

## THE JAPAN ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES (JAAS)

### 1. Establishment of JAAS and Its General Character

#### 1) Brief History

The Japan Association for Asian Studies (formerly The Japan Association for Asian Political and Economic Studies: hereafter JAAS) was founded on May 5, 1953, when the San Francisco Peace Treaty had just been signed and the Korean War was coming to an end, aiming at doing purely academic but comprehensive studies on Asia. JAAS was not the only one which was involved in Asian studies at that time, but unique in the sense that it was politically neutral while most other similar organizations were deeply influenced by specific ideology and activities, against the background of the political atmosphere in Japan in the early 1950s.

The membership is said to have been only about 50 when it convened its first national meeting at Keio University with two main themes: nationalism in Asia and development of Asian economies. In 1957, it was authorized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a public service corporation (*koeki hojin*). It is one of the few academic associations that are officially permitted as foundational juridical persons (*zaidan hojin*) in Japan. Although the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is its competent authority, it goes without saying that the Association has never lost its academic freedom in its history of 51 years.

#### 2) Membership

The membership has been expanding year by year since then, particularly since the early 1980s, when the importance of Asian problems was widely recognized in this country. After the currency and financial crisis took places in East and Southeast Asia, JAAS met another springboard, and it quickly attracted younger members, including overseas graduate students. The Association now includes among its members around 150 Asian scholars or graduate students.

The total number of members has increased impressively over the past decade: from 850 in 1994 to 1050 in 1999, and further to 1343 in July 2004. JAAS has become one of the largest academic organizations for area studies in Japan. The Association comprises members with a variety of specialties, not only economics, political science and international politics but also history, sociology and anthropology, though they share interests in Asia, from Pakistan to Japan and from Mongolia to Indonesia. Not a few members also cover region-based study such as ASEAN, APEC, the Greater

Mekong Sub-region (GMS) and the Japan-ASEAN Comprehensive Economic Partnership (CEP). Thus it can be seen as almost equivalent to the AAS (Association for Asian Studies) in the United States, namely an association of specialists in Asian studies with a variety of disciplines.

Unlike the AAS this association is somewhat inclined toward East Asia as a focal region and China as a specific country. According to the latest survey of the membership (1182 out of 1343 members replied to the questionnaire by 22 July, 2004), 61 percent of a total of 1182 academic members specialized in East Asian studies, while 32 percent majored in Southeast Asian studies and a further 7 percent concentrated on research on South Asia. In terms of country focus, China dominated the field, accounting for 48 percent (565) of the total. This was followed by Korea (121), Taiwan (109), Indonesia (89), Thailand (82), Malaysia (65), Vietnam (59), the Philippines (55), India (51), Singapore (41) and Pakistan (9). Reviewing the change in the regional distribution for the past five years, we find that the proportion of members specializing in East Asia increased from 56 percent in 1999 to 61 percent in 2004, while those in Southeast Asia showed no change.

## 2. Academic Activities

JAAS formal academic activities may be grouped into the following three categories.

### 1) Annual Meetings or National Conventions

Its annual meetings, or national conventions, usually consist of three sessions: free theme sessions, sub-theme sessions for specific topics, and a common theme session with a common issue. All the records on discussion at these sessions from 2000 to 2003 are reproduced in *Newsletters* of the Association from Number 14 to Number 20, and are uploaded as a form of PDF text on the website of the Association (<http://www.jaas.or.jp>).

The 54<sup>th</sup> meeting or the 2000 annual meeting was held at Takushoku University, focusing on Asia in the Age of Globalization: Perspective for the Asia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This meeting also organized four free theme sessions with eight reporters (Southeast Asia, Chinese politics, Chinese economy, Asian industrial development) and two major sub-theme sessions consisting of Tradition and Evolution: Pictures of Asian Leaders, and Integration and Disintegration in Asia. The former session highlighted distinguished leaders in four countries such as Yuen Shi-kai, Sun Yat-sen and Deng Xiao-ping in China (Tatsuo YAMADA), Chiang Kai-shek, Chiang Jing-kuo and Lee Teng-hui in Taiwan (Masahiro WAKABAYASHI), Korean leaders such as Park Chung-hee (Tomohiro SHIGEMURA) and Gandhi and J. Nehru in India (Yoko NAGASAKI). The

second session, organized by Hiroyoshi KANO, discussed the movement of integration and disintegration in Asia with case studies of three countries including China (Ka WANG), India (Chiharu TAKENAKA) and Indonesia (Osamu INOUE).

The 55<sup>th</sup> meeting or the 2001 annual meeting was held at Bankoku Shinryo-kan at Nago-shi in Okinawa, where the Kyushu-Okinawa Summit was held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Keizo OBUCHI in 2000. This impressive two-day meeting on 8 and 9 December was organized by Masaaki GABE and his associates at Ryukyu University with three free theme sessions and three sub-theme sessions including Problems of the Korean Peninsula, the World of the Sea and Contemporary India. The second sub-theme session, focusing on “Study of Asia in the World of the Sea: From the View Point of Ryukyu and Okinawa,” was able to attract a large audience owing to interesting reports on three different topics: “One Country Two Systems in East Asia and the Possibility of an Asian Common Currency” (Takeshi HAMASHITA), “Political Interpretation of Policies for Okinawa” (Tsuneo OSHIRO) and “Public Health and Social Order: Malaria in the History of Ryukyu and Okinawa” (Wataru IJIMA). On the second day, an international symposium on “Asia and Japan in the New Era: Globalization and Expanding International Cooperation Scheme) was organized by Satoshi AMAKO (President of JAAS) with five main speakers (Suzan SHARK, Sanjaya BARU, WENG Yiz-hou, Yan C. KIM and Masaaki GABE) and three commentators (Akihiko TANAKA, Akira SUEHIRO, Takashi SHIRAISHI). This symposium raised three major questions on the impact on Asia of the 9.11 terrorist attack in the United States, the rise of Greater China, and the significance of Asia as a regional entity in the new era.

The 56<sup>th</sup> meeting or the 2002 annual meeting was held at Kobe University with a special common topic of Asian Development and the Possibility of Regional Integration: the Prospect of an Asian Community. Importantly, the organizing committee attempted to introduce a new system into the free theme session in order to encourage younger members’ activity. Previously, reporters for free theme sessions had been selected on the basis of a questionnaire survey and senior members’ recommendation. Kobe University changed this policy and recruited reporters on the website. All the applicants were given the chance of presentation as long as they would submit a full text paper before the meeting. Thanks to this new system, as many as twenty young members reported on their own academic topic at five free theme sessions on the first day (16 October). The meeting also organized five sub-theme sessions on Education in Asia in the Era of Globalization (organizer: Fumiko OSHIKAWA), Development and Changes in Regional Economy (Atsushi KITAHARA), Racial and Religious Conflicts and Regional Troubles (Takako HIROSE), Thirty Years of

International Relations among Japan, China and the United States (Sei-ichiro TAKAGI: English session) and Rising China and Regionalism in East Asia (Yoshihide SO-EYA). On the second day (17 October), Kyo-ichi ISHIHARA organized a common session by inviting four main speakers with different disciplines of development economics, international political science, sociology and area study. These speakers included Yukio IKEMOTO (Globalization and Income Disparity), Ryo ASANO (Problems of Natural Resources with Environment and Asian Security System), Shigeto SONODA (Economic Change and Cultural Conflict in China), and TOU Tsuan-en (Region-based Economic Zone and Regional Integration).

The latest meeting or the 2003 annual meeting was planned by the Institute of Social Science of University of Tokyo to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of JAAS, and was held at the National Center of Sciences (Gakujutsu Sogo Center) in Takebashi, Tokyo. The organizing committee adopted the same system as in Kobe University and successfully recruited 24 reporters with a wide range of topics at seven free theme sessions in the morning of the first day (8 November). In the afternoon session, a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary commemorative international symposium was held at the Hitotsubashi Memorial Hall to discuss the common topic of “After the 9.11 Terrorist Attack, How Do Asian People Look at the United States?” This symposium, chaired by Akihiko TANAKA (University of Tokyo), invited six main speakers: John IKENBERRY (United States), K. S. JOMO (Malaysia), Mohammad WASEEM (Pakistan), MOON Chung-in (Republic of Korea), WANG Jisi (China) and Makoto IOKIBE (Japan). Speakers addressed their ideas to an audience of 320 and emphasized the necessity of a more academic approach in grasping world-wide terrorism, new American policies, and the reaction of Asian people against American hegemony. All the papers and discussions were reproduced in *Aziya Kenkyu* (Vol.50, No.3, April 2004).

On the second day (9 November), the meeting organized four sub-theme sessions including “How Can We Understand a Democratic Regime in Asia now?” (organized by Takako HIROSE), “Political Economy of Regional Cooperation” (Akira SUEHIRO), “Innovative East Asia and the IT Revolution” (Tomoo MARUKAWA) and “Fifty Years of Agrarian Problems in Asia and the WTO” (Toshio TAJIMA) with three main speakers in each session. In the afternoon session, Akira ISHII (President of JAAS) celebrated the 50 years of the Association by inviting two distinguished guest speakers: Shigeru ISHIKAWA (emeritus of Hitotsubashi University) and Saburo MATSUMOTO (emeritus of Keio University). These two honorary members summarized the development of Asian studies in connection with the activity of JAAS for the past time and suggested a new approach to changing Asia.

## 2) Regional Meetings

The Association has two divisions, and each has its own separate regional meetings, usually at the end of May in the Higashi-Nippon region, or Eastern part of Japan (two-thirds of members) and in June in the Nishi-Nippon region, or Western part of Japan. These meetings can be said to be a copy of the annual meeting, and the larger meeting held in the Higashi-Nippon region usually includes three or four free theme sessions and two common theme sessions with three reports in each session.

For instance, in May 2000, the Higashi-Nippon meeting at Tokyo Women's University focused on Integration and Disintegration in Asia, which included three main reports on "Market Integration and the Rise of Industrial Clusters in China" (Tomoo MARUKAWA), "The Hindu Nationalist Movement in Contemporary India" (Mitsuhiro KONDO) and "Lessons from the Case of East Timor's Independence" (Kiyoko FURUSAWA). In the same year, the Nishi-Nippon meeting highlighted Taiwan in the Post-Lee Teng-hui Period by inviting three main speakers: Masahiro WAKABAYASHI (the general election in 2000 and politics in Taiwan), Hiroshi ISHIDA (prospects of Taiwan-China economic relations), and Takashi IMAI (characteristics of the social security system in Taiwan).

In June 2001, the Higashi-Nippon meeting was jointly organized by Yamanashi Gakuin University and the Yamanashi Research Institute Foundation. This meeting focused on two major topics: Enterprises in Asia in the Age of Global Economy (Hideo KOBAYASHI, Junko TAKEUCHI and Makoto KOJIMA) and Political Corruption and Changes in Government (Tsuyoshi KAWANAKA for the Philippines, Norio KONDO for India and Yoshiyuki OGASAWARA for Taiwan). In addition, the Ritsumeikan Asia-Pacific University (APU) organized the Nishi-Nippon meeting at Beppu-shi and a total of 24 members reported papers in five different sub-theme sessions. Importantly, this meeting for the first time raised the topic of culture and literature in Asia, which included cultural conflict between Japanese firms and Chinese politics, literature in Japan-controlled Manchuria and Japanese novelists in Java under the Japanese occupation. In this meeting Tomoyuki KOJIMA, the former President of JAAS, made a special speech on "East Asia and Japan in Regional Cooperation" at a seminar open to the public.

In May 2002, the Higashi-Nippon meeting (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies) organized four sub-theme sessions (Comintern and Asia, Politics and Economy in East Asia, the Chinese Steel Industry and Transfer of Technology, Changes in Agrarian Society in Southeast Asia) and two common theme sessions: Asian Studies under the Structural Reforms by the Japanese Government, and International Politics and the Islamic World in Asia. Concerning the first session, the meeting invited main speakers

from four major area study institutions: the Institute of Developing Economies (better known as *Ajiken*), the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa (Tokyo University of Foreign Studies), the Institute of Oriental Cultures (University of Tokyo), and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (Kyoto University). In June 2002, the Nishi-Nippon meeting was held at Fukui Prefectural University facing the Japan Sea. The organizing committee headed by Kenkichi HONDA provided three free sessions with twelve speakers on various topics.

In May 2003, the Higashi-Nippon meeting was jointly organized by Kanda Gaigo University and the Institute of Developing Economies in Makuhari, Chiba Prefecture. Two common theme sessions consisted of How Do Asian People Look at the United States? with three main speakers: Noriyo ISOZAKI (Korea), Masashi NAKAMURA (Malaysia) and Mari IZUYAMA (India), and Asian Local Firms' Response to Globalization with three main speakers: Momoko KAWAKAMI (Taiwan), WANG Shokko (China) and Tran Van Tu (Vietnam).

Subsequently, in June 2003, the Nishi-Nippon meeting organized by Konan University at Hyogo Prefecture focused on the North and South Korean Economy and the Possibility of Reform, in reference to increasing tension at the Korean Peninsula. Two interesting reports by PARK Il and Teruo KOMAKI produced heated discussion. This meeting also arranged another common session on Globalization and the Asian Economy with two main speakers: Akira SUEHIRO (multinational corporations and the Changing Asian Economy) and Nobuaki SASAKI (globalizing the Chinese economy), which introduced new movements taking place in contemporary Asia.

### 3) Ad Hoc Seminars and International Conferences

Besides annual meetings, the Association has a special program for providing ad hoc seminars by inviting Japanese and foreign guest speakers on interesting topics. At the same time, the Association has also organized international conferences at the annual meetings as we see in the cases of the 55<sup>th</sup> meeting at Okinawa and the 57<sup>th</sup> meeting at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary meeting in 2003. JAAS is planning to promote internationalization of its academic activities not only through such international conferences but also through an exchange program of Asian studies with academic associations abroad.

### 3. Publications

JAAS has its own quarterly journal called *Aziya Kenkyu* (Asian Studies), which has already a 51-year history of publication. Alongside with *Ajia Keizai* (the Asian

Economy) published as a monthly journal of the Institute of Developing Economies of JETRO, the journal can be said to be one of the major academic journals for development and Asian studies in Japan. Articles and papers from members are strictly refereed by anonymous members appointed by the editorial committee.

From 2001 (Volume 48), the journal completely changed its cover, size, and typesetting in conjunction with the demand for a more readable and attractive academic journal. In this process, JAAS also reorganized its editorial system by increasing the number of editorial members to 17 persons and by setting up a sub-committee for book review articles with 12 members under the leadership of Yoshiki KANEKO. Since 2001, the journal has been available electronically on the home page of JAAS and thereafter all the articles can be seen in the form of PDF text. At the same time, the Association also embarked on reproduction of all the articles in *Aziya Kenkyu* for the past five decades into PDF text by using a grant for scientific research fund (*kakenhi*) from the JSPS.

Beside quarterly journals, the Association had a unique system of publishing monographs on China studies. The monographs published under this program are entitled the *Contemporary China Study Series*. Thirty-eight volumes in this series had been published by 2001, and this program gave a great opportunity for younger researchers to publish their academic products. However, the Association was forced to terminate publishing this series in 2002 because financial support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs ended due to budget constraints. The Association plans to upload all the volumes as PDF text on the JAAS home page by 2005.

Another noteworthy activity is the introduction of the JAAS Prize for the Best Article for Asian Study in 2003. In order to promote Asian study in Japan, JAAS set up a special committee to select and award the best article in the year among the articles in *Aziya Kenkyu* as well as articles in other academic journals relating to Asian studies. This prize intentionally targeted younger researchers, including graduate students. There were two articles awarded first in 2003: “Diplomatic Relations of China with the Korean Peninsula in the Era of Deng Shao-ping” (Sachiko MASUO) and “the Petrochemical Industry in Its Early Stages in Taiwan” (CHEN Cheng-ta).

#### 4. New Direction for JAAS as a Public Service Corporation

Since the currency and financial crisis in 1997, Japan’s commitment to Asia has become more active as seen in the cases of the New Miyazawa Plan, the Asian Bond Market Development Scheme, the Japan-ASEAN Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the promotion of an Asian Community. With no doubt, Asian issues

have become very important not only in the government but also among the people. Asian issues including security, diplomatic relations, economic cooperation, environmental problems, food security and migration are characterized by cross-country relations rather than bilateral ones. This change requires academic circles to seek for more collective cooperation beyond country-based study.

On the other hand, the government and the society have increasingly required public service corporations (*koeki hojin*) to improve their activities in information disclosure, responsibility, accountability and benefits to the public. For this reason, JAAS is also expected to improve its administration and accounting system as well as to expand its contribution to the public.

To meet these new circumstances, JAAS is now going to start several new programs.

(1) To streamline time-consuming administrative work. For this purpose, in 2004, JAAS began to transfer part of its daily-based services such as correspondence, registration of new members and management of its membership list to a non-profit organization (Ochanomizu Academic Association NPO). At the same time, necessary correspondence between directors has been changed to e-mail communication to economize on cost and time.

(2) To expand electronic services at the website to make a more speedy response to members' requests. Agendas of national and regional meetings and all the reports submitted to the meeting are quickly reproduced on the home page. Beneficial information to members is also introduced on the home page.

(3) To develop collaboration with Asian studies in other academic institutions or associations to promote cross-country study. In order to meet this request, JAAS has constructed a close linkage with major COE programs relating to Asian studies such as COEs at Waseda University, Keio University, Aichi University, Sophia University and Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. The Association also became a core member of the Japan Consortium of Area Studies (JCAS) when it was established in April 2004. The Association joins essential programs initiated by this consortium.

(4) To encourage studies by younger members. To achieve this purpose, JAAS started the JAAS Prize for the Best Article for Asian Study. Beside this, the Association also plans to collect detailed information on younger members' academic productions and provide them on the website for researchers as well as the public. This plan is closely connected with a program of constructing a database of Japanese researchers in Asian studies sponsored by the JSPS in 2004.

(Akira SUEHIRO, President of JAAS)