium on Changing the World (23 – 24 March, 2019 at Ritsumeikan University) and I have corrected and revised it.
- 2) Kwang-Yeong Shin (Department of Sociology, Chung-Ang University, Republic of Korea), “Dynamics of Income and Wealth Inequality in the Post-crisis Period in South Korea”, paper presented at the 11<sup>th</sup> Inter-College Symposium on Changing the World, Ritsumeikan University, Japan, March 23-24, 2019.
- 3) B.И. Lenin, *What is to be done? Burning Questions of our Movement*, in 1902, Collected Writings of B.И. Lenin, Volume 5 (『なにをなすべきか？ われわれの運動の焦眉の課題』、『レーニン全集』第5巻、大月書店、1954年、邦訳447頁). Lenin makes this statement in the context of the Russian liberalists at the time, who had not studied or experienced in the theory and movement of socialism, harshly criticizing the resonance of spontaneous terrorism if there is only benevolence, going along with it and heading towards catastrophe.
- 4) Toye, John (1987), *Dilemmas of Development: Reflections on the Counter Revolution*

*in Development Theory and Policy*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, UK, p.68.

- 5) Mun Gyongsu who is the author of *A New History of Modern South Korea* (文京洙著『新・韓国現代史』岩波新書、2015年) states in the introduction of it that what characterizes the past 10 years of both Japanese and Korean society is the expansion and deepening of social risk structure which have come with globalization (pathology and polarisation of society as a whole due to difficulties concerning employment, the increase in divorce rate, the decrease in birth rate, family breakdown, suicide and dramatic increase in the number of homeless people). He analyses it in depth in chapter5: Korean Politics and Society in the Age of Globalization.
- 6) Miyoji Yabunaka (Ritsumeikan University, Japan), "Japan's Path in the Changing East-Asia Theatre", paper presented at the 11<sup>th</sup> Inter-College Symposium on Changing World, Ritsumeikan University, Japan, March 23-24, 2019.
- 7) See Moriteru Niizaki, *A History of Modern Okinawa, new version* (新崎盛暉著『沖縄現代史 新版』岩波新書、2005年).
- 8) Denny Tamaki, Governor of Okinawa Prefecture, said in an interview that Okinawa Government has calculated that it will take five years at least and need a budget of 2.5 trillion to build a new base in Henoko. See "I will protect the dignity and democracy of Okinawa", in *Sekai*, June 2019 (玉木デニー「私は沖縄と民主主義の尊厳を守る」、『世界』2019年6月号).
- 9) Let me touch on the history of the establishment of RCEP. The prototype of RCEP was the Japanese proposal of ASEAN+6 in opposition to the Chinese proposal of ASEAN+3 (Japan, China and Korea) with the main theme of the structure of an East Asian Community. Following this, at the Parliament of Australia in Canberra on 17 November, 2011, President Obama strongly hammered home the concept of economic integration in the Asia Pacific region through the TPP led by the US (the so-called Obama Doctrine). ASEAN responded to it at the 19 ASEAN Summit in Bali, Indonesia which was miraculously the same day (17 November, 2011). The ASEAN presented a new proposal, RCEP, because of (1) the feeling of crisis about the fragmentation of ASEAN caused by TPP-affiliated and non-affiliated countries and (2) the strong volition to protect ASEAN centrality in the economic integration of the East Asian region. As this proposal was accepted by Japan and China who respected the intentions of the ASEAN, thereafter RCEP was established.

See my following two papers: 1) Kiyokatsu Nishiguchi, "The Noda Cabinet's Announcement for Participating in the TPP Negotiations and the Japan's Course: An Observation from the US's New Asia-Pacific Strategy and the ASEAN's Framework for Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership", *Ritsumeikan Economic Review*, Vol.61,

No.2, July 2012 (西口清勝「野田内閣の TPP 交渉参加表明と今後の日本の進路－アメリカの新アジア太平洋戦略と ASEAN のアジア広域圏構想の検討を踏まえて－」、『立命館経済学』第 61 巻第 2 号、2012 年 7 月)、2) Kiyokatsu Nishiguchi, “An Essay on TPP and RCEP: Comparative Studies and the Future Path that Japan Should Take” Ritsumeikan Economic Review, Vol.62, No.5-6, March 2014 (西口清勝「TPP と RCEP－比較研究と今後の日本の進路に関する一考察－」、『立命館経済学』第 62 巻第 5-6 号、2014 年 3 月).

