

Session III

Strengthening the Intellectual Underpinnings of East Asian Community Building

SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS

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It seems that articulating common interest and identity is key to building an East Asian community or an East Asian order. In order to accomplish this, we should, in theory, strengthen regional cooperation, international cooperation, and multilateral cooperation rather than bilateral cooperation. In practice, however, there are two different imperatives working now in East Asia. By and large, economic imperatives are working toward interdependence and regionalism. But, on the other hand, political imperatives are working toward nationalism. It is naturally desirable that the economic imperative should prevail over the political imperative.

But in recent years, the region tends to see the clash of different nationalisms, for example, the clash between Chinese nationalism and Taiwanese nationalism observed in the recent Taiwan presidential election. It seems there also is a trend for a clash of two different versions of nationalism between China and Japan. In Japan there seems to be a rising tide of what can be termed “wounded nationalism” as a result of a great deal of frustration after experiencing 13 years of recession. The Japanese wish to restore some measure of self-confidence by restoring respect for the nation as a whole and for their tradition.

In China, there is a tide of “assertive nationalism.” Not only have the Chinese overcome a sense of humiliation, but also they are experiencing a great sense of confidence in having achieved an economic miracle. And it seems that there is a clash between the Japanese “wounded nationalism”

and the Chinese “assertive nationalism” today. It is desirable that Japan and China should make some kind of fundamental political reconciliation in order to build what is envisioned as an East Asian economic community. Without this Sino-Japanese reconciliation, building an East Asian economic community will not be possible for a long time.

How can this regional cooperation be promoted? There are basically three approaches. One is called realism, the second is called liberalism, and the third is called constructivism.

From the perspective of realism, cooperation results from a balance of power. Particularly in the field of security cooperation in East Asia, it seems that basically a balance of power is at work on such issues as the anti-terrorist campaign and counterproliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

Liberalism is essentially rule-based cooperation, the idea that you can facilitate human liberty and cooperation through the rule of law or institution via regime building. If you accumulate these regimes, you can build up an institution. But it should be remembered that this regime institution is very weak in East Asia, particularly in economic cooperation involving APEC and ASEAN + 3.

Constructivism is the idea that you can create an imagined community by building and sharing a common society and common interpretation. Through the process of scholars meeting often and trying to share a common interpretation, you can build an epistemic community. Basically this is what they are trying to do at ASEAN by the so-called ASEAN Way or the ASEAN informal way. While trying to stay out of the big power rivalry, ASEAN has wished to enhance its own power by bringing together and facilitating meetings among big powers at its own ASEAN Regional Forum and ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference. This in itself is quite an achievement and yet this is far short of an epistemic society or community. Today, even ASEAN subscribes to the balance of power game by playing off Japan against China and China against Japan using FTAs.

How can East Asia overcome this nationalism problem? In Asia, the Westphalia system based upon the national sovereignty doctrine is on the rise quite contrary to the trends in Europe and North America. This is because the nation-state system has not yet been rooted deeply in Asia, particularly in China, Taiwan, and even in Japan. Thus, it is very important to overcome the spell of nationalism. One element is the rise of popular nationalism. As a countermeasure, East Asians should be able to share history. People do care about history in East Asia and it matters particularly in

China-Japan relations. Something should be done for East Asian countries to share common history.

What can facilitate functionalism or the functional approach to community building? It should be remembered that functionalism in itself does not lead to full-fledged cooperation. In order for functional cooperation to spill over into political cooperation, somebody has to take the lead and push. Without this push, economic cooperation on a functional basis itself leads nowhere. East Asia will have to address this issue of lack of common political identity and political leadership.

Lastly, it will be extremely difficult for us to build an East Asian community in the long run without sharing a certain measure of common values and common norms. In this conjunction, there may be three points that must be kept in mind. First, perhaps people should be much more honest by paying more attention to what is politically feasible rather than what should be done. Second, it is also important to put emphasis on the role of civil society in the ongoing dialogues. It may take a long time, but in this age of globalization, exchange of people at all levels should be promoted. Third, education is crucial. There should be more exchange of education, particularly on the level of higher education, student exchange, and perhaps exchange between think tanks and even private institutions throughout the region.

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Three models of regional community building include the North American integration process that does not have the kinds of underpinnings that have been discussed as a condition for Asia Pacific or East Asian community. This leads to the observation that you can have a very high level of economic integration without political convergence or convergence of values. And the irony of North America in the year 2004 is, as the Canadian economy is reaching the high point of economic integration in most sectors with the United States, political values, worldviews, and basic social values between Canada and the United States are moving further apart, producing enormous complexities in the management of the Canada-U.S. relationship from the Canadian side. The North American case seems to show that convergence may not go through economics, social values, and to politics.

Regionalism has three eyes. The first eye is material interactions. The material foundation of East Asian regionalism is trade, investment, and production. But the pattern of interactions in East Asia has changed dramatically, with the volume of interactions increasing greatly. Interactions have also expanded to include other areas, such as people movements and various forms of migration within the region. Cultural interactions in East Asia also have increased.

The second eye of regionalism is the concept of identity. That there is something in common or that is being created in common pulls countries in the region together. And the final, third eye is institution building.

As far as the interactions and the question of culture are concerned, East Asia in the last decade experienced a jump in the level of interactions involving artists, particularly pop music, fashion, and the interconnections of these, and there has been an enormous amount of intercultural interactions on an Asian basis. One may wonder if there are not some keys here to understanding how culture can unlock a step toward a common identity. While culture has been as much a force of division in the last 100 years along a path toward something in common, the recent situation might be quite different from before and enhanced cultural interactions might actually hold some possibilities for common identity.

In the context of Japan's relations with South Korea, the opening of cultural exchange over the last two to three years has contributed greatly. Looking at culture in more positive ways, thus, also allows one to start addressing the history questions. East Asian regionalism is not going to get beyond square one no matter how much functional cooperation there is unless there can be a reconciliation on some of the deeper matters of history.

Next is the question of the language of East Asian community building. One may wonder if there is a way to move from the domination of English into the realm of vernacular languages in the context of East Asian regionalism. And this can be partly a process of popularization of East Asian regionalism.

When people talk of the malaise of existing institutions, what should be expected from the third eye, i.e., institutions, at this period? What kind of organizational structures are now appropriate to move East Asian regionalism to a next step? This is an exceptionally difficult political problem for reasons of sovereignty and for reasons of government anxieties over possible sovereignty loss. It is also intellectually difficult to explore what kind of institutions should be designed. One can already detect a certain

dissatisfaction with the ASEAN way, which is politically useful but very difficult to utilize as an instrument to engender the kind of cooperation that is wanted.

One intriguing question is how to connect governmental agencies on one hand and institution-based processes with networks on the other in a sophisticated way. It will be a really interesting set of puzzles how those networks can be integrated, not just as window dressing but as integral parts of the process, bridging a great divide to connect policy networks and governments in new ways.

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Intellectual underpinnings perhaps mean activities and other efforts promoting, or at least consistent with, the creation of community building. There seem to be three areas of activities that may be regarded as intellectual underpinnings of creating and promoting an East Asian community.

One is the activities that are explicitly promoting the policies relevant to creating a community, including those activities that various think tanks and government agencies are conducting to create policies which are necessary for East Asian community building, to explore a better multilateral security policy agenda or ponder on the right approaches to promote FTAs. This Asia Pacific Agenda Project meeting is one example of those. The think tank networks that China is proposing in the context of ASEAN + 3 is another example of an attempt to strengthen the intellectual underpinning in the sense of promoting or creating policies for the purpose of community building.

The second area is the broad range of activities that may be regarded as promoting, or at least consistent with, creation of the community in this area. This category includes those activities that are not necessarily targeted at creating regional community but are nevertheless quite helpful and in many ways necessary to attain the goal. If one broadens the meaning of intellectual activities to include manga and other forms of pop culture, those may be regarded as activities that are consistent with the creation of a community.

Within this category a second set of activities that deserves attention is what scientists and engineers are doing with each other in the region. Of the 4,000 faculty members at the University of Tokyo, for instance, some

500 to 700 are conducting research in Asia. And the majority of those are scientists and engineers. A similar situation is observed in other universities, and an increasing number of scientists in engineering in this country are conducting their research in Asia. In terms of numbers, scientists and engineers collaborating with Asia far outnumber social scientists. Thus, those who are interested in creating a community should pay attention to these activities and try to connect these activities with our efforts of creating and building a community in East Asia. It might be of some use to measure and tabulate those activities that are being undertaken by scientists and engineers in Asia.

The third category of intellectual underpinnings is what may be called the intellectual basis that is fundamentally in support of the identity of a community. This is concerning the importance of promoting Asian studies in Asia, while the empirical fact is that Asian studies has been predominantly promoted and led by North American and European scholars. And again the universal language of Asian studies is English. What is conspicuous is the lack of Asian content in Asian studies, and this lack of research activities on our neighbors should be rectified. Unless this is rectified, there will be no intellectual underpinnings fundamentally in support of community building.

One focus of these research activities on Asian studies should be history. Unless we conduct research in history together, we will not be able to understand and promote understanding of the commonalities as well as differences, which are the basis of nationalism. Another focus can be basic research on contemporary East Asian societies. When social science research is conducted in Asian societies, scholars are faced with very little consistent systematic data, which should be remedied by such activities as an "Asia-barometer" modeled after the Euro-barometer.

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There is something quite significant in China today in political as well as scholarly discussions. This is what it is called the "Scientific Approach to Development," or the "new development outlook." While the previous development strategy pursued rapid economic growth under the slogan of "efficiency as the priority and taking social justice into consideration," since Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao took power in the spring of 2003, and especially

since the SARS crisis, there has been a new emphasis on a more balanced development strategy. The new political slogan is to “put the people first” instead of “GDP first.” Along with the new slogan there is a heightened consciousness of civil rights and accountability of government. This new concept was triggered first by some government officials’ mismanagement of SARS at the critical initial stage.

Against this backdrop, the pro-GDP group in China is fighting back, arguing that the lack of economic momentum and measures to treat overheating taken by the new leadership are causing, rather than eliminating, problems, and that only very high GDP growth can generate more jobs and enhance people’s welfare. To some extent this controversy is somewhat akin to the familiar arguments often heard in the West (for instance, between the Democrats and the Republicans in the United States). However, there are some very important differences.

First, the disagreement is pertinent to government policies rather than the role of government or the Communist Party in society. People on both sides of the argument are talking about the readjustment of government policies in favor of the GDP or the disadvantaged people, depending on where one stands, but not about the role of the government in society. Thus, few people will promote the idea of establishing more NGOs, the role of which is limited in Chinese society today. Civil society is still an alien concept in China, along with good governance and other values.

In the mindset of most Chinese, government or government policies are still the key to all solutions. In other words, people in China are still dreaming of a good emperor. It is important to notice that there is widely shared disillusionment or cynicism about democracy and pluralism, after witnessing what democracy has done in Taiwan; South Korea, where a president who garnered the popular vote is to be impeached; Indonesia; the Philippines; and Russia. Simply put, democracy is not a popular idea in China today.

Another theme of domestic debate in China is the “peaceful rise of China,” which is a popular subject among China’s intellectuals today. This is a concept that was initially promoted by some political figures in China about a year ago. And the theme is further reinforced by the realization that globalization is not going to be reversed. There is also awareness that China should draw lessons from the downfall of the Soviet Union, which spent a lot of national resources on the arms race that retarded economic growth.

Surprisingly enough, people who are promoting this idea have more problems at home than abroad. There is remarkable cynicism and

skepticism at home about this concept of the peaceful rise of China. Some scholars argue that no great power has ever risen along a peaceful road, and China cannot be an exception. People on the moderate wing, on the other hand, claim that talk about the rise of China from the outside world has gone far enough, because it has created the perception of the China threat. What is the point of boasting about the rise of China ourselves, they argue. Assertiveness in China's nationalism is very much in evidence in Chinese society today. Other issues of frequent domestic debates in China include energy, reflecting the fact that energy consumption has risen remarkably over the past one or two years, and Taiwan.

What do these domestic debates in China mean to the East Asian community? China is certainly moving closer to other parts of Asia, but it is still moving slower than expected. It is an Asian community, instead of an Asia Pacific or East Asian community, that has more significance for China. This is related to China's worldview, which divides the world into three levels. One is the developing world, another is the developed world, and the third is countries surrounding China, which include Russia, Pakistan, India, and the Central Asian states, apart from the East Asian states. Thus, the Asian community to China is different from the East Asian or Asian Pacific communities. There is a rising consciousness in China that it does not necessarily welcome non-Asians in Asia, referring, of course, to the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and even Canada.

China is not yet clear about what kind of community it aspires to establish in Asia. But the current Sino-Japanese relationship is worrisome. Feelings in China toward Japan are definitely not good and they are at an extremely low ebb compared with the past.

As far as Asian studies are concerned, they are not very well developed in China for various reasons. Asian studies in China are predominantly focused on the study of governments in Asia, and not on societies in Asian countries. This is not a welcome development. Instead, China should learn more about its neighbors by studying their histories.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

In this session, the "soft" side of community building, both positive ingredients and potential obstacles, was discussed. Interventions mentioned are outlined below.

Ingredients for East Asian Community Building

Several factors were discussed in the context of elements promoting or at least consistent with community building in East Asia, including Asian values, improved bilateral relations in the region, and shared common goals.

One would expect that Asian values, which had been promoted loudly and aggressively a few years ago, could provide a psychological and intellectual foundation for an East Asian community. Several participants indeed referred to this, but none suggested that Asian values could be utilized to promote community building. A senior Japanese scholar introduced two cases of grand intellectual inquiries into the identity of "Asian values" that produced only many books with no better understanding of its substance. A North American participant, looking from outside the region, suspected these attempts will never succeed and, indeed, believed it could even be dangerous to dream about this. He held that a good region with a high level of regional integration could be built without a common set of specific values. A senior ASEAN historian finished the debate by stating that Asian values came onto the scene temporarily under the special circumstances of post-cold war Western euphoria and that the concept does not matter much any longer. Indeed, the concept had already disappeared, he felt.

Throughout the conference, the schism among three countries in Northeast Asia had been pointed out as a huge obstacle that needed to be overcome in order for an East Asian community to be created successfully. During this session, a number of participants referred to improved bilateral relations between China, Japan, and South Korea in recent years.

An ASEAN senior political scientist observed that there seemed to be some consensus among participants that the Sino-Japanese relationship or, more clearly, reconciliation within that relationship, is a necessary ingredient to East Asian community building. A Japanese East Asian expert agreed that Sino-Japanese relations are extremely important for community building.

One panelist pointed out that the general image of Japan has been on the decline among the Chinese public, to which a Japanese East Asian specialist responded that the image of Japan in China is worsening because so many things happened in 2003, including the controversial visit by Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichiro to Yasukuni Shrine. A group of Chinese scholars who advocated a "new thinking on Japan policy," which was highly welcome in Japan, was in the end severely criticized by other Chinese scholars and

citizens through the Internet, tabloids, and newspapers, reflecting a rather negative climate vis-à-vis Japan in China. This speaker believed that one way to address this problem is to promote more sound Japanese studies, which are still weak in China.

The same speaker, on the other hand, observed that in Japan “it is a little bit quiet,” because, he believes, the Japanese economy has finally regained its growth partly thanks to progressing economic interdependence between the two countries. A senior ASEAN economist was impressed by a study by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) that shows there has been quite a significant change in Japanese perceptions of and reactions to China. Instead of looking at China as a threat, Japanese now see China as more of an opportunity because it is the fastest growing market for Japanese products. This speaker reminded participants that when people talk about a bilateral relationship there is no forgetting the importance of economics.

A senior Japanese intellectual felt that feelings toward China among the Japanese have improved compared with two years ago, and he attributed this change to three factors: (1) the proactive approach that the Chinese government has taken in solving the North Korean nuclear issue; (2) Japanese business, which is actually benefiting more from China’s growth than losing; and (3) the emergence of a new leadership in China. This speaker concluded that Japan-China relations are in good shape and that the Japanese nationalism, which it had been feared at one time would flare up against China, is no longer so prevalent.

Another Japanese political scientist added that he thinks the Japanese view on China now is not so bad—not so terrific perhaps, but nevertheless not so bad. The reasons he cited for this were (1) increasing interdependence in the economic sphere and (2) the growing number of Japanese students and businesspeople who are studying the Chinese language.

Improvement of bilateral relations is not confined to China-Japan relations. A Japanese participant felt that, despite some unfortunate incidents, the Japan-South Korea relationship has matured in recent years to the extent that some people involved in Sino-Japan relations suggest that Japan-South Korea relations should be a model for the future. A senior Japanese intellectual observed that in Japan the popular attitude toward South Korea has improved tremendously, referring to South Korean movies and TV programs that the Japanese public has found fascinating. This kind of exposure has brought South Korea closer to Japanese youth and the Japanese public in general.

A senior South Korean scholar confirmed from the South Korean side this trend in the improvement in the relations between South Koreans and Japanese. He attributed the improvement on the South Korean side to the emergence of a new generation, which has affected everything in South Korea, including national politics. He observed that South Korean youths are apparently accepting Japanese people and culture much more innocently than older generations, a trait that, he suspected, is shared by Japanese youth. Between the new generation in the two countries there is much more affinity in terms of lifestyle, he noted.

China-South Korea relations—the third leg of Northeast Asian bilateral relations—have experienced a bumpy period due to the historical authenticity/lineage issue. Chinese participants and South Korean participants seemed to show slightly different assessments about these bilateral relations. While pointing out how sensitive the United States is to the improvement of Sino-South Korean relations, a Chinese participant disclosed that the public image of South Korea in China is very good partly because some South Koreans are constantly reminding the Japanese of Japan's wrongdoings during World War II, an attitude that some Chinese insist their government should emulate.

A senior South Korean scholar who said that while he had been under the impression that South Koreans for a long time regarded China as benign, explained that recent unfortunate events have led South Koreans to feel that China can be nasty toward them. Here he saw a great deal of concern on the part of the South Koreans about the Chinese attitude toward South Korea. He feared that the negative attitude toward Chinese goes deeper than recent events, having something to do with China's size.

Reference to the current status of democracy in Chinese minds by one of the panelists invited a number of comments from participants in support of democratic developments in China. A Japanese scholar who was a member of the East Asian Vision Group stressed the necessity of keeping a goal in mind when creating a community and reported that the consensus his group had reached was the creation of "a community of peace, prosperity, and progress." The intention behind such an ambiguous, contentious, and, to some, even annoying term as "progress" was, according to this speaker, the inclusion of good governance and eventual democratization. He dared to say that unless the idea of progress is included, many community building efforts will be directionless.

Another Japanese senior intellectual found the panelist's assessment disturbing. According to his analysis, the root cause of Japanese affinity to

South Korea and Taiwan lies in the fact that these are democratic countries. Solidification of Sino-Japanese relations, he felt, required a sign that China, too, is moving toward democracy or, at least, toward pluralism. An ASEAN intellectual agreed with this speaker, declaring that we cannot build a regional community only on the basis of open markets because we cannot attain open economies without working toward becoming, eventually, open societies. Thus, we will have to think in terms of open societies, instead of open markets, when we build a regional community.

A Japanese East Asia specialist agreed with the original assessment on Chinese cynicism toward democracy. Since he believed that the common values and senses on which an East Asian community will be founded must be related to democracy and open society, he declared that political reform is truly vital for China's future development. In order to move forward toward an East Asian community, China will also need to share certain common values, including open society, he stated.

Another senior Japanese economist testified that there has been tremendous growth of NGOs, genuine NGOs and nongovernmental NGOs, in China in recent years, particularly in the fields of environment and community building. This can be interpreted as a positive sign of pluralization in China, the speaker suggested.

Responding to these comments, the original panelist clarified that he did not say that democracy has been removed from China's political agenda. Instead, he reiterated, the Chinese people, particularly intellectuals, have been disillusioned by democracy, partly due to the result of the alliance between the rising middle class and the government which has often resulted in self-serving corruption, e.g., corrupt officials supported by entrepreneurs, instead of the more democratic mechanisms that textbook democracy preaches.

Potential Obstacles to Community Building

The Nationalism Issue

Several participants responded to a panelist assessment on what appears to be a resurgence of nationalism in some countries in East Asia. A Japanese participant recognized the existence of the view that in Japan the younger generation is more nationalistic than older generations; however, he very much doubted the validity of this view, particularly vis-à-vis South Korea.

He hoped that the presence of this younger generation that is not particularly nationalistic will encourage the betterment of relations with Asian countries, including China.

Another Japanese scholar saw the influence of the mass media behind the recent attention to nationalism. Referring to the stir triggered by Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine, this speaker informed participants that the Chinese government itself had been trying to keep the incident as low-key as possible but that the Chinese mass media had blown it up. From this experience, this speaker was convinced that there should be a more active exchange of journalists between China and Japan.

An ASEAN observer noted that, in terms of nationalism, China has behaved much more maturely, as a big country should behave, in the past two to three years, and particularly since the change of leadership.

Approaching the issue differently, a South Korean participant thought that Asian regionalism in itself may be an attempt to absorb Asia's nationalism. In other words, he saw the desire for regional community as an expression of what he called pan-Asian nationalism in response to U.S. power and American dominance. A good deal of anti-U.S. sentiment exists in Asia, he noted, and he stressed that it will be important for East Asians to be much more honest by recognizing realities, constraints, and historical legacies when building the intellectual underpinning for the regional community.

The History Issue

History could be a major stumbling block on the path toward an East Asian community. Referring to a recent incident involving ancient history which has become an issue of contention between China and South Korea, a Japanese political scientist stated that history is constantly being rediscovered, including even ancient history, and some discoveries become hot issues in relations between and among countries in East Asia. A Korean participant endorsed this view, confessing that even now he thinks Chinese have a condescending attitude toward Korea and Koreans. If the issue of ancient history becomes politicized, he continued, the only solution would be to concentrate more time and energy on the part of scholars in conducting further research on the particular issues, and to do so with a more detached sense of history that is not dominated by a nationalistic mode of thinking. He concluded that joint study of ancient history in East Asia could become a building block for creating a new community, instead of an obstacle.

A senior Korean scholar agreed that contention triggered by ancient history is nothing new in East Asia, including between China and South Korea. He recognized behind these incidents the intentions of some politicians who wish to politicize these issues. He endorsed the previous Japanese speaker's proposal for a joint study in ancient history between countries concerned. Referring to another history-related issue—i.e., Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to Yasukuni Shrine, which has been a thorny issue between Japan and its neighboring countries—this Korean scholar disclosed his impression that Japanese public opinion seems to be divided on this issue, with a slightly larger portion favoring the continuation of visits over the establishment of an alternative site. Politicians, being what they are, will naturally play up public sentiment to gain more votes, he concluded.

A senior ASEAN scholar stressed that Asia must begin to write its own history, not from different national perspectives but from the standpoint of the inter-Asian region. History is important because it is the base for the future and, in his judgment, two things must go together when building a community, i.e., history or a common appreciation of where we come from, on the one hand, and an appreciation of where we are going, on the other hand.

A profound and useful viewpoint was provided by a prominent historian participant. He pointed out that one of the interesting things about Asia is the differences in things like religion and conceptions of the past, i.e., certain countries and cultures in Asia place a lot of emphasis on political history, while in some other countries political history is not at all important. China, South Korea, and Japan have all developed a sense of political history and, in fact, legitimacy of any regime in these countries is based on a historical record. For countries like India and Southeast Asian countries, the past is not seen in terms of political history, but more in terms of literature, gods, and events, which have moral tales. Thus, there seems to be a vast difference in the sense of history between Northeast Asia and South and Southeast Asia, which could contribute to a lot of misunderstanding about how to deal with the past. This speaker warned that when one culture emphasizes political history and another culture does not, there is no dialogue.

China Factor

As the preceding debate on democracy implies, China itself can pose an obstacle to East Asian community building. Whether China sees itself as an East Asian country and how China sees East Asia was discussed in conjunction with this. A senior ASEAN promoter of Asia Pacific cooperation,

while understanding that China, being a large landmass, has to pay equal attention to many surrounding countries/regions, questioned whether East Asia is not the most important region to which China should give priority, especially when East Asia is where economic expansion and integration is happening, and when a strong East Asia will be of benefit to China in its relations with the United States.

Another ASEAN political scientist wondered where Japan fits in the Chinese typologies of its surrounding world, the answer to which will determine what China wishes to do with its relations with Japan.

To these questions and comments, the original Chinese panelist responded by partially agreeing that East Asia is the most important region in China's strategic thinking as well as in practical Chinese considerations. But he claimed that the unique presence of Japan (i.e., as part of the developed world, a U.S. ally, and as one of the surrounding countries in Asia, according to Chinese typology) complicates the situation. China's view of East Asia as a strategically important region has been crowded by its dissatisfactory relationship with Japan, which plays a very important role in the region, while Japan's strategic alliance with the United States further complicates the situation. As a result, this speaker stated that it is not easy for China to see East Asia as the most important, vital region for China's strategic considerations. Therefore, he believed that unless China becomes more accommodating to the existing security relationship in East Asia, it will not be easy for China to embrace this concept of East Asian community.

Underpinnings for the Future

Next a senior ASEAN intellectual shared his impression that there is definitely not enough intellectual underpinning for East Asian community building and that the region needs to pay attention to strengthening this weak underpinning. Playing the devil's advocate, he declared that if at the moment the region has only enough intellectual underpinning in terms of economic growth and prosperity, we should stop talking about the community and instead talk about regional cooperation or association. He believed that the region should take this task of community building step by step and try to strengthen the political side, beginning with regional economic cooperation or association.

Several other participants commented on steps to be taken to further strengthen intellectual underpinnings. An ASEAN legislature participant

stressed the need for a paradigm shift with respect to leaders' and people's view of East Asia and East Asian community, the lack of which has been a major stumbling block in community-building endeavors. This shift calls for the articulation—a task for intellectuals—of a new paradigm, and this should be followed by the popularization of the paradigm, in which he hoped the media can and should play a major role.

Some participants pointed to the importance of educational/research exchange in the region. A Japanese university professor believed one area of activity that will be important for East Asian community building in the long run is international education, especially on the university and post-graduate levels. More specifically, he wished to see Japanese institutions accepting more foreign students and sending more students overseas, particularly in collaboration with Northeast and Southeast Asian counterparts. Another senior Japanese scholar thought it important for Japanese scientists/engineers working with Asian counterparts to be assisted by social scientists in order to deepen the social context of their joint endeavors.

The importance of the track two contribution was pointed out repeatedly throughout the session. One of the keys seems to lie in more effective and sophisticated connection between track two networks and governments. One senior ASEAN track two promoter stated that the issue of strengthening the intellectual underpinning for East Asian community building is in fact directly related to the role of the second track and how to effectively organize the second track. The most important task for track two is, according to this speaker, related to the institution that East Asia should establish to facilitate community building. While some argue that the region should be content with an institution that is currently politically feasible, this speaker believed it is the role of the second track to identify what needs to be pushed beyond what is politically feasible and how far. Track two can and should present a vision of the institution to come, in other words.