

Foreword

The International Symposium held in July 1995 is a part of an ongoing priority research project (1995-1997) financed by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Culture. This project proposes to research, "Changes in the Slavic-Eurasian World: Conditions for Existence and Coexistence," covering research in the fields of politics, economics, history, literature, international relations, law, religion, social anthropology, demography, education, and ecology. It aims to promote further Slavic studies in Japan.

The stunning collapse of the Soviet system in 1991 has made a dramatic impact on the entire Slavic-Eurasian world. One is tempted to satisfy oneself with a single, neat formula in analyzing the transition from one institutional order to another in the former Soviet Union and East European countries. However, the reality of such a transition is inevitably, on closer consideration, more complex and untidy, dictating a variety of analytical approaches to make sense of it. It is with this in mind that this research project has been conducted. The project thus analyzes the disintegrating, realigning, and institutionalizing processes, and identifies the emerging political, economic, and social system(s) in this region that may be universal or particular to the Slavic-Eurasian World. This Symposium has dealt largely with the economic and social aspects of the transition.

This symposium, and those that follow, will hopefully contribute to creating common norms and values to the framework of research disciplines in the changing field of Slavic-Eurasian studies.

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