

# Preface

Globalization is one of the dominant trends of our era. Although no consensus has been reached on what this concept actually means, we recognize that globalization is proceeding as the lines of regionalization. The research project: “Globalization and Publicity”, is concerned with the possibility of integration of East-Asia becoming integrated and the impact that globalization is making on states and societies in East-Asia. We know that the East-Asian region is now united by strong interdependent economic relationships. In general, the region as a whole is characterized by an export-driven accumulation structure that relies on American and EU consumption. Japan and Korea export capital goods and materials to China and ASEAN, while China and ASEAN export consumption goods that are produced by them to EU and America. Each country needs and relies on each other. However, the possibility of integration of East-Asia becoming integrated is far from a reality. Then, doesn't the possibility of integration exist even? This is one of the research issues our research project intends to investigate.

We also recognize that globalization is a process that has been encouraged by neo-liberalism and thus is giving rise to various social problems in areas such as employment, income redistribution, social policies, and human rights in each country. The struggle of hegemony against neo-liberalism has now become severe under this situation. A lot of people hope a democratic form of globalization. Then, what a democratic form of globalization is? This question is also an important issue that needs to be addressed by this research project.

We know a mature of civil society is important to creating a democratic East-Asia region. Then is there a possibility to form a civil society in each country and in the region of East-Asia? This question is also an important issue that needs to be addressed by this research project.

Thus, so far the research project was conducted by four universities to research these issues and each university took turns holding an international symposium every year. Ritsumeikan University organized held the international symposium this year (March 23-24, 2012), which is consisted of two sessions (Economic and Social Issues in East-Asia and Possibilities of Civil Society in East-Asia) under the title of “East-Asia in Transition” . Researchers from Lancaster University (the UK), Jinan University (China), Chung-Ang University (Korea) participated with the symposium, and we invited new participants from Chinese University of Hong Kong, Sun Yat-sen University (China), National Central University (Taiwan), National Chiao Tung University (Taiwan), Deakin University (Australia) and Copenhagen University (Denmark) participated to this symposium. We held a good discussion and confirmed that we would continue this project.

Articles in this Journal were presented at this international symposium.

(Takeshi Shinoda)