



Why Northeast Asian States have not seen the Emergence of Cross-border Cooperation: Reflections from the 1980s to Today



Kick-off Symposium of National Institutes for the Humanities (NIHU) Area Studies Project for Northeast Asia "Rediscovery of Northeast Asia" held on January 23-24, 2016 at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka

Forward

The National Institute for Humanities (NIHU) established an Area Studies Project for Northeast Asia in 2015. The Slavic-Eurasian Research Center of Hokkaido University has joined the project as the core institution responsible for examining international and regional relations. Reviewing the entirety of the post-Cold War period, initially the Northeast Asian area experienced a surge of optimism regarding the possibilities for cohabitation and interdependence in the region, which ran from the late 1980s to the 1990s. This vision of functioning cooperative relations between Japan, the Koreans, China, Taiwan, the Russian Far East, Mongolia and the United States extending across national borders was striking, captured under the notion of a "Common



“House of Northeast Asia” that shaped much of political and social discourse at the time. More than 20 years has passed, and today few people still refer to Northeast Asia. Efforts to create a regional community, including the six-party talks, have vanished. Little attention is now given to the prospects of regional integration and cooperation while political and economic rivalry and competition has characterized relations between the US-Japan alliance, China and Russia. North Korea remains a pariah in the region, although a nuclear-armed one.

These challenges force us to re-examine past efforts at building a Northeast Asian community and to develop a new blueprint for the emergence of such an organization under current conditions. The Slavic-Eurasian Research Center’s role within the Northeast Asian project is to shed light on the potential for community-building across scales: at the sub-national, sub-regional and supra-regional levels.

The first issue of the on-line report *Northeast Asia Today* offers both a history of community-building in Northeast Asia and reflections on its future. It incorporates the contributions of scholars from Korea, Japan, China, Russia and the US, all of whom have extensive experience of the Northeast Asian region.

The discussion begins by examining what Northeast Asia is and why it failed to successfully develop a framework for regional cooperation in the 1990s. Reflecting on these past experiences, it then offers some thoughts for the future.

I hope that readers are inspired to join the discussion with us.

Akihiro Iwashita

Professor, Slavic-Eurasian Research Center
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Moderator:

Akihiro Iwashita (Hokkaido University / Kyushu University)

Speakers:

Ha Yongchool (University of Washington, US)

Sergey Sevastyanov (Far Eastern Federal University, Russia)

Yang Cheng (East China Normal University, China)

Mitsuhiro Mimura (Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia, Japan)

David Wolff (Hokkaido University)

Akihiro Iwashita

Good morning ladies and gentlemen. My name is Akihiro Iwashita, and I work at the Slavic-Eurasian Research Center, at Hokkaido University. But now I am also affiliated with the Kyushu University's new center for Asian Pacific Future Studies. Today, I will chair this first session.

First of all, when I was invited to this project one year ago, I was shocked to hear the name "Northeast Asian Project," because from my point of view, the term "Northeast Asia" is a bit old-fashioned. If we go back to the 1980s, we had exhaustively discussed the term "Northeast Asia." Seeking to create a "common house of Northeast Asia", the region was made up of South and North Korea, Russia, Mongolia, China, Japan, and the surrounding neighborhood. But the realities are very severe, and we should face these realities before creating a more beautiful plan. This is my starting point.

In the 1980s and 90s, we had discussed the Northeast Asian communities in the context of international relations at the state-to-state level, and also, we had big dreams for Northeast Asian regional cooperation and integration. For example, Niigata, Toyama, in Japan, Primorye and Khabarovsk in the Russian Far East, Jilin and Heilongjiang in China, and the Eastern coastal provinces of South Korea and North Korea. Unfortunately some criticized this area, and this plan for uniting poor regions to get resources. Except for a couple of capitals of the states, the Northeast Asian countries did not pay attention to this regional plan.

This is the first point why now we again discuss Northeast Asia. And this is the first



task of our first session. Secondly, what is Northeast Asia? Some mention it in a very, very ambitious perspective, but 20 years ago, 30 years ago, we also had discussed what Northeast Asia was.

We never reached an agreement. Probably, this kind of discussion will continue for long, but our main concern here is international relations and politics. So, I hope that we can provoke further discussion. We decided to manage this session in a slightly different way. I do not want you to sit, to be patient for a long, long time; therefore,

we decided that speakers will have at least 3-5 minutes each, a kind of roundtable. So, let me start the roundtable's first half of the discussion.

First of all, dear panelists, I will give you 3- 5 minutes, so please introduce yourself: who you are, why you were invited, what you think, and your contributions to Northeast Asian research. So Professor Ha Yongchool first, 3-5 minutes please.

Ha Yongchool

First of all, I don't know why I was invited here, but anyhow. Actually, personally, I have been trying to be a regional man for the last 10 years or so, but then I found it was very difficult to be a regional man in this region. That's why I am interested in regional studies more than anything else. I used to teach at Seoul National University and then I moved to the University of Washington several years ago. I came to look at the region more or less from afar. Basically, what I see in the region is the gap between international relations approaches and regional studies.

To me, particularly reflecting on the Western international theories, somehow I see what English historians long time ago said, that is what I call poverty of theory in the region. In other words, as much as we were felt to be regionally oriented, we haven't developed any kind of conceptual theoretical framework to understand the distinctive, unique aspects of the region, largely because of the historical legacy of the region that has long been what I call externalized by outside forces.

My first point to make is that we should realize—as much as I think we are in a hurry



—the theoretical conception frameworks are not developed to support our sense of urgency.

Akihiro Iwashita

The reason I invited Professor Ha is that he has endeavored to make the Northeast Asian Committee. Every time he told me that we lacked an institution of Northeast Asia and that we should create one. He tried to do so before the APEC Summit in Vladivostok of 2012. He organized a workshop to create the institution, invited governmental people; we met in Beijing and in Moscow, but unfortunately, he failed and I failed. Therefore, it's a very big chance for Professor Ha to resume this work. This is the reason why I invited him. Next, Sergey.

Sergey Sevastyanov

Chairman, so to start with the first question why I am invited, I think because I have been a friend of Professor Iwashita for a long while, and maybe because, again it's kind of recognition that Russia is a part of Northeast Asia, also this is a good point I guess. Maybe the third point is that I represent Far Eastern Federal University, which many of you may know. It is a really big university now, focused on Russian efforts to go ahead with more studies and research on Northeast Asia and many other areas.

As for me, I have kind of two positions. I am Director of Research Laboratory of Multi-Lateral Cooperation Studies in Security and Economics, and my research focus is East Asia, Northeast Asia. Also, I am a professor at the Department of International Relations.

In my research laboratory, we do a lot of studies, solve these issues, and during the last several years we have published several monographs on East Asian Regionalism and on other issues, so we cooperate with many research schools in Japan, the United States, China, and South Korea especially.

Maybe my last point is that, yes, it's a long story. I have represented Russia for many years in such multilateral cooperation forums like Northeast Asian Economic Forum, which many of you may know it's about security and run by Lee-Jay Cho and also



Northeast Asian Cooperation Dialog run by Susan Shirk from California.

Again, both of these groups have been working for more than 20 years maybe and there are always questions: if they are efficient, do they help or do they really make sense? The answer is that yes, they actually do. For example, the Northeast Asia Economic Forum, for many years, they have discussed all those multilateral projects to start constructing oil pipelines, to connect railroads, and finally, this happened and we can see it. It took some time, and then the governments accepted these ideas proposed by scholars and said that was their own ideas. Maybe this is how it should work. Anyway, I think that our project is important, and I would like to contribute to it as much as I can. Thank you.

Akihiro Iwashita

Professor Sergey Sevastyanov has been a leading researcher in the Russian Far East's Vladivostok. Particularly during the Cold War period and after the 1980s, it was difficult to find a good researcher who could speak English in the Russian Far East. He was an exception. Even now, he is a bit older than me, but he is still progressive as always. In the Russian context, Moscow has ignored the Russian Far East, Vladivostok for a long time, but Sergey now is very, very appreciated in Moscow. Therefore, I am very happy inviting so influential a researcher in Russia, particularly in the Russian Far East.

Yang Cheng, he is the youngest, but already a shining star researcher from China.

Cheng Yang

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and thank you for inviting me to join this mega project. I'm very happy. I think you invited me because of my research institution, Research Center for Russian Studies at the East China Normal University, which has a status of a national key research base for social science and humanities. Among all of the Chinese universities, this is the only one which has such kind of status.

The second is because I joined the East Asian Academic Community on Russian Eurasian Studies or Slavic Eurasian Studies. We have helped Hokkaido University's Slavic-Eurasian Research Center from 2009 and had six East Asian Conference, but



actually, I think it's better to call it as Northeast Asian Conference because the majority of the participants at this conference came from these six countries, which have been mentioned a lot this morning. And the seventh conference on the Slavic-Eurasian Studies will be held this September in Shanghai, which we will host.

The third I think is because we also have some similar kind of multi-institutional or multidisciplinary collaboration projects like yours. For example, in our school, we have a Center for so-called – it's quite difficult to translate actually into English, that means not only Russia and Central Asian states, but includes Japan, South Korea, North Korea and so on, so a little bit similar to Northeast Asia, but it also includes Southeast Asia.

The last I think is maybe because I have written some papers that criticized Chinese studies on Russian and Eurasian studies. I think that we need new area studies, different from traditional area studies. Actually, I think that China's Russian and Eurasian Studies after the collapse of the Soviet Union actually have entered into a new period of crisis. We would like to have more collaboration with the outside world, with the leading experts from all around the world. I think this is also one of the points. Thank you.

Akihiro Iwashita

As you know, Northeast Asia has faced tense situations, particularly involving China-Japan relations. The reason why I invited Yang Cheng is because he is a non-typical Chinese researcher. Usually, in public, China delegates hesitate to speak their own voices, and only repeat the official line or semi-official line. But Yang Cheng never does that. As far as I know, until today, I don't know about now, but I believe that he will show his honest frank talk, as usually he does.

Next, Mimura-san.

Mitsuhiro Mimura

Thank you Chairman. I am working for the Economic Research Institute of Northeast Asia, which is located in Niigata, and I think the reason why I was invited here is



because our institute is a principal part of the notion of Northeast Asian Economic Cooperation starting in the 1990s. Actually, I am not a native of Niigata. I am just an immigrant worker, and this area (Osaka) is originally where I was from. My high school and university are in a 5-kilometer radius of this MINPAKU, and I am very happy to come back to my hometown, and also be in an environment where I can speak Osaka-ben.

Anyway, I am a researcher on North Korean economic law and also the North Korean economy, and in my institute I conduct research on the Northeast Asian Economic Cooperation. I like travelling so I travel everywhere in Northeast Asian countries, and the place where I first met Professor Iwashita was the transit room of Vladivostok airport. When I came back from Pyongyang via Vladivostok to Niigata, I saw him at the airport, and he also saw someone sitting, maybe looking like a Japanese in a transit room in the Vladivostok airport, and he thought that was a little bit strange and started to talk.

Our institute has done a lot of work for the Northeast Asian Economic Cooperation, but there are no official relations between Japan and North Korea yet, and there are so many difficulties that we have to face, so yes, I want to do something to make the Northeast Asian Cooperation Framework start working again in the 21st Century. Thank you very much.

Akihiro Iwashita

The reason why I invited him is because in the 90s, he invited me to a big conference on Northeast Asian Studies and community in Northeast Asia. But of course, as I told you, it didn't work. This last symposium, I remember he organized, on Northeast Asia, therefore, he should have a responsibility for the work. I asked him not to forget Northeast Asia. So anyway, I am happy he will be back.

One more thing, it's hard for us to invite researchers from North Korea, but he really knows North Korea and he often goes there. We have so many researchers on South Korea, but not so many on North Korea. I believe he is the number 1 North Korean researcher in Japan because his accent of Korean is in North Korean way. Have a chat



with him in Korean. So, David.

David Wolff

Good morning. My name is David Wolff, and I am probably here because I am from the University of Hokkaido, and I am probably here because my office is across the hall from Professor Iwashita's, which is very convenient. Also, I am a historian, and therefore, in possession of historical imagination for approaching imaginary geographic areas such as Northeast Asia. And I am also an American citizen. Even though Northeast Asia may be imaginary, nonetheless, imaginary things do have the ability to inspire fear. When we talk about Northeast Asia, and we talk about Northeast Asia that includes all of the countries we've just discussed, and we don't talk about including the United States, then the United States would always like to remind us that there are other imaginary regions that we could be thinking about, such as the North Pacific, which would include the United States.

If we're going to include a piece of Russia in Northeast Asia, because we are kind of excluding the part that's bordering on Germany, and if we're going to exclude large portions of China from Northeast Asia because otherwise we're going to have pieces of Northeast Asia that are bordering on India, which is kind of far from what we imagine Northeast Asia to be most of the time, then why don't we imagine a Northeast Asia that includes a piece of Alaska and maybe even Seattle and the University of Washington so Professor Ha can also live inside our region.

In any case, as an American, I present this view saying that we can talk about Northeast Asia, but it doesn't have to be in an exclusionary way as we search for ways to develop further cross-border activity and cooperation. As a historian, I can look back and tell you that this region has been imagined differently in the past. There was a very large Japan in the last century, and there was a vision of a greater China, and the Soviet Union, which doesn't exist anymore, had bigger pieces of what we would think of as Northeast Asia, with Mongolia almost as a semi-colony. And we can also imagine a greater Korea. Koreans often think about a large version of Korea that includes all of the Koreans in the Diaspora as well. So all of these visions of what Northeast Asia can be are very rich for a historian. On the other hand, they involve overlapping claims



and therefore, it makes it exceptionally difficult to come up with cooperation across the borders. And that's where historians can come in to help us understand where those overlapping claims come in and possibly to help us to diffuse those claims in the present and to think of ways of compensating people for giving up on parts of their important imaginary of where their nation should be. So maybe I'll stop there for the moment. Thank you.

Akihiro Iwashita

David is a historian of Northeast Asia, and he is talented in languages. He speaks Russian, Chinese, and Japanese. Probably, he will contribute a comment to other history-based sessions. But today, I want David to be the commentator from the United States voice. Because how we treat the United States in Northeast Asian issues is very important and, particularly for Japan, a country allied with the United States. We can't do well without the United States, for better or worse. Anyway, I will ask David to comment on and listen to the Northeast Asian voices-- Korea, China, the Russian Far East, and Japan-- and he will wrap up our session and elicit questions. So basically, the roundtable, the four panelists from Professor Ha up to Mimura-san, we continue.

The first topic is history and the background of Northeast Asia.

What historical events were more important in Northeast Asia? What should a country have responsibility for? Responsibility means not just war and conflictual causes. In conventional wisdom, Japan seems to be the number one cause of World War II, and North Korea seems to be the number one cause for post-World War II tensions. However, we have not forgotten the reconciliation period between Korea and Japan, China and Japan, and North Korea and its neighbors. We also know about the tensions (past and potentially future) between South Korea and China, China and Russia again, and so on. Please tell us about your constructivist or about the time-changing complex historical factors beyond the simple understanding of direct "responsibility."

So Professor Ha, please.

Ha Yongchool

Thank you. Actually, I was interrupted earlier, so I forgot to express my sincere



thanks to the organizers for their excellent job here. Also, I am very happy to be a part of this distinguished group. Actually, Professor Iwashita sent us eight questions. I thought I was going through another round of qualifying examinations at the end of my Ph.D. work, and so it was very tough. Each question could be a book project.

Having said that, in the interest of time, just let me briefly read whatever I thought about the questions which Professor Iwashita sent to me. To me, the most relevant to East Asia and especially Northeast Asia is the fact that modernization of the major countries in the region was not motivated by endogenous factors, but pressured by exogenous forces. Each country trod a different route for change, but what they have in common is that the changes started with a strong sense of inferiority over the West, and in one form or another, the members of the region experienced the sense of humiliation through the interaction with the West. Intra-regional dialog or interactions were minimal, if not non-existent. China took the most radical form of modernization as a way of catching up with the West. Korean history was interrupted by colonialism, and Japan modernized in the most defensive way. The concept of Northeast Asia and East Asia was poorly developed among the members of the region. In short, the region had long been defined by non-regional members and forces. The originality of the ideas for the region as a whole has not been seriously sought. The region has long been externalized, as I had said earlier.

This is the basic background for the poor development of the consciousness of the region. Out of this historical background, two distinct phenomena have developed: One is the apparent Asian paradox where the members of the region have shown opportunistic and short-term pursuits of economic interests through increasing trade and investment while slowly progressing in political and security relations. The other is a high level of frustration out of the lack of serious regional integration, which comes from the weak sense of history. These two factors gave rise to the weak endogenous intellectual foundation within the region. Little effort has been made to build intellectual infrastructure to understand and to present the historical trajectories of the region.

Asia and Northeast Asia in particular should reflect upon this common historical background before it is too self-critical of the lack of progress in regional cooperation.



The Asianization of Asia, thus, has a long way to go. Thank you.

Akihiro Iwashita

Thank you Professor Ha. I'll just recap. So he emphasized the outside factors for the Northeast Asia, and the lack of original ideas. So we should reflect more upon ourselves. Sergey, you are probably an outsider. So what do you think about this discussion?

Sergey Sevastyanov

Thank you Chairman. Yes, of course, Russia is a late comer to Northeast Asia, this is a fact. Sometimes we think that with our coming to the Northeast Asia's region, we kind of became formally organized. It actually got the recent form as it is now. We speak about it differently, but anyway, Russia now considers itself as a part of this area, and we are really interested in developing the Russian Far East and distant Siberia in cooperation with our neighbors in the Asia Pacific, and especially with Northeast Asian countries.

According to the Russian point of view, of course, all these countries are a part of Northeast Asia. It's Northeast China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, North Korea, Mongolia, and the Russian Far East, but plus also Eastern Siberia. This is important and it's natural to look at Eastern Siberia as a region connecting European Russia with its Eastern territories in a geographical and political sense. These days, it's really important in global projects to speak about this Eurasian Initiative and other projects. The Russian Government, while proposing perspective plans to develop eastern territories, never separates the Russian Far East and Eastern Siberia.

As far as all historic experience in formation of Northeast Asia community, there were lots of discussions over the last 25-30 years highlighting complementarities between economies of countries in Northeast Asia. Based on that, many proposals had been made and initiatives had been launched with The Tumen River Project being the most important among them. But unfortunately, most of those plans of forming a regional community failed to materialize due to such fundamental opposing factors as: negative historic memory, nationalism and territorial disputes, differences in state and



socio-economic systems, culture and civilization background et cetera.

But coming back to current situation, as our relationship with neighbors, Moscow has very good relationship these days with China, with the Republic of Korea, with Mongolia, and we are also making gradual steps to solve the territorial dispute with Japan. In fact, Russia does not consider it as a main obstacle on the way to reconciliation and improving bilateral ties with Japan. We are asking Japanese business for more cooperation with Russia, and I will touch this subject later during our discussions.

My kind of final but preliminary final points, what is Russia's possible input? How can we see it? Energy and transportation have been chosen as Russia's strategic assets to become more economically integrated to Northeast Asia, and to become Russia's contribution to future Northeast Asia Community.

Another big point, as I say it now, as far as long-term historic animosities are concerned, making substantial improvements in bilateral ties between China and Japan is a 'must' on the way to forming the Northeast Asia community. Thank you.

Akihiro Iwashita

Thank you Sergey. As a researcher of Russian foreign policy, I am always thinking of the meaning of the Russian presence in the Northeast Asian community. As Sergey mentioned, Russia is a late comer, so it means that it is relatively free from the long, long history of Northeast Asia. I mean that the presence of Russia sometimes provides space for cooperation that is free from historical issues. As he rightly said, probably Russia is the most tolerant country to Japan in history, more than others. So in this sense, Japan probably will be targeted every time by Koreans, Chinese, and others. So, I skip Yang-san. Yang-san, after listening to Mimura-san's comment, I would like to know how China will respond. So, Mimura-san first.

Mitsuhiro Mimura

Okay. Well, as a researcher of Korean matters, I often visit South Korea, North Korea,



and China. What I remember is, my first day in South Korea in 1985 was also started with history. An old man sitting next to me started to talk about history on a train from Busan to Seoul, and I was very surprised because our conversation started with history. I mean Japanese colonization, and I didn't know how to say anything but sorry. But anyway, after that, I had many, many research projects with South Korean, North Korean, Chinese counterparts, and now what I understand is that history, especially the anti-Japanese war in China, or the struggle of Koreans on the Korean Peninsula, constitutes a kind of legitimacy of these countries. So dealing with anti-Japanese sentiments in South Korea, North Korea, and China is very important in order to make a Northeast Asian cooperation mechanism.

One thing, very simply speaking, is the history problem with China, Mongolia, and Russia is not so complicated because we were defeated World War II. China won, Mongolia won, and the Soviet Union won. But the problem is with the Korean Peninsula. Korea, as a colony of Imperial Japan was defeated in World War II with Japan, and later, they gained independence. But anyway, they have a trauma of being defeated with Japan in the World War II, and they had the Government of the Republic of Korea in Shanghai, but the government was not ratified either by Allied forces or by the Axis powers, so that constitutes a kind of a trauma. I suppose these are the sentiments of the Korean people.

History is always very complicated and troublesome when we discuss Korea. The day before yesterday I was in Seoul as a part of a strategic dialog between Japan and South Korea, and what we talked about all day was how we could reach an agreement between Japanese and the ROK government over the comfort women matters. So history is not history. History is a contemporary matter, and we are easily creating history this moment too. Thank you very much.

Akihiro Iwashita

Thank you for the constructive explanation on the issue. How will Yang Cheng respond?



Yang Cheng

I think history is history. History in fact plays a significant role in the current situation. For me, I think before the modernity entered into Northeast Asia, before the Western powers entered into the region to break the traditional East Asian system, I think we have had – as a part of the country in Northeast Asia of today has been a part of the integrated system, economic system, culture system. But when the Western countries entered, the nation states started to replace the traditional empires in Northeast Asia, and the result of this kind of states and nation building was the state-centrism behavioral patterns of the decision-makers in this region.

I think to a large extent, nation building and state building as a political process partially blocked the economic process in Northeast Asia as a common economic space, from the perspective of the long-term concepts of the French Annales School.

I think the historical memory, like the Qing-Japanese War, Russo-Japanese War, and the War of Resistance against Japan consolidated the national consciousness of elites and ordinary people in the countries located in the Northeast Asia over and over again.

The end of the Cold War did not bring an end to history, an end to geography, and an end to the nation states, but strengthened the geographical and psychological boundaries of nation-states instead. It also led to a competition among different models of regional cooperation, regional integration, which is a leading cause of the failure to develop regionalism and the regionalization process similar to the EU in Northeast Asia.

Akihiro Iwashita

Thank you. We have a couple of different aspects to discuss, so if we haven't fully discussed these historical backgrounds, we will revisit them because this is just a kickoff session in a kickoff symposium.

The second issue I raised is economy. Divisional cooperation on the economic issues in the region, for example, labor force for China and South Korea, resources for Russia, technology and investment for Japan and Korea were typical discussion points on the future of the Northeast Asian community in the 80s, early 90s. Why hasn't this



blueprint worked well? We should go back to discuss the starting point.

Please provide economic reasons here rather than political ones that can answer the above question. Additionally, the role of divisional function in the region seems to be changing now. China is now able to invest and lead the regional economy. How should we evaluate the current situation? TPP, AIIB, and other new plans for economic order making go beyond the Northeast Asian framework. It means that we do not need Northeast Asian framework in the economic terms, I think. Can we, then, foresee a new opportunity to make a community in this new context of an economic order? We also change the order, as an economist, Mimura-san will have the first say.

Mitsuhiro Mimura

Thank you Chairman. Well, in Niigata, when we started talking about the Northeast Asian Economic Cooperation in the mid-1980s, those who started the conversation were the older generation, senior generation, that had a memory of the boats coming into the port of Niigata full of goods in between 1943 and 1944. After the control of the sea lane in the Pacific Ocean was taken by the US Allied Forces, and Japan had only the Sea of Japan to get materials from Manchuria, Niigata was in the midst of an economic boom at that time. One of the reasons why we started to think about Northeast Asian economic cooperation was the geographical proximity. It's near. So we can make some cooperation. We already had cooperation. In the 1920s, we had a boat line from Niigata to Vladivostok, in the 1930s once every 2 days to Chongjin, Rajin, and from the Tsuruga, Fukui prefecture, Rajin, and Sŏnbong, and Vladivostok. That kind of – there is a memory that had something to do with the Northeast Asian Economic Cooperation thinking. But at the same time, in order to make economic cooperation, the conformity of systems and also the quality of market economy and those kind of things were very, very important. But at that time, in the 1980s we mainly talked about proximity, and in the 1990s about Russia in the middle of shock therapy, and that this financial system wasn't working very well, and is a kind of – is a legal system and also is a governmental organization. So it was not working very well. So some Japanese companies invested in the Russian Far East in the 1990s, and they failed. Since then, they were continuously saying that, "Russia is stable, Russia is stable". But Russia, in 2015, is much different from Russia in 1992 or '93, so in that sense, we



have to rethink how we failed at economic cooperation in Northeast Asia and then how we can make better ways of economic cooperation. Thank you.

Akihiro Iwashita

Sergey, you are targeted probably, so you are the next.

Sergey Sevastyanov

Considering the Russian Far East territories, and yeah, maybe Eastern Siberia too, but mostly the Russian Far East, the critical challenge for Russia and for Moscow is how to diminish the outflow of Russian citizens from the Russian Far East to the most prosperous parts of the country. Actually, just during the last several years, this process has slowed a little. People are still leaving, but not so many as it was before.

Heavily relying on natural resources of these territories, Moscow decided to introduce long-term plans to develop the Russian Far East, and lately has been substantially increasing public allocations to improve regional energy and transportation infrastructure in these parts of the country. The main idea of those concepts is to stimulate local and export business activities that will reproduce itself with being of permanent character, and create high paying jobs, bring more taxes to local budgets, and finally, stop outflow of local Russian population. This is kind of a big plan.

But in fact, the APEC Summit that happened in Vladivostok 3 years ago, demonstrated that well, it gave Russia a chance to articulate some of these ideas, some of its preferences and to develop into the Russian Far East. But the most important point which I always emphasize in my papers, and with which not all Russian scholars agree is that this summit demonstrated first of all, that the investment climate in the Russian Far East is very bad, both for Russian business and foreign business. As you may know, as students of economics, in the Russian Far East, only huge government companies are successful, like Rosneft, Gazprom, which are subsidized, but others are actually not coming to the Russian Far East at all. As a result, several important administrative decisions have been made in the Kremlin, and a whole series of administrative measures and economic measures had been started.



In the administrative sphere, as you may know, the Ministry of Development of the Russian Far East came into existence, and they were given the task of developing several new projects to develop the Russian Far East, and very quickly, they introduced the so-called Priority Development Areas Program as a key tool for the development of the region. In December last year, President Putin signed a law “On priority socio-economic development areas in the Russian Federation,” trying to attract more investments from Russian and foreign private investors. According to this law, business people wishing to obtain resident status on these territories should sign an agreement with the authorities. It’s a kind of interesting point. After that, they are subjects of a special, very good tax regime and simplified business rules. In terms of the Japan Sea Rim Economic Integration, as a core of the imagined Northeast Asia community, I can emphasize just this perspective, the Priority Development Areas that have been proposed recently for the Primorsky region where I come from, Southern Primorye. Just to give you an idea how diversified this area is, there are a lot of options for Russian and foreign business. In the Primorsky region, for example, there are projects, three or four of them already, that have been approved, and three more are under discussion - a Rosneft petrochemical cluster in Southern Primorye, a shipbuilding cluster at Bolshoi Kamen, the sea port Zarubino, the Russian island where our university is, this is research and development plus tourism cluster, the Mikhailovsky agricultural park, and Nadezhdinsky industrial and logistics park. All possible areas are there. These plans correspond well with the most recent initiative by the Russian Government to introduce from January this year a special regime of a free port in the southern part of Primorsky region for Russian and foreign investors. For business, it means a lot, but it’s a very complicated and long story. Just for all of you as scholars, I just let you know, now you can come to Vladivostok visa-free, any of you, any country, any citizen of any country for up to 8 days. So now you are more welcome because Russian visa is very tough to get, but now you can come visa-free.

As for the perspectives, some preferences are given to China, for example, now Russia gives more space for Chinese participation in southern Primorye ports, and recently, Japanese investors were given a proposal to invest in energy projects. My final point is that Russia also is still interested in trilateral cooperation projects on the Korean Peninsula. Of course, it is not easy to start because of the DPRK issue, but we still



I think that it's very important because otherwise, economic integration in Northeast Asia will not go anywhere. Thank you.

Akihiro Iwashita

Very, very good plans, like in the 1980s. Could you tell me in 1 minute – 30 seconds what's the difference between the 1980s and now? Thirty seconds.

Sergey Sevastyanov

The point is that in previous years, it was only politics and the idea to show that we were kind of ready to cooperate. But now, we finally brought some economic impetus. And it's really, if you are an economist and you look at it, the conditions are excellent, just extremely good. So we'll see what will be in practice. And the new team, we have a new minister and a new representative of the President, they are both absolutely focused on developing this new type of relationship.

Akihiro Iwashita

I hope it works well. We invite the Chinese realist view on the economy.

Yang Cheng

I think actually, yes, successful economic cooperation, you have some pre-conditions for it, but for example, it's better to have a whole chain of economic exchanges, especially to have a stable market. It's better to have good governance in the Northeast Asia countries. So I partially agree with Professor Mimura's statements.

But I think it's not enough to have this kind of stable market or good governance in these countries because we have witnessed some different cases, fully successful or partially successful regionalism in the world where also there is a lack of very developed market economies. I think this is not the only precondition. I would like to say that there is no cooperation or little cooperation in Northeast Asia, economic cooperation can never be just economic, I fear, but has an active political nature. Many political factors like historical memory, security regime, and political relations constitute a complex cooperation background for the Northeast Asian economic cooperation. Let's take the European integration as an example. Even European



integration was a political and legal process in the economic cooperation agenda from the beginning. So I think ideas of politicians played a leading role in this process.

Therefore, in Northeast Asian countries, when we design the integration path, if we just look from the perspective of economic functionalism, I think it will look scientific. But actually, it's unscientific. It seems rational, but it's actually irrational. For example, think in the context of the Ukraine crisis. Many Western observers emphasized that the agreements between China and Russia will play a significant role in the power configuration in Northeast Asia. But actually, let's look at all of the agreements signed by China and Russia. Maybe a lot of agreements have been signed, but if we look at the real situation, I think a lot of agreements have not been realized until today. Even the agreement of cooperation between Northeast China and the Russian Far East and Eastern Siberia in 1999, which I joined in the designing of, and joined almost all of the negotiations between the Chinese and Russian governments. But until today, I think no more than 40% has been realized. But this program is aimed at until 2018 from 2009, which means more than half of the process has passed, but the rural situation is not good enough. But the difference is that the Chinese Government and the Russian Government tend to use a lot of new mechanisms – to express new mechanism issues that we have a very successful agenda. I think it's a typical issue. For example, labor forces in the Far East, the developing Far East needs a labor force from the outside world, but a think-tank of top researchers from Russia, from Moscow, who have always worked for the Kremlin told me and told all of the Chinese participants in Shanghai that it is too sensitive for Moscow to accept a Chinese labor force in the Far East. They would like to use North Korean or Central Asian neighbors, but not Chinese. So I think there are a lot of political factors which played an active role in this whole process.

Akihiro Iwashita

We identified the challenges and the perspectives, so Professor Ha, could you wrap things up in a more theoretical way?

Ha Yongchool

I don't know a lot about it, but let me try. Before I get into the economic area, with



which I am not so much familiar, I will just raise a general question, very commonsensical question about how much actually, while working intellectually on this regionalization or committee building issue, do we really feel regional? I don't think that's the case. In most cases, we are intellectually regional, but actually psychologically sentiment-wise still its non-regional. That's my honest feeling about all of this. Having said that, Professor Iwashita, my dear colleague, mentioned the failure story of the Northeastern Committee Building Consortium that I organized with him several years ago. I noticed that the main causes of the failure were exactly the lack of leadership and vision in the region. In fact, whether it was Russian leadership or any other national leadership in the region, I don't think they were really interested in this long-term vision thing. I mean I thought at least intellectually or theoretically – conceptually the Russian Far East is a good target to build some sort of a – it could provide some venues to improve the sense of community at least. Why, because all neighboring countries are interested in Russian resources. Then, the Russian Far East has all the resources that we can possibly think of. But simply, there is no sort of a final touch to speak on the issue. So to me, that from a political science point of view, there is a total lack of long-term vision and leadership.

Then, secondly, I would like to point out, I think having said that, however, somehow the nature of the political economy development in the region, actually has a strong sense of state or nationalism embedded in its development. In other words, there is no separation between the economy and policy in each country's mode of development. To me, it's embedded as a sort of impediment or barrier to the further development of a regional vision.

But then also, having said that, somehow we have a sense of urgency. We are in a hurry. To me, that kind of sense of urgency comes from the modes of our own development. That is, rapid late comers overcoming their own domestic economic problems.

I would like to throw in a general question here, somehow are we in a stage of frustration or are we hopeful about the future? To me, now it's kind of a borderline area—there is some hope and there is some frustration. At this juncture, my



proposition is that we should not be so much frustrated. To me, the sources, as I'll develop later perhaps, the source of frustration in the region comes from the fact that we are comparing ourselves with Western Europe. To me, that kind of impetus assumption needs to be critically reviewed among ourselves. So that's my third point.

My final point is slightly separate from this political issue. There is an intrinsic sort of confrontational conflict between what I call physical economy and the financial economy. Somehow, whether you look at Japan, Korea, or China, they have very weakly developed financial markets. So I remember I was invited to Tokyo University in 1997 right after the South Korean economic crisis, and then my first comment in Japan was about the famous model of Flying Geese with Japan leading and then the rest of the geese follow. I said that all the geese flew away, leaving only one Japanese goose ahead. Why?

The Japanese production model of capitalism should have prepared for the possible reaction of finance capitalism from the West upon the East Asian model. Somehow, we are not ready for it. As long as the financial market is so weakly developed in the region, the sense of vulnerability will remain high all the time and then this kind of intrinsic sense of vulnerability will inhibit the further integration process.

Akihiro Iwashita

Thank you. I think another team will continue the economic mission, so we can leave this and go to the main topics - international relations, security, and geopolitics.

The end of Cold War gave us a good opportunity to reshape the community. Particularly, the Six-Party Talks on the Korean Peninsula were expected to become an institution in regional cooperation. The reality is that it did not work even for nuclear issues, and has almost disappeared. Why did we fail to capitalize on the opportunity? Now, as China's presence and challenge are reshaping the Northeast Asia regional order, the US-Japan alliance has gained new momentum to react to that. How should we see the current situation? Could it be a new opportunity for community building or just a continuation of a messy rivalry?



What do you think were the geopolitical factors behind the failure of Northeast Asian Community making in the past? The China-Soviet conflict and the Korean War were examples of continental competition, but now the main battlefield is moving towards the maritime area. To what extent are the Southeast and East China Sea, the Sea of Japan, the Sea of Okhotsk and the Arctic relevant to regional order transformation?

So as a specialist of international relations, Professor Ha, you are first.

Ha Yongchool

All right, I didn't expect it. I think that as for security, I will mainly focus on the Six-Party Talks since you highlighted my current background. To me, the era of Six-Party Talks has long been over. I have been advocating that the Six-Party formula is not going to work for a variety of reasons. The most important factor would be US intentions. The US intention was not to meet with North Korea, they used the Six Party formula as a way of avoiding North Korea. To me, that's a fundamental limit, the limitation in the Six-Party Talks. Secondly, it's too clumsy. I mean, what kind of meeting is this when it takes more than a year for one meeting. For the past 10 years or so, actually, the Six-Party Talks basically has functioned as a kind of final stamping of the job rather than seriously talking about anything.

Thirdly, it brought about too heavy reliance on China. Now China became a target, sort of, for their lack of control of North Korea or influence in North Korea. To me, that's a totally irresponsible act on the part of the United States. For example, the current US Government, President Obama, I like him in many ways, but what I don't like about his North Korean Policy is that this non-policy calls for strategic patience. I used to call it no strategy, only patience. To me, that's not going to work. To me, solely or merely relying on China is not going to work. But most critically, what happened to North Korea, I think the Six-Party Talks worsened what I call the nuclear dilemma in North Korea. Why?

In the case of North Korea, Kim Jong-Un's base strategy was to prepare kind of a project in the international environment before maybe he was thinking about any kind of domestic change. But then, the nuclear talks dragged on and on. In the meantime,



they only developed nuclear facilities while leaving North Korea economic agenda totally lost along the way. So the gap between the domestic agenda and the nuclear weapon program development continued to grow. For all these reasons, within the Six-Party Talks, there are two trends. One is Japan and South Korea, sometimes South Korea situation and position fluctuate, but still Japan, the US, and South Korea on the one hand, Russia, China, North Korea on the other hand. So the North Korean position was a good position to manipulate contending strategies in the Six-Party Talks. For all these reasons, to me, the Six-Party Talks are not going to work. However, I am going to say that we shouldn't abandon the Six-Party Talks. But the general problem they highlight is that the US has failed – they objectively failed in Asia, in Asian Policy since the end of the Cold War, that's my main criticism about US-led policy.

Then, in the meantime, within the region, each government actually also has not developed better initiatives compared to the other governments. Anyway, my final point is that particularly, many people talking about economic security is a kind of dilemma in Asia. Once again, this basic frustration comes from an underlying comparison between Europe and Asia. As for me, we should start thinking about what kind of different historical trajectories this region will go through rather than simply comparing Europe with Asia.

Akihiro Iwashita

Thank you. Targeting North Korea, so Mimura-san, you first.

Mitsuhiro Mimura

Well, security is one of the hardest areas for me, but I agree with Professor Ha, the Six-Party Talks for the United States was too rationalized and accomplished nothing substantial on North Korean nuclear issues. During the Obama administration, North Korea has had a free-hand to develop nuclear weapons, not only plutonium but also the uranium type of nuclear weapon. In that sense, yes, we have to do something against that.

Speaking of the economy, economists basically think that the countries are interdependent, and I think political scientists see international relations as some kind of



mutual distrust or something like that, so they need some nuclear weapons to save their countries. But economists think that a nuclear weapon is a very expensive thing, and it's not good for the economy. We are inter-dependent, so China and Japan also yes, are very interdependent. But sometimes, something happens, and then the statesmen start to break the interdependence of the economies. But it's almost too late as the economies of Japan, China and South Korea are already interdependent. But one of the reasons why we failed to form the Northeast Asian Economic Cooperation mechanism is that we forgot other people's thinking – that is, the way of other people's minds – I mean, there are other people who think that the people on the other side of the sea, I mean, the Sea of Japan (or the East Sea in Korea), we thought that the Far East, China, South Korea and North Korea would be economic partners. But at the same time, in Tokyo too, I don't know in Niigata, but in Tokyo too, there were more people who think that China or Russia will be possible enemies at that same time.

In essence, security is one of the most important areas of research to make Northeast Asian cooperation possible, I think. Thank you.

Akihiro Iwashita

So China?

Yang Cheng

Okay, I would also like to start with the Six-Party Talks because when I worked at the Chinese Embassy in Moscow, the first paper I wrote for the Ambassador was about the North Korean nuclear issue. At that time, I pointed out that it was not a tactic but a strategy for North Korea to have nuclear power. We recommend that it's better to have a more equal platform for every party to join.

We have imagined that maybe it can be resolved if the US could regard North Korea as an equal partner. But it failed. I think the failure of the Six Party Talks shows that actually the end of the Cold War is partial and incomplete, to some extent, although the global Cold War has come to an end on the physical level. But nowadays, even on the Korean Peninsula, there is always the specter of the Cold War.



In a sense of the national, North Korea and several regional countries are not at peace. Also, there are territorial issues derived from the Second World War and strengthened by the Cold War between Japan and Russia. Also, the American ally systems based on searching for an enemy during the Cold War did not weaken but strengthened after the collapse of the Soviet Union. More crucial, I think that the mentality of the Cold War still influences decisions of Northeast Asian countries, including the United States as an “invisible Northeast Asian country”.

I don't totally agree with the statements made by the Chairman that China has become a new impact factor, so that if we use John Fairbank's analytical framework, the “impact-response model”, then the other parties, including the United States and Japan, are the “response” parties. I don't think so because I think in Northeast Asia, especially during the period of power reconfiguration, every country, including the great powers, mid powers, and small powers, use almost the same tactic, the same strategy—I call it hedging. Hedging means every country has a tool box. They'll have many instruments from cooperation to containment and a lot of different other instruments. So every country uses a different instruments strategy and has different opportunities in a real concrete situation. So that means that China can play the role of a new impact factor, and the AIIB case is a good example of this. If China would have liked to maintain its monopoly on this new international financial system, we wouldn't have invited Japan, the US and other European countries to join. We invited, but Japan refused. It's quite strange for me to understand actually.

Akihiro Iwashita

How Russia should show its own presence or what Russia should contribute to Northeast Asian security...

Sergey Sevastyanov

Yes, thank you. The issue of how Russia should really contribute is a difficult issue. Yeah, I agree with previous scholars who argued that the Cold War is still not over in our area, in Northeast Asia, and it's all about territorial disputes, historical memory, as we already heard. And just I also want to say a couple of thoughts about that. As we all know, the security system in Northeast Asia is still mostly based on American



bilateral alliances, and we have no any real multilateral mechanism to discuss these issues. The ASEAN Regional Forum is just a small one. It's really not very effective and more focused on Southeast Asia. So, really we have nothing.

As for a multilateral security system, China and Russia are consistent in supporting the creation in Asia of a new security architecture that would serve the goal of building an integrated space, and this can only be based on the concept of indivisible security. This system of equal security in Asia should be based on a balance of bilateral mechanisms and multilateral diplomacy that excludes any closed or restricted systems and blocks. This is important. We are sure that only if Asian states achieve real progress in forming a new more comprehensive security system sometime in the future, Asia may play a role of a global world leader.

But my own participation in annual conferences on Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialog during the past several years recently revealed that in terms of regional security system models, Northeast Asia powers are clearly divided into two groups. The USA, Japan, and the Republic of Korea prefer a security system based on bilateral military alliances with the United States. While three other countries, China, Russia, and the DPRK want to form quite the opposite security system, and any hint of a compromise is not foreseeable on this issue. The same line divides to some extent, Northeast Asian states on the issue of the possible resumption of Six-Party Talks. China, Russia, and the DPRK are ready to start without any preconditions, while the USA, Japan and the Republic of Korea have different demands of the DPRK. Of course, they are reasonable, but anyway. So this is the reality.

We have a huge structural problem here, and it's not clear how to solve it. At least I don't know how it can be solved. But we should try to do something, and in this context, if coming back to the Six-Party Talks, I think it's – yeah, maybe at this point, the only option is to convert it to Five-Party Talks. Yeah, there is such a group that is actually headed by Russia, and maybe we can start to discuss Northeast Asian security issues in this format of five-party talks.

Besides, I want to mention that Moscow is ready to support the Northeast Asia Peace



and Cooperation Initiative, NAPCI, which was proposed by Korean President Park Geun-hye. As you know, this is a process seeking to gradually build up trust among Northeast Asian countries by proposing to start cooperation in solving soft security issues first, including energy security, environment, disaster management, and so on.

Akihiro Iwashita

David, I apologize for the long silence for you, so probably the United States feels uneasy about being excluded from the discussion, so I give you a chance for 5- 7 minutes as a commentator to show our allied spirits.

David Wolff

I'm put in a somewhat difficult position because you asked me not to speak historically as a historian, and then we had a section on history during which we identified issues of post-colonialism. I don't think the word was used, but I think that was largely what people had in mind as being a basic mentality in the region and modernity as having come out of a colonial, imperial, and then post-colonial, post-imperial – that sounds like a very historically-based interpretation of the present. I don't see how I can address that without speaking to history.

Then, we had an economic section where we talked about the failures of numerous bright ideas in the late 1980s and into the 1990s, which I also participated in, being among the first, together with some of my colleagues here at the table to get to Vladivostok when it was finally opened, also opening a new vision of Northeast Asia. That's also history already. In fact, when we have tomorrow's session, today's session will be history. All of this is grist for the historian, just one day at a time. Then we had a security discussion where one of the salient points was that the Cold War is not really over, that sounds pretty historical to me, you know we are already back to saying okay, so what was the Cold War and what changed and what didn't change when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 and various other things that went along with that.

I'm left with wearing my historian's hat with these three big points that are so historically-based. Let me go back now while I still have 5 minutes, if I take the full 7, and speak to a couple of these points as best I can.



I think that all of us at the table aspire to – at least up here at the front of the room--aspire to Professor Ha's position of trying to be a regional man. It's not that easy because there is that deep tension between our professorial role as thinking beings and as members of the epistemic community of Northeast Asia, that's a term I heard for the first time in Vladivostok sometime in the late 80s I think, very late 80s. A community of knowledge that is attempting to create out of our cross-border knowledge the vision that we hope we can inspire politicians with in order to produce a more secure place in which to live.

But there is this deep tension between the thinking of that process and the feeling because all of us have, in our own way and in our own time and in our own place, been brainwashed by the states in which we live, and even the multiple states in which we live have had their effect on our brains, and we all respond to those nationalist cues, although some of us become consciously uncomfortable with them and try to step away from those gut-reaction feelings that we have. A good Marxist, a good Leninist, would identify this as a form of bourgeois 'false consciousness,' but they would also know how to manipulate it against their enemies by getting their enemies to feel those kinds of irrational feelings that prevent them from thinking clearly.

To come back to the post-colonial issue, clearly this is at work here even if the countries see themselves as being on different sides of post-colonialism. For example, Japan and Korea, one was the colonizer and the other was the colonized. On the other hand, Japan also has its sense of having been somewhat colonized after World War II, and having been attacked by the Soviet Union so that there is that sense of victimhood and post-colonialism here as well. This could be seen as something which the region shares if they were willing to accept their shared position as post-colonial. Possibly that's a way forward towards some kind of vision, possibly, but we've gone on and on about these sorts of the history questions with only occasional breakthroughs, such as the Comfort Women Agreement that we had at the very end of this past year. The very fact that they actually spoke about it and reached an agreement suggests an attempt to deal with it rather than the irresponsible position of not dealing with it. Let me just say that about our post-colonial issue.



Russia is arriving late in Northeast Asia. It arrives late, but when it does arrive. Alaska is part of Northeast Asia, so there we have that vision of the United States, and Alaska went all the way down to California in those days, yes, right. We finally got Professor Ha into Northeast Asia. I know that Professor Ha also has a vision about the shared political economy in the vision of Northeast Asia as well and that maybe is also some kind of grounds for a historical sharing, in the sense of Northeast Asia having developed its modernity and Russia as well through command economies or controlled economies, a much heavier hand at the state in economic development and in many other places in Europe I am thinking of here.

Professor Yang has talked about the traditional shared civilization of Northeast Asia, and I think we'll come back to that in the second round. But I think he didn't mention it, but of course, the traditional civilization of Northeast Asia is the Chinese Tribute System, so that's a China-centered vision of shared civilization.

I was a little surprised in the discussion of economics, if I can move on from the history to the economics, to not see a discussion refuting the question, the view that's often spoken about the division of labor. People talk about how there is a natural division of labor in the region. Russia has the resources, China has the manpower, and there is lots of capital now from several different sources.

That's something to be kept in mind. Yes, there is a certain sense of irrationality; you know, economists all think that they are very, very rational because they can do it with numbers. On the other hand, often the numbers that they come up with on different sides of the border are quite different, so much for rationalities meeting all the time. I agree with the comments that were made about how seemingly rational things are sometimes not quite as rational as all that.

What else seems to be of particular interest? Of course, APEC. APEC 2012 had the additional benefit in Vladivostok of producing a brand new campus for the Far Eastern State University (DVGU), Federal (DFGU) now, Far Eastern Federal University. I am also a preacher of the past. Yes, they changed their name as well when they got the new campus.



With regard to security, no one I think really spoke to the issue that was raised by Professor Iwashita, the Chairman, about how friction in the region is shifting from continental problems to maritime problems. I don't think that one's been addressed yet, so maybe we will come back to that. I would just say on that score that if we were on the Korean Peninsula, we often think of Korea as being on the continent, but it's actually a peninsula, which means it's surrounded by water on three sides. So from a geopolitical point of view, this is not really fully a continental issue, and of course the conflict on an island in the middle of a river is not quite so continental either even if the river was frozen over at that moment. But I think that your point is really important here about people thinking in very traditional geopolitical terms about security that includes thinking about the importance of the sea, and China in particular having devoted an awful lot of attention to the development of its maritime forces. And finally, well, one unmentioned thing with regard to the incompleteness of the Cold War's ending, it was mentioned that the Korean Peninsula is still split and the US alliance system is still there, and there are still territorial disputes. But we didn't mention that we still have the largest and most powerful country in Asia still controlled by a Leninist Party, which is also something we think of as kind of having come to an end and that Leninist Party is much more experienced than it was before and much more secure. We have almost a hundred million party members in China, we don't think about it too often, and we have a new middle class of approximately 150 to 200 million people, and although there is no statistics on this, I would bet just about anything that among the 150 million are the 100 million party members, almost all the party members I met during my recent year in China all owned a car, which is almost a definition of being in the new middle class. The state has done well by its people. They will be responsible. I don't see the Leninist state going away any time soon. If we thought of the Cold War as a conflict between Leninist visions and capitalist visions, well maybe we still have a little bit of that going on. Thank you very much.

Akihiro Iwashita

Thank you David. Frankly speaking, I provided a couple of more questions about the domestic impact on international relations, the cultural impact on communities in comparison with other institutions, such as SAARC, ASEAN or the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. But the Northeast Asian community should be transparent



and more open to the outside. Therefore, I decided to pose questions and elicit comments first and then we'll return to the speakers. The speakers have the right to say anything. How many questions, comments, please hands? Okay, the lady in the back. So please limit 1, 2 minutes per question and comment.

Chisako Masuo

Thank you Chairman. I am Chisako Masuo from Kyushu University. First of all, well, I am just going to ask one question. I would like to ask a question to the prerequisite of this session, why have the Northeast Asian states not seen the emergence of cross-border cooperation? I think this way of thinking is kind of a negative thinking because we have listed all the negative factors, why we have not achieved the emergence of cross-border cooperation. However, there is another way to make it as a positive calculation, and I think it is very necessary to review how much we have achieved so far and how there is the possibility of achieving this cross-border cooperation or community making. Well, based on this session's title, it sounds like Northeastern Asian states have not made this cross-border cooperation, but as a student of Chinese foreign policy, I think maybe we can compare this case to Southeast Asian Regional Cooperation. And if we do this, we will realize that Asian states have achieved so much in terms of cross-border cooperation, and it is true that they have established a good framework for that. Then they were very successful to invite China, Japan, and the ROK and some other states to join the framework of their regional cooperation. However, if we think of the contents of their cross-border cooperation, I think we have seen quite similar factors in this region already. When they talk about cross-border cooperation, first of all, what is the most important is economic integration, and then politics. They have made great efforts to enhance connectivity and that usually means infrastructure connectivity, transportation network or the mobility of people and goods. But at least, maybe not so much in North Korea and Russian Siberia, but if we look at Japan, South Korea, China, at least within those three countries we have seen a lot of these already. So it looks like we have fulfilled the precondition for the – we have achieved quite a lot of cross-border cooperation.

Akihiro Iwashita

Thank you. A good point, and thank you for correcting my negative campaign. Any



questions? Lady, you.

Naomi Chi

Sorry, I am not very good with the machines, that's why I am a social scientist, not a natural scientist. Good morning everyone. My name is Naomi Chi, I am from Hokkaido University. Thank you Chairman. I just wanted to reiterate Masao-sensei's comment on the negativity, why so much negativity. I just wanted to pose a question to the panelists. Of course we need to work on sort of traditional security issues, but along with that, in parallel, we need to work on human security issues. I think in Northeast Asia, just to give you some numbers, the birth rate in Japan is 1.4, in Korea it is 1.2, and Russia, 1.4, China, 1.5, Taiwan 1.2, Mongolia, just over 2.

I mean we are not having enough babies in Northeast Asia. We're not going to have people living in this region if we don't do something about this very important issue. I am just wondering if there is a possibility of building cooperation and trust in terms of human security issues. Thank you.

Akira Ishii

My name is Akira Ishii, University of Tokyo. I have a question to Professor Ha Yongchool. Professor Ha clearly pointed out that the age of Six Party Talks was over, and that the United States' efforts at avoiding dialog with North Korea have not ended in success. I remember that in 1992, China and South Korea's diplomatic relations were restored. After that, already over 20 years have passed, but there is no possibility of the United States and North Korea developing relations. Furthermore, North Korea still shouts loudly that the signing of the Peace Treaty of the Korean War is urgently needed, but there is no possibility. My question is why has the United States so far avoided direct dialog with North Korea? Thank you.

Akihiro Iwashita

Last question.

Edward Boyle

Good morning. Edward Boyle from Kyushu University. This sort of follows on



from Professor Masao's question as well, but it's to do with what we are expecting the Northeast Regional Cooperation to achieve. Professor Ha was talking about the implicit comparisons with Europe. But if we would look at Europe today, it seems to be there are a lot of divisions within the EU; the first time Europe hits a crisis, what was previously seen as a very tightly, regionally integrated collection of countries seems to be disintegrating under migration and economic crises. It's just looking at what we are expecting regional integration within the Northeast Asian Framework to look like. I mean, would the EU be the only model that is being aimed at here? More a comment than a question.

Akihiro Iwashita

Thank you. So back to the panelists. I think that Professor Ha should respond; therefore, I give you time to think, so you are the last. I guess you will have a long talk so think seriously. Firstly, Mimura-san.

Mitsuhiro Mimura

Well, the reason why Professor Iwashita has a negative thinking and well, I am mostly for Professor Iwashita, because we visit Northeast Asian countries every year, and we know that there have been many things achieved. But in order to make the Northeast Asian Cooperation Network or some frameworks, we know that there are so many things to be done. In daily activities what we feel is that there are so many things to be done rather than what we already have made. That's why Professor Iwashita made this kind of explanation. Also, yes, among Japan, China, ROK, we have a lot of things we have been accomplished and also, including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau as a Greater China region, yes, we have a very integrated economic cooperation. But if something happens, then there will be a keen problem among these countries, especially with the historical issue and also the maritime issue around China and so on.

As for the questions of Professor Chi, yes, we have a lot of human security issues, but when I think about the North Korean issues, conventional security is kind of the number 1 priority; I mean the nuclear issue, and also, human rights there. Also, yes, there are a lot of human security issues. I am doing some projects on that, but it's very difficult for us to cooperate with North Korea if the conventional security problems are not



resolved. In order to achieve something in the human security issues area, conventional security issues should be solved accordingly. That's why I think conventional security is now more important—it has a very important meaning in this region. Thank you.

Why it is important to discuss about the failure of Northeast Asian regionalism is because without the knowledge of why we have failed, we cannot design a roadmap for the next maybe successful cooperation agenda in Northeast Asia. Also, I don't think that the successful, partially successful maybe, cooperation between China, South Korea, and Japan can be regarded as a success for Northeast Asia as a whole because Northeast Asia is more than these three countries. There is Russia, there is East Mongolia, and so on. I think if we could create a new multilateral mechanism which would provide successful cooperation among all parties, including all of these six countries located in Northeast Asia, then we may call it successful, not a negative phenomenon in Northeast Asia. This is the first point.

The second point is about human security. To me, human security is a special term according to the United Nations. That means there are approaches Western, Eastern, maybe Canadian, and a Japanese one. The Western approach is focused on political rights for ordinary people, so that means political participation, freedom of speech, and so on, which are very important. But for the Eastern approach, they are more focused on the development of society. For example, food safety is a crucial element to this kind of human security. It's better to call them non-traditional security issues in the Northeast Asia region. I have mentioned in my statements that actually it is better to organize some non-traditional security cooperation agenda for the Northeast Asian countries so that we can develop trust and accumulate trust, and it will be paid back when regional security structures are stabilized in the future. These non-traditional security fields include environmental safety, nuclear safety, and so on.

The last point is that, I think China is not a Leninist state. Domestic politics are quite important to understand its stance. But I think, even according to studies in the West, China is regarded more as a capitalist country than a socialist country. It has never been a Leninist state like the Soviet Union. But domestic factors have an impact on the agenda-setting of Northeast Asian cooperation. I mean, not only for China, but for



all of these countries located in Northeast Asia. For example, nationalism is rising nowadays. But we also are told that, for example, even in China, nationalism is not the mainstream ideology. Actually, we have a lot of different diversified values, including, for example, more pro-Western liberal ideas, especially in developed regions like Shanghai in the eastern part of China. Also, we should pay attention to the issue of regime security for the authorities of these countries, especially for North Korea, for Russia, and for China. Thank you.

Sergey Sevastyanov

Okay, I shall be brief because several issues have already been mentioned. In these questions from the audience, there were a couple about the models of integration and why they failed. I think we have already discussed it; that mostly because the consequences of World War II are still not resolved, we should go ahead and do something otherwise we will stay in the same position. As far as we really have effective models, of course, the European model has been considered very effective for the time and recent developments are not directly connected to its ineffectiveness, I guess. It's kind of something brought from somewhere else, and I don't think that the European model is bad. It's still good, but it's kind of in trouble for some unexpected reasons.

Speaking about it, I think what we can see actually, in the EU as well as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, is that we should have shared leadership. It would be very good if we could share leadership, like France and Germany or Russia and China in a high-cooperation organization. But in Northeast Asia, we have a division of leadership, and until the relationship between China and Japan is on a good course, we can get nowhere. That is important. But of course, I don't think we will use this EU model in terms of having subnational governance. I don't think that is good for Asia and that it will ever be achieved.

As for human security issues, I think it's very important, and I have mentioned about it, that this is one of the ideas behind the Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative. Russia supports such areas like energy security, environment, disaster management, and we are happy to contribute, but so far not much has been achieved, but I think it's a very



important area.

And a good point was made by Professor Chi that we don't have enough population, and it will show in time. In the Russian Far East, we sometimes have joint families with a husband from China and a wife from Russia, not too many, but there are some, it's kind of a joke. But in reality, we have some programs which are aimed to increase the population in the area. Quite recently, I have read in the Russian newspapers, there will be 1 hectare of free land given to every family coming to the Russian Far East. So far, it's for Russians, but I don't know maybe even for foreigners in the future.

Ha Yongchool

I heard many, many questions and good comments, but then, speaking of human security, since I have only one son, I am responsible for this decreasing population. But I think, generally speaking, it's more a trend issue, because in many Asian countries, we are going through a kind of generation change from families with a large number of children to lower numbers of children.– probably, you may come back to a more optimal level. I don't worry too much about this so we will see, but that's my very unprofessional comment on this. But more seriously, going back to the first question about Southeast Asia or whether my colleague has been too negative about the current situation– I don't think he was negative. He was more realistic. Always there is some kind of very delicate balance between realism and pessimism. But having said that, however, I agree with you that we should not underestimate the potential of the region.

As I said, my position on this is that we should not be in a hurry. We should be very patient about this process. But as I said earlier, there are sources of urgency. One is external –the European issue to which I'll come back in a moment. The second issue, I think, is domestic sources. That is, if you look at China, Korea, Japan, somehow their domestic success pushes them to be in a hurry, even in external affairs. To me, these kinds of self-generated success stories, I think, at the international level, probably become an impediment to gradual preparation for regional integration. Particularly, however, I will say that we should not compare Southeast Asian success to Northeast Asian failure. In fact, I would say the Northeast Asian countries have been



outsourcing too much of their own problems to Southeast Asia.

To me, there is some ironic kind of inverse relationship, the more success in Southeast Asia, the less success in Northeast Asia. I would say, we should realize this kind of inverse relationship between the two regions.

Then, having said that, however, I want to make some general points; that is, in international theories or even comparative studies, we don't yet have IR theories for late coming nations. We don't yet have the social changing, institutional changing patterns of late industrialization. We only have the political economy for late development. To me, that's a serious limitation, there are many, many good studies on Japan, but for the other cases, very few studies on the changing institutional and social patterns of late industrialization. We have a long way to go, that's why I said at the outset that there is a long way to go for Asianization. Asianization doesn't mean to exclude the West, but is more about the region itself, to develop a sort of distinct conceptual ideological framework. So far, to me the Asian problem is its intellectual dependency on the West.

My other point is about comparing, going back to the gentleman's question about comparison with Europe, yes, that's exactly my point. That is, if you look at the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, to me, the European Union was too politically motivated. That's why now it is suffering from these kinds of problems. As a region of late coming, I want to use the term of a regional theory of late comers, so as a region of late comers, we should learn something from Europe. Rather than quickly catching up with Europe, I think we should learn some lessons from Europe to avoid getting frustrated with ourselves.

All in all, to me, we need to have some sort of historical, long-term perspective. If you look at history, this region has gone through so many different phases: Imperialism, Communism, and the Cold War, and now we don't know where we are going. But then, in the meantime, we have to ask ourselves, have we ever created any universally applicable values and systems other than to ourselves. This means we should take a more long-term civilizational kind of position on this question. Once again, we should



not be so frustrated. I don't mean we have to achieve too much, but also I don't mean to degrade the possibility of potential, as long as we take a more kind of relaxed position on this. Not being too critical.

Going back to the professor from the University of Tokyo, the professor had a question about why the United States has been reluctant to talk to North Korea. I mean, we all know there are many, many theories or a sort of hypothesis or guesses, but my own thing is that somehow the United States does not recognize any intrinsic interest in North Korea. To me, that's the primary cause for the lack of engagement – but then what they have with North Korea is simply an international issue of denuclearization. But now, I guarantee you that, even within the Washington circle, the so-called belt area, they now gradually accept that the North Korean issue is not so much about denuclearization, and is more about non-proliferation. But then the policymakers are actually very reluctant to talk about this because this is kind of a self-contradictory about their own set goals, about complete irreversible denuclearization. Then what to do with North Korea? To me, the way they deal with North Korea is that they don't know what to do. I mean simply they don't know what to do about it themselves. Why? If you look at Soviet history, I remember I met Gorbachev in 2009 in Italy, and I asked him the following question, How much did he know about his own country? Actually, he made a mistake of not knowing the citizens or minority issues. In other words, we should not assume that North Korean leaders know about their society completely. But why? There are no guidelines, reform plans which give them any advice on political risks. Every sector, every group, every country has pushed them to open up. But how? Very little about how. And then, there are still possible political consequences.

My suggestion is that we need to decide whether or not we'll recognize regime stability or regime persistence in North Korea. We haven't agreed on this critical, fundamental issue. Then secondly, on the part of the United States, in fact, this is mainly the policy failure of the Bush administration, we all know this. Now it's time for Asian countries to talk for themselves and then to propose an Asian alternative to the United States rather than solely relying upon the United States perspective. That's my position.



Akihiro Iwashita

David, do you have a 1 minute comment? Two minutes, okay.

David Wolff

I guess I'll speak briefly to a couple of the questions that came from the room. I had the honor in the early 2000s to serve on a working group that specifically examined the question, Should the United States recognize North Korea? Every single nuclear expert and every single Korea expert on the panel spoke in favor of speaking directly with North Korea about these issues. On the other hand, all of the representatives from the National Security Council and the State Department and the Defense Department were very hopeful that North Korea would collapse all by itself and why should we talk if they are going to collapse. That has proved to be wishful thinking. We said all those things at the table, and it's been over a decade, and anybody who's waiting for them to collapse, they might as well wait for China also to collapse with a 100-million strong party in full control of the economy, the second richest country in the world, they are not going to collapse any time soon, and I don't think the Korean leadership is either. That's an answer for Professor Ishii. Professor Chi, I agree with you. We need to focus more on some of the soft security issues if we can't handle the hard security ones, but it's tricky, you know, for example, energy security. We have the cheap oil. We can have all the energy security we want. But we're going to destroy our environmental security by using it. These are two pieces of soft security in contradiction with each other. I agree with Professor Ha that on the global level, we're still facing overpopulation not under population, so maybe this isn't such a terrible thing although it looks like a tricky economic problem in terms of imbalance in the age cohorts.

My final point, I wanted to speak to Professor Masao's question of why we were being so negative, and I think the reason we're being so negative is I think that on security issues, things are genuinely getting worse, both the nuclear bombs in North Korea and the tensions in the East China and the South China Sea and the new political stance in Japan in reaction to some of those things is leading us into the security dilemma where we're going to see a whole next generation of armament, and everybody in this room is going to pay for it. The Americans have just launched their newest destroyer, and I'm



sure the Japanese will want to buy it shortly. It costs about triple the amount of the previous one. They just get more and more expensive. Of course, there is a grave chance of there being a real conflict and real friction in the region, especially when things are out to sea where you can't see them so quickly and so immediately unless you've got a satellite right on top at that moment. What happens out at sea is just not so visible all the time. Thinking about the well-known crises, you know all kinds of terrible international conflicts have been triggered by incidents at sea.

Finally, I would say that we're actually not negative. We're worried, but we're not negative. Every single one of the people up here has been doing Northeast Asia for a couple of decades. We had a lot less grey hair when we started. But we're still doing it, and we're signing on and we want to thank the National Institute for the Humanities and MINPAKU for heading this initiative, and we all want to see Northeast Asia become a safer place. But in order to do that, we really need to think about what we can do to move the agenda for a safer place forward when conditions are good, and what do we do to minimize the downside when conditions are bad, because history goes in currents like that, and we're bound to see both good and bad moments in the near future. Thank you very much.

Akihiro Iwashita

This session is also the startup session for our Hokkaido University Team, and following Mimura-san's terms, the best is to start with saying apologies, because now today, we apologize for our failure to make the Community of Northeast Asia. Then after that, we will be more relaxed and we will see the bright future. Therefore, this is kind of a ceremony. So, the negative campaigns, particularly today, we pay attention to big issues and the high politics, and economy. But we agree that even in community making, we need big relations, state-to-state relations, big economy discussions. We also fully understand we should pay more attention to social life based on bottom-up processes of community making, for example, cross-border cooperation—a kind of social civic relations. Of course we will continue the discussion in this direction. Today is just the beginning, and I think that you have many questions, but we will have discussion time tomorrow at the end. Thank you again for joining us.

We have already planned next year's schedule. We have a seminar in Hamada at the



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University of Shimane next May, and also, our team is organizing an international symposium in December. If you are interested in our Team's discussions, then please join us in the next year events. We will focus more on local social life processes and making the Northeast Asian Community. Thank you for joining us. A big hand for the panelists.



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