

Session 6: After ICCEES: The Future of Slavic-Eurasian Studies

Chair: Hayashi Tadayuki (Kyoto Women's University)

Numano Mitsuyoshi (Tokyo University)

Ikeda Yoshiro (Tokyo University)

Oka Natsuko (Institute of Developing Economies)

Yaroslav Shulatov (Kobe University)

Feng Shaolei (East China Normal University)

Ha Yong-Chool (University of Washington at Seattle)

[**Chair**]: Good afternoon. Let's start the final session. This is the last session, but of course not the least session. I'm Hayashi Tadayuki, from Kyoto Women's University, working on East European Studies. I was a member of SRC from 1994 to 2011, so it is my great pleasure and honor to participate in this memorial symposium to celebrate the 60th anniversary of SRC, as the moderator of this round table. The table is not so round, but this is the roundtable, titled "After ICCEES: the Future of Japanese Slavic-Eurasian Studies."

I'll introduce the speakers very briefly, because there are 6 speakers, and you all have the distributed profile of the speakers, so please see it for more details. Numano Mitsuyoshi-sensei, Professor of the University of Tokyo, is an excellent specialist of Russian and Polish literature, and also known as a literary critic on Japanese literature, especially Murakami Haruki.

And Ikeda Yoshiro-sensei, also Professor of the University of Tokyo, is an excellent specialist of Russian history.

Roundtable

Oka Natsuko-sensei is a senior research fellow at the Institute of Developing Economies, Japan External Trade Organization, IDE JETRO. She is one of the leading scholars in the field of Central Asian studies.

Dr. Yaroslav Shulatov is Associate Professor at Kobe University. He is a historian of Russo-Japanese, Soviet-Japanese and international relations in East Asia.

Professor Feng Shaolei, Professor of East China Normal University, specializes in Russian politics and diplomacy, and he is Director of the Center for Russian Studies of ECNU.

Professor Ha Yong-Chool is Korea Foundation Professor at Henry Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington in Seattle. He is a specialist of comparative politics, focusing on late-coming countries, including Russia.

The world conference of ICCEES, the International Council for Central and Eastern European Studies, was held at Makuhari, Chiba Prefecture, in August of this year. JCREES, Japanese Council for Russian and Eastern European Studies, the umbrella organization, combining six associations or societies for Slavic-Eurasian Studies in Japan, took on the responsibility of conducting the congress. Numano-sensei is the chairperson of the JCREES, and he served as one of two co-chairpersons of the organizing committee of the World Congress, with Shimotomai Nobuo-sensei, Professor of Hosei University. Oka-sensei and Ikeda-sensei were two of core committee members. Ikeda-sensei headed the financial section and Oka-sensei controlled almost all events. Here I should mention predecessor events to the Makuhari World Conference of ICCEES, the East Asian conferences on Slavic-Eurasian studies. These East Asian conferences were held in Sapporo, Seoul, Beijing, Kolkata and Osaka from 2009 to 2013. This series of conferences promoted close relations and cooperation between East Asian countries, including Russia, in the field of Slavic-Eurasian studies, and formed the solid East Asian foundations for the success of the World Congress of ICCEES at Makuhari. Therefore, we have invited three guests from Russia, China, and Korea.

I'd like to ask all speakers to present their views on the future of Slavic-Eurasian studies in general, in Asia, or in each of your countries, as well as the future activity of SRC, as you like.

So, let's start. Numano-sensei, please start your presentation.

[Numano]: Thank you very much. It is a great honor for me to be here to be one of the speakers of such an important panel discussion. And I have just a very minor correction to what Hayashi-sensei said. Although it's true that I write extensively about contemporary Japanese literature, I'm not a specialist on Murakami Haruki. Maybe I know a little bit more about Kenzaburo Oe than Murakami Haruki.

As Professor Hayashi said, I was the chairperson of JCREES, and also one of the co-chairpersons of the organizing committee for the ICCEES Makuhari World Congress. In that capacity, I want to ask the question: was Makuhari a success? This is a very natural question to be asked on such an occasion. I'm not intending to be very proud of what we have done, but I think that the history of our discipline, Slavic studies in Japan, can be divided into two eras: before Makuhari and after Makuhari. It was such a decisive event that it will remain in our memories for many years to come, and I think it will deeply influence the younger generation of Slavic studies in Japan.

And let me just give you some concrete statistics about the congress. The total number of participants, official registered amounted to 1209 persons. And we had also 101 other guests and observers, totaling 1310 people who participated in our congress. And in comparison with the previous world congresses of ICCEES, it was kind of the average number, so it was not the largest, but if you take into consideration that Europeans, and Americans and Russians, from Moscow, had to travel a long distance to Japan, so if you consider the total mileage of travel of the participants, I think we set a record in the history of ICCEES world congresses. Analyzing the number of participants by country, we find Japan as number one with more than 400. And then Russia, USA, Germany, Great Britain, Finland, Sweden, China, Korea, and Kazakhstan.

Of the 380 sessions, maybe a little bit unexpectedly, the largest discipline was history followed by literature.

Now let me proceed to my second point, our strong East Asian connection. The congress in Makuhari was a very good chance for us to think about some basic questions. First of all, it was the importance of East Asian ties and the search for a common language with our Chinese, Korean, and Japanese colleagues, both in the literal and metaphorical meanings of "common language." Direct meaning is, of course, what language we should use to communicate, and to discuss things with each other. And the metaphorical meaning is because we have different positions

and different training and different cultural and political backgrounds, so sometimes it is not easy for us to find common language even among East Asian colleagues. Sometimes it even seems easier for us to find a common language between Japanese, and for example, American scholars. We should make further efforts in this direction.

And speaking of my specialization, literary studies, for example, in the field of East Asian connections, we have some interesting topics which should be studied further. For example, Japanese translations of Russian literature were widely read in Korea and China, at least in the first half of the 20th century. I think this is a promising topic which we can study as a collective effort in the future.

My point number three asks what is special about Japanese Slavic studies? Well, I think it was also a very good occasion to consider, if there is any specific Japanese possibility to contribute to the global community of Slavic studies. Well, maybe we can make use of Japanese traditional aesthetics—I'm speaking of literary studies, not politics, because I think politics does not involve aesthetics, normally—combining it with Western theoretical approaches. And maybe we can play the role of mediation between Western Europe and America and Russia, because not only due to the geographical position, but also thanks to what I call the “geopoetic” position of Japan, which is located between Russia and Europe.

And then point number four, the task of Japanese scholars to forge the future of our discipline. I will leave this question to everybody, simply noting by way of conclusion, our difficult conjuncture. As all Japanese scholars in the room know, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Science and Technology—known as Monbukagakusho—it's a very long name in English—this ministry is now urging Japanese universities to re-structure and curtail the social sciences and humanities, considering that these disciplines do not meet contemporary societal needs. In such a very difficult time, we have to make every possible effort in our discipline to develop our social and humanities studies. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

[**Chair**]: Next I would like to introduce Dr. Oka from the IDE.

[**Oka**]: Thank you, Hayashi-sensei. I'm Natsuko Oka, from the Institute of Developing Economies. First of all, just a few comments on ICCEES. I joined the organizing committee a bit later than my other colleagues on the committee. I really enjoyed the whole process of preparing for the Makuhari world congress. I did not prepare events, but was responsible for food. One of my main concerns was having enough for all participants without too much—because if it's too much, we have to pay for it anyway.

First of all, I'd like to express my sincere gratitude for the invitation to participate in this memorable event, and I'd like to congratulate the Slavic Eurasian Research Center on its 60th anniversary. Since I joined the Institute of Developing Economies in 1994—it's quite a long time ago—I owe a great deal to SRC. I had great opportunities to be included in existing projects, attended international symposiums and used resources through ILL, or inter-library loan services, as we don't have much literature on Slavic studies at IDE. I'm practically the only person who is doing research on the former Soviet Union at IDE. These opportunities have great meaning for me and for my research activities. Taking this occasion, I'd like to offer my sincere gratitude, many thanks for the Slavic Eurasian research center, and all current and former staff of the center.

Today, I'd like to talk about interaction with foreign scholars, in particular the scholars of the countries and regions we study. I should say, in advance, that my talk is based on my personal, my own experiences, at my workplace, IDE, and also my research focuses, which are contemporary politics and society of Kazakhstan. So, the issues I'm raising, I am referring to, may not hold for other regions or disciplines.

First I'd like to talk about our traditions and changes. The Institute of Developing Economies, or IDE, was established in 1960, five years after the SRC was founded. As its Japanese name, Aija keizai kenkyusho, suggests, the main focus was Asian countries, but later, IDE expanded its objectives to other developing economies like Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. Technically, I belong to Middle Eastern Studies Group at IDE, because there is nowhere else to be affiliated. The official English name correctly reflects our activities, as it appeared a bit later than the Japanese name.

As to the history of Slavic research at IDE, some of you here may know better than I do. I really regret that I could not attend yesterday's session, because I arrived in Sapporo in the afternoon. At this moment, regrettably, only two research fellows remain. It's me and one colleague specializing in transition economies. With about 120 research fellows and its own library, IDE is one of the biggest research institutes in social sciences all over the world. Our characteristics can be summarized as 1) "san-gen shugi," a three-pronged approach, that puts emphasis on local languages, field work, and local resources; 2) collective publications based on collective research activities; and 3) On-the-job training of young researchers with or without advanced degrees. These traditions still remain, except we do not take bachelors any more, but they are changing in the last decade. First, san-gen shugi has lost its relative advantage due to a substantial increase in information and knowledge about developing economies. In particular, the number of Japanese citizens living in East Asian countries like China, has dramatically grown, and proficiency in local languages and local experiences is no longer exceptional.

If, in the past, analysis of current events was a major part of the IDE activities, in recent years, our colleagues are more interested in theoretical approaches.

As for the publishing of research results, we continue to produce edited books, or "so-sho" in Japanese, but more and more colleagues prefer to submit papers to academic journals in English, or write a monograph in Japanese or English.

Now, IDE encourages and provides financial support for participation in international conferences.

Today, applicants are required to hold a Ph.D. and a certain number of publications, as elsewhere in academia. Another new trend is internationalization of IDE staff. Today, 11 out of 120 research fellows are foreign citizens. Many of them are from Korea and China. And most of them are very fluent in Japanese. By the way, IDE is quite well-balanced in terms of gender. It's not a female-dominated organization, but there are many women working.

Now I'm going to move to the second section. Before coming to Sapporo, I had a chance to read Ito-sensei's paper, and once again, I realized what kind of difficulties you faced at the Slavic Research Center. You introduced invitational programs and started organizing international symposiums, which we today consider as natural and essential.

As we are studying foreign countries and regions, contact with scholars of the Slavic and Eurasian world is indispensable. Needless to say, interaction and exchange of views with other foreign scholars in our field are very important. Today I'd like to focus on the interaction and dialogue with the scholars of the area which we study.

Just like at the SRC, we hold international symposiums at IDE, and invite scholars from abroad, and we have visiting research fellow programs. We also have a very generous two-year long program for IDE staff. We send our colleagues overseas for two years. I give you an example of my own experience. We had a four-year long project on Central Asia since 1994. And our partners in Central Asian countries provided us with basic information and analysis on market reforms and state building at the time. In other words, it was a one-way interaction; we ordered a report, and they submitted it. As for the visiting research fellow program, we had one state official from Kyrgyzstan, and one economist from Kazakhstan. I still personally have contact with them as friends, but our research interests are quite different. So, what I'm going to do now is closer, longer-term cooperation with local scholars. I'm going to organize a two-year joint research project, very small, with a Kazakhstani scholar. This became possible due to the rise of a new generation. Some of the representatives of this generation are here today in the audience. This generation of researchers in Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states will be very important for future research. Thanks to the fellowships from their own states, e.g., Kazakhstan, and also the foreign overseas education programs provided by foreign states for Central Asian students, today there are a number of scholars who receive degrees from the US, European, and Japanese universities. In addition to their own native languages, English and Russian, some of them are proficient in Japanese, Chinese, and Turkish. They have the advantage of having a local network and internationally recognized academic training. My partner for the forthcoming project is one such scholar of the new generation.

And the third point, how to share research results from and with the local community. One of the reasons why I decided to work with this Kazakh scholar is, of course, she is an excellent scholar and also her research interest is very close to mine, but also I'm excited to see how she will evaluate—or what kind of comments she will give to my own research. Currently, I do research on informal payments or corruption. This is a very politically and socially sensitive issue, so how local readership will accept my research is very important for myself. Needless to say, in order to have my published work accepted by local scholars and journalists and

policy makers, I have to write in English or Russian. In the audience, I see that many of you have lots of English publications, and even monographs. In the future, it's really more and more important to publish in English or Russian or in other local languages, because as far as we write something in Japanese, it will be practically limited to Japanese scholars. That said, I do not mean to say, that it's meaningless to write in Japanese.

Since I have an impression that Central Asian studies are quite developed in China and Korea, I am looking forward to hearing about the interaction with Slavic and Eurasian studies from our distinguished guests, Professor Feng and Professor Ha. Thank you very much.

[**Chair**]: Thank you very much. Please, Ikeda-sensei.

[**Ikeda**]: In the organizing committee of the Makuhari Congress, I was responsible for the section categorized as "History." We had about 80 panels and roundtables in this section. And together with the literature group, this was the largest category in the congress.

With respect to medieval and modern Russian history, many sessions were dedicated to the issues of so-called "empireness," concerning, for example, confession, dynasty, representative organs, regions, ethnicity, and so on. It clearly reflects a trend of the research in the field. At the same time, the Congress had many other papers from this period, focusing on more orthodox themes, including, for example, military history, series of reforms, and economic history, in particular.

An impressive number of sessions were dedicated to the First World War, and the revolution of 1917, showing the increase of academic attention to the problem, in connection with the centenary of Russia's great war and revolution. One such session was the evening session, titled "New perspectives on the Russian revolution: looking ahead to 2017," in which Professors Buldakov, Kolonitskii, Stockdale, and Wada participated as panelists. So, already, we have started commemorating [sic] the centenary of the Russian Revolution, but of course, it is a very difficult problem—from what kind of viewpoint we will talk about this event, because today, it is clear for many of researchers that 1917 is—of course, it was some kind of beginning, but at the same time, it was a collapse or catastrophe. No matter how we will welcome the centenary of the revolution, we must think about this problem today, and after the century.

So, regarding the session dedicated to the history of the Soviet Union, and communism, in general, the issue of empire, or multi-nationality, is again among the favorite themes of the participants. My personal impression is that these sessions concerning the problem of the Soviet Empire was one of the most successful sessions of the whole congress, with high-quality discussions in which many young students participated, especially from Europe and the United States. Besides, other panels from the soviet period treating such important issues as violence, ideology, memory, and so on, were also quite productive.

The Cold War segment may be regarded as a separate division, concerning mainly, the post-Stalin period of Soviet history and diplomacy from the 1950s to 1980s. Here, the participation of a younger generation from Europe, and especially from Japan, was quite remarkable.

From the panels dedicated to the history of Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans, those concerning the Habsburg Empire were among the popular themes of the participants. Here, it was remarkable that a series of papers were devoted to the highly specialized analysis of each region of the Habsburg Empire. Sessions on Yugoslavia distinguished themselves by new approaches and topics, such as popular culture, sports, and immigration, though it was quite a pity that some specialists from Yugoslavia couldn't come to Japan due to financial problems, and it is also true for many specialists from the Ukraine. But anyway, we have some number of participants from Ukraine and Yugoslavia. Then, in general, young scholars from Japan contributed much to the section of Central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans. The history of Central Asia and Eurasia in general was also among the popular subjects of the Congress. A wide range of topics was discussed: for example, imperial bureaucracy, influence of Buddhism, and historical documents. Here, colleagues from Kazakhstan and the Urals, together with young Japanese researchers, showed their activity.

The location of the Congress resulted in active and plenty of discussion on the issue of Russia in Eastern Asia. Geographically, such regions as Japan, Siberia, and the Russian Far East, Manchuria, and the Pacific Rim, were concerned. And the traditional themes of Russo-Japanese relations were also reconsidered in a wider context.

The segment of women's history also included a variety of issues, such as entrepreneurs in the imperial period, mobility beyond the borders in the epoch of the world wars, and girl culture in late Soviet history.

Roundtable

The richness of panels on the history of science in the Soviet Union was also one of the achievements of our congress. On the agenda were such interesting topics as the Academy of Sciences, Lysenkoism, atomic cities, environment, and so on. In part, the success of this segment is the result of academic collaboration between Russian and Japanese scholars.

In concluding, a few words on the generation of participants from Japan. I can give only an impressionistic observation, but it seems clear that many younger scholars who were born in the late 1970s and the 1980s, quite actively participated in the Congress as organizers and panelists—not only as panelists, but also as organizers. In addition, graduate and even undergraduate students attended the Congress en masse. For them, the Congress became a standard for academic research—that is, to write a paper, to organize a panel, and to participate in discussions, in universal languages, first of all, in English. Armed by experience in the Congress, these new generations will be the foundation of our academic community in the forthcoming decades. Thus, for our community of historians of Russia and Eastern Europe, the Makuhari Congress became a revolution in the literal sense: the eight days that shook the world. Thank you very much.

[Chair]: Thank you very much. We have also invited foreign scholars, but Shulatov-sensei, whether you are foreign or not is not sure, but please start your presentation.

[Shulatov]: Thank you. My name is Yaroslav Shulatov. Well, it's sort of a question of whether I'm a foreigner or where I'm a foreigner. Or, I'm just a ruthless cosmopolitan. I was born and brought up in the Russian Far East. I originally come from Khabarovsk, but I live and work in Hiroshima nowadays. I will try—I promise to be within the framework, although I feel a little bit embarrassed to be given the same time as Numano-sensei and other respected scholars, so I will try to make a brief explanation about my own experience, but first of all, I would like to say my sincere words of congratulations to the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center, and of course, it is a great pleasure and a big honor to be here at this roundtable.

Prof. Wolff asked me to talk about my own experience working with the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center, and how it helped my studies, and what kind of benefits other comparatively young scholars could find here for their future research, so this session is devoted to the future of Japa-

nese Slavic-Eurasian research studies, but so I have to say my apologies to speak up a little bit about the history, not so long.

My first experience of working with the Center was about 10 years ago. Then, I received a scholarship and came to work here on materials held in the library's unique collection for use in my monograph and other articles. I want to use this chance to say thank you, again. My first publication in English came out in *Acta Slavica Iaponica* and my first Japanese publication was in *Surabu Kenkyu* (Slavic Studies), so like many researchers, the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center became my window not just to Europe, but to the international academic world. For me, this window came through Asia—an Asian gate.

I had the pleasure to work with Hara-sensei on his Sakhalin Kaken Project, together with many magnificent scholars. One book covering the Russo-Japanese war in Sakhalin came out in 2011, from Hokkaido University UP, and became one of the results of this project. Another one, devoted to the island of Sakhalin during the revolution and civil war will hopefully come out next year, maybe after next.

Last year, we, together with Prof. Ikeda, Prof. Naganawa, from the Center, and Prof. Miyazaki Haruka of Hokkaido University of Education in Hakodate, received a grant—kyodo kenkyu—from the Center of Inter-War Period Studies, and organized a panel here in the summer symposium last year. So, we—I also had the honor to participate in the conference right before the ICCEES, and in the ICCEES, together with colleagues from the Center, so as we see, the Center provides a whole range of opportunities for researchers of all ages.

But one of the greatest experiences I had here was the ITP fellowship. I see here in the audience, those who also participated in this magnificent program, so please correct me if I miss something. Three years ago, I was sent as a visiting scholar to the Davis Center of Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University. Well, a Russian representing a Japanese institution in the United States of America was something suspicious there, so I remember that gleam in my colleagues' eyes, but the whole year was extremely successful. I got a chance to organize presentations, not only in the Davis Center, but also the Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies—the Korea Institute. We were in the same building, fortunately. I was also invited to the University of Southern California by Professor Peter Berton, who passed away last year. So I feel really thankful to get a chance to get to know him in person.

Roundtable

With the great help of Prof. Iwashita, who was the head of the center at that time, and Prof. Wolff, we organized a Hokkaido Roundtable at Harvard, speaking about the history of Russo-Soviet-Japanese relations over the previous century at three main turning points: 1917, 1945, and 1991. Our discussants were the heads of the Davis Center, Prof. Terry Martin, and of the Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies, Professor Andrew Gordon, so that was probably a good illustration of how area studies research and multiple area research are supposed to be organized, cross-border and cross-discipline as important complementary components.

As an ITP fellow I had to organize at least one event at the Davis Center, and participate in at least one national conference. I had the great luck of doubling this due to my cross-border interests to attend the Association of East Slavic East European and Eurasian Studies and the Association for Asian Studies conferences covering both Slavic researchers and Asian researchers.

The presentation, the second one, was devoted to the Koreans—a nation between the devil and deep blue sea, a hundred years ago, a clash between the great powers 100 years ago, Russia and Japan and Germany. The ITP fellowship provided the great chance to put myself into different academic societies and helped to establish contacts with different scholars from all around the world. And I sincerely hope this program will be launched again. I would also suggest expanding this kind of program to the level of postgrad students, in order to invite young scholars from abroad and send the young scholars from Japan to the areas of their research beyond the frame of Japanese Ministry of Science and Education, Monakasho. It's probably worth making it mandatory for Ph.D. students to make at least one presentation abroad. It's not a big deal to come from Japan to the Russian Far East or China or Korea. Or, since the Center has a number of agreements with the main institutions in the Far East, with the Russian Far East and with Central Asian countries' leading academic institutions. I'm actually speaking not only about the Center. I think it could be a good idea for other institutions both in Japan and the bordering countries. And that might bring us a little bit closer to what was mentioned by Prof. Wolff, preparing practically, not only those who are working in theory but those who actually know their studies.

So, in conclusion, I would like to emphasize the importance of a beyond-the-borders approach in area studies. In other words, every young researcher from now should probably try to master at least three lan-

guages: his or her own, English, and the language of his area studies, to be a specialist not only in the Slavic Eurasian studies but at least in one or two more fields, have an experience of long-term research at least in two different areas in different countries. I can argue that this is a sort of minimum for those who want to gain both academic results and jobs, because unfortunately we know that academic results, even brilliant ones, do not necessarily bring us the jobs.

And finally, I want to end with this sort of personal message. Last year, I was involved in one big project in Russia. We have accomplished and published this year a new textbook on the history of Japan. So, this is going to be the main textbook for Russian institutions and universities in the coming years. Maybe not only Russian—for the whole Russian-speaking world—for those who are going to be studying the history of Japan. So, I was in charge of the fifth chapter, the history of Japan from 1905 to 1945, and the final pages of that chapter were written here in Sapporo when I was here last year for the previous winter symposium. The text was submitted from here on December 7. So, for me, the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center is truly not only about Slavic studies—it is “karmicly” connected with Japanese studies in Russia, proving its name as a real Eurasian academic center, because Japan is a part of Eurasia. Once again, I would like to congratulate the Center, and wish a long life and prosperity, at least for the following 60 years. Thank you for your attention.

[Chair]: Please, Feng-sensei.

[Feng]: Thanks, Chairman. Many thanks, Director Tabata. I think I’m greatly honored to have the chance to participate in today’s discussion at a very special moment. 60 years for one institution is, I think, a whole historical circle for many East Asian countries. So, now we start this discussion as one circle finished and a new circle started. So, I think that is a very special moment.

First of all, I would like to very briefly introduce the history of our institution. The previous name of our institution was the Shanghai Institute for Soviet Union and Eastern European Studies, established in 1981. The motivation to establish such an institute was to learn about socialist reform—socialist perestroika from the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries. Of course, in the beginning, in the early 80s, we couldn’t officially and openly call the Soviet Union and Eastern

European countries socialist—only “revisionist.” Ten years later, as we approached the end of the 80s and the beginning of the 90s, suddenly, the Soviet Union collapsed. Such kind of historical, radical change of course brought many problems for our institution: what name we can use? Just like our colleagues from the Slavic Center.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the reputation of Russian studies, Eastern European studies, was going down very soon. But in the middle of the 90s, the former mayor of Shanghai, Mr. Wang Daohan, had a request for me—he told me, he asked me to organize a conference to discuss the collapse of the Soviet Union, of course, on the national level, cooperating with Beijing colleagues, such as Professor Li Jingjie, Ambassador Li Fenglin and the late director Xing Guangcheng. Why did the Soviet Union collapse so soon? Wang Daohan, with his close relationship with Mr. Jiang Zemin, the former top leader, asked for this unique academic conference on the national level, I think which strongly impacted on the whole academic development of Eurasian studies in China, and also somehow impacted on the later development of Sino-Russian bilateral relations. Wang Daohan attended each day of our conference, raised ideas and requirements, and also made judgments regarding financial support for our center for conferences. So in this way, by the end of 1999, our institute changed its name to the Center for Russian Studies.

Currently, Eurasian Studies in China pays special attention to three areas. The first one, of course, particularly in the last two years, many scholars, I think, spent a lot of time discussing and writing something about Ukraine crisis and the Syrian conflict, about such processes and the background, reason, perspective, and also what kind of impact on different regimes, for example, to Asia.

Secondly, currently, we also can find so many initiatives on Eurasian regional cooperation or development, including the Eurasian Economic Union, and also One Belt, One Road from China, and also many such kinds of ideas and initiatives from India, from Kazakhstan, from Mongolia, and maybe also from Japan. I think the situation is very complicated. What kind of interaction between such ideas and different initiatives. People pay attention to—I think, in particular, Chinese scholars—really pay attention to such kind of new progress, new situation. Of course, one of the topics is that Xi Jinping and Putin decided to make links between the two processes, as Eurasian Economic Union, and One Belt, One Road initiative.

And the third thing: not only our center, and I think also many Chinese scholars specializing in Eurasian studies still pay attention to domestic transition processes. I think that is the most important area. Ten years ago, our center published five volumes of collective monographs under the title “The Transformation Era,” focusing on post-Soviet Russia’s transformation during the “ten golden years.” The first decade of the 21st century was golden in China as the economy roared up, also creating newer state capabilities. This is state capitalism and we have seen it in Russia, in China, maybe India and different countries—Central Asia, maybe included.

Finally, very briefly, I would like to introduce our next year’s plan. Some books, some monographs, will be published. One is origins of Ukraine crisis, which is our best understanding of what happened. Another is a comparison of new state capitalism in Russia, India, and China. And also we have a special academic magazine, *Russian Studies*, and colleagues from the Slavic Center provided so many very interesting articles. Of course, we translate into Chinese. The Chinese young people, I think, are very interested in such kind of articles. Next year, we also will host some international conferences on China-Russian bilateral relations, on Far Eastern Siberia and on the Nordic Sea. Additionally, we organize the Russia-China academic young elite program, which invited international scholars to deliver lectures for our young people.

[Chair]: So, last but not least, our final speaker, Ha-sensei, please.

[Ha]: Thank you. Actually, speaking last preempts everything, so I don’t have anything to say, because I have been preempted by previous speakers. Also, somehow the jet-lag is catching up with me rapidly, so it’s kind of a challenging, tough time, for me. But anyhow, I’d like to start off by saying, my deepest thanks and gratitude to the Slavic Research Center, now called Slavic-Eurasian Research Center. I began to come to visit this Center since 1989, when Professor Ito was director. Also, I first met Professor Hasegawa here, so at that time, the theme of the conference was the impact of perestroika on Asia. Now, I thought, looking back at that topic, I thought that it was time to think about the impact of Asia on Eurasia, so the reverse way.

Anyhow, so, I think yesterday I was so much impressed with the very healthy senior scholars reflecting on their own memories and histories. And to me, that’s a beautiful thing. It’s a very rare scene in Korea, particu-

larly. So, not only their memories and histories, but also their wisdom and their willingness to still cooperate with the Center, I think, is a uniquely Japanese phenomenon, which I really cherish. And also, I remember that I was invited to Professor Mochizuki Kiichi, and we drank too much that night and I almost missed my last train. But then he generously opened up his own study room, so that I could get access to many of his data on the Russian Far East. That was, among many other good memories that still come to my mind, that illustrate the intellectually generous way in which scholarship has been conducted at the SRC these many years.

Anyhow, with the sense of humility and with the best wishes for another successful 60 years of development for SRC, I would like to make the following comments. Given the time constraint, I don't want to read my text.

My first comment is about the role of the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center for this region. Already the professors mentioned about the very important East Asian conference on Slavic Studies, which was initiated by this Center. I remember traveling with Professor Sato in my hometown in Korea. We were discussing about the importance of the creation of this conference some years back. I'm very happy to hear this conference is still going on, and hope it will achieve whatever the goals were that it originally set out to achieve.

And I would like to highlight the importance of continuity in the hope that a series of conferences should develop a project for the region's stability and peace, with the distinct goals and aims to promote, or to develop, some ideas, as to how to promote the peace and stability. Because among many conferences I've gone to, this place, I think, particularly in the North Asia or East Asian region, this Slavic Center, Russian Center, is the least-politicized intellectual space. This is impressive. So it has now invited so many different scholars from so many different regions and so many different orientations, they intermingle so freely here. I think it's sort of unusual, very remarkable, spot, or space, particularly in this region, so once again, I really appreciate—I express my gratitude to your past contributions.

So, the first point I made, I really hope the center continues to develop projects to promote regional stability and peace through very pragmatic projects.

But even more seriously, I would like to raise the following question: that is, what would be the identity of the research of this Center in the future? Already, Professor Hasegawa, you raised the three “I” s—interdisciplinary, internationalization, and integration. But I think we can develop these ideas into more substantive questions. That is, that one area we should focus on would be expanding comparative studies. Particularly, I don’t mean to say comparative studies among the former previous Slavic or Eurasian countries, but going beyond them. Particularly, I’m very much struck and impressed by the Center’s initiative in joining the larger, the regional, or the area study program in Japan. To me, it’s a very distinct parallel development in anticipating what’s coming in the future. So, I really cherish and am happy to see that program.

But then, more specifically, I would like to mention the following: that is, somehow I got the distinctive feeling that in Asian countries, there is a great separation between domestic political studies and then the area studies. So, I think this gap, these walls, should be broken down, so that we should learn from each other, between domestic studies and then area studies. Particularly, in this regard, I would like to mention that it’s about how to link historical studies to the social sciences or to the present studies. In other words, although I appreciate the fact that the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center has a long tradition of historical studies, now, in order to develop a distinct identity of Eurasian studies at the center, we should realize the fact that what is going on in the countries and region actually is going to be tremendously affected by the histories of some of the Northeast Asian or East Asian countries. In other words, the past of Japan could be the present of, let’s say, many countries on the Eurasian continent. So, how to link the past history to the present studies of Eurasian countries is going to be a big challenge for the future of the Center.

In order to facilitate that kind of interaction, I strongly urge, once again, to break down the wall between domestic studies and area studies.

And then, another, bigger question is, if you look at the Western tradition, particularly the American tradition, American studies or comparative studies in America, have greatly influenced, Soviet studies and Eurasian studies. So I think this is a good example. But then, at the present moment, in America, particularly in the social science fields, actually, everybody is complaining that there is no “big question.” Now, American social sciences is suffering from the lack of big questions, so clear in the 1960s and even earlier. When you apply that to Russian studies and Eurasian studies in the West, you remember, there were basically 3 or 4 distinctive

perspectives: for example, how to understand Russia as a hybrid of East and West, or oriental despotism, or all these kind of images of Russia or the Eurasian theme. In other words, Eurasia and Eurasianism, either an empty concept without any substance, or basically, some pejorative, negative implications. So, how to feel this Eurasian tradition, with us, a very positive and progressive substance, through substantive studies or research. To me, that's a very challenging question. In other words, now in the West, people are talking about the rise of Asia. But they are speaking about the rise in primarily economic terms, but without sort of establishing a strong intellectual foundation. But the rise of Asia, actually, the rise of Asia will not last too long. So, I hope the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center here can play a very critical, important role, in this direction, particularly given that you have the hardware of institutional infrastructure well-established under the various leaderships of the previous directors, including the present leader, Professor Tabata-san.

So, all in all, I think we have a great opportunity here. We should not remain the lever of repeating the intellectual inferiority of the West. I think it's high time to go beyond that. How to overcome this intellectual inferiority would be a critical, challenging task, including the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center.

Once again, I would like to express my deep appreciation and thanks to the organizers for the invitation. Somehow, I would like to conclude my observation with what I heard from one of the Japanese Nobel laureates, a physicist. He was interacting with Japanese students and I was much struck by his first advice to students: "Don't be too serious. Relax."

Following this Nobel advice, I hope we all relax after this. Thank you very much.