Reconstructing Asianism
Asia as a Matrix of Civilisational Projects

Report of the International Symposium of Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership (CAPP)
Osaka University of Economics and Law
This report summarizes the proceedings of two International Symposia on “Reconstructing Asianism: Asia as a Matrix of Civilisational Projects” held on July 21 and December 2, 2007 under the auspices of the Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership (CAPP), Osaka University of Law and Economics at Tokyo Azabudai Seminar House. The First Symposium featured leading scholars from South and East Asia to explore the potential, possibilities and challenges of civilisational projects emanating from the Asian continent as a counterpoint to hegemonic discourses on civilisation. The second one was organized as a dialogue between Dr. SUN Ge, a leading expert on Japan in China, with leading historians and social scientists of Japan, on the different aspects of “Asianism” in the Japan of the 1920s and 30s. The objective of the dialogue was to determine the Japan-centric limitation of this project in view of reconstructing an Asianism beyond its counter-productive ideological connotations.

The context of the two Symposia is provided by the cultural, political and methodological constructions underpinning extant civilisational discourses, both the presumed “clash of civilisations” (HUNTINGTON) and the rise of a singular “universal” (Western) civilisation (FUKUYAMA). Recognition of multiple sites and registers of alternate mappings of civilisations, in spite of different ideological constraints linking them to particular political interests, presents new pathways to rethink the limits of homogenizing notions of politics and cultural projects.

The three principal presentations by Director, MUSHAKOJI Kinhide, Suresh SHARMA, and Mustapha Kamal PASHA of the first Symposium and the presentations of Dr. SUN Ge, Professors USUKI Akira, MARUKAWA Tetsushi, YONETANI Masafumi and NISHITANI Osamu bring into sharp relief the heterogeneity of civilisational projects, the richness of alternative sites, and commonalities and differences amongst different civilisations. Contributions by a diverse group of participants also highlight the heterodox nature of civilisational projects, but also reveal the conditioning force of neoliberal globalization upon the production of viable civilisational alternatives. Above all, the Symposia underscore the importance of historical consciousness in any meaningful examination of civilisational dialogue and confluence.

I am delighted to offer this report on “Reconstructing Asianism: Asia as a Matrix of Civilisational Projects” with the aim of furthering sober and imaginative conversation on alternatives to hegemonic accounts.

MUSHAKOJI Kinhide
Director, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership (CAPP),
Osaka University of Economics and Law
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THE FIRST SYMPOSIUM
ASIA AS A MATRIX OF CIVILISATIONAL PROJECTS

Programme

July 21, 2007

9:30–10:00 Opening Remarks

HAYAO Takanori, Visiting Researcher, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership, Osaka University of Economics and Law

MUSHAKOJI Kinhide, Director, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership, Osaka University of Economics and Law

10:00–13:00 Presentations

MUSHAKOJI Kinhide, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership, Osaka University of Economic and Law, Japan, “Asia as a Matrix of Civilisational Projects: General Remarks and Comments from East Asia”

Suresh SHARMA, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, India, “Indian Civilisation and Asia as a Matrix of Civilisations”

Mustapha Kamal PASHA, University of Aberdeen, UK, “After Orientalism: Islamic Civilisation in a Neo-imperial Context”

13:00–14:00 Lunch

14:00–17:30 Roundtable Discussion
Lists of Participants and Discussants

HANOCHI Seiko, Associate Professor, Chubu University, Japan

HAYAO Takanori, Visiting Researcher, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership, Osaka University of Economics and Law, Japan

Shirine JURDI, PhD Candidate, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan

MIYANAGA Kuniko, Professor, Tama University, Japan

MARUKAWA Tetsushi, Associate Professor, Meiji University, Japan

MUSHAKOJI Kinhide, Director, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership, Osaka University of Economics and Law, Japan

NISHINAKA Seiichiro, Visiting Researcher, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership, Osaka University of Economics and Law, Japan

ONUKI Hironori, PhD Candidate, York University, Toronto, Canada

Mustapha Kamal PASHA, Professor, University of Aberdeen, U.K.

Suresh SHARMA, Director, Centre of the Study of Developing Societies, India
Opening Remarks

The International Symposium on “Asia as a Matrix of Civilisational Projects” was chaired by HAYAO Takanori, a Visiting Researcher, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership (CAPP), Osaka University of Economics and Law, who provided the immediate context for the event. HAYAO mentioned an earlier meeting CAPP organized in May by Professor MARUKAWA Tetsushi (Meiji University) which featured Dr. SUN Ge, a very prominent scholar of Eastern civilisations at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. (She also received a second Ph.D. in Politics and Law in 2003 from Tokyo Metropolitan University. Dr. SUN Ge is also the founder of the intellectual forum “The Japan-China Knowledge Community” which has created new intellectual spaces for discussion. Her principal work is How Does Asia Mean? (YaZhou yiweizhe Shenme?), published in 2000). SUN Ge has made “substantial contributions to the concept of Asia, especially, East Asia.” SUN Ge has explored the expansion and deepening of the East Asian community in her extensive writings on the subject. Unlike other experts who have focused primarily on the economic and political aspects of this nascent community, SUN Ge has examined the “concept of Asia” itself and the intellectual dimensions of “creating one Asia”. How can we talk about Asia from an historical perspective, but also with an eye for its ideational aspects? According to HAYAO, SUN Ge’s contributions have sparked a stimulating discussion on the possibility and imagination of East Asia. HAYAO also mentioned the dialogue between SUN Ge and Professor MARUKAWA on the topic.

Director MUSHAKOJI Kinhide, the intellectual force beyond the conceptual design and content of the international symposium, welcomed the participants in his capacity as Director of CAPP and offered a brief rationale for the Symposium. “The concept of civilisational projects,” MUSHAKOJI explained, originates with the writings of an internationally acclaimed Egyptian scholar, Professor Anouar ABDEL-MALEK, who is also the first scholar (now largely forgotten) to provide a critique of Orientalism (now associated principally with Edward SAID) in 1963. (ABDEL-MALEK is widely recognized for his important works, Social Dialectics: Civilisation and Social Theory [1982], The Civilisational Orientation in the Making of the New World [1984], and scores of other writings on ancient civilisation. He is a pioneer in presenting a comprehensive critique of the hegemonic location of the West in civilisational discourse). According to MUSHAKOJI, the idea of “civilisational projects” disrupts the singularity of civilisational discourse in favour of a pluralistic notion, countering both Marxist historicist explanations of colonialism and imperialism and triumphalist Western accounts. The recognition of multiple “non-Western” civilisations creates the possibility of a more robust and intellectually ecumenical conversation. Many civilisational projects have emerged throughout history and in various cultural zones, especially in Asia, notably in China, India, and the Middle East. The concept of “civilisational projects” affords the opportunity to look at Asia not merely as a “region” but as a “matrix”. This provides the basis to view Asia as an intersection and confluence of different cultural flows and currents. Before the advent of European modernity, there are alternative worlds and visions that provide creative resources to conceive and construct political and social lives. The idea of civilisational projects captures the presence of alternative worlds and visions, but also furnishes the source of understanding the poorly articulated notion of Asianism, including Japanese thinking about Asianism. With an appreciation of heterogeneity, new pathways can be created to strengthen counter-hegemonic thinking.
PRESENTATIONS
MUSHAKOJI Kinhide, “Asia as a Matrix of Civilisational Projects: General Remarks and Comments from East Asia”

Background

Director, MUSHAKOJI placed his General remarks within the General context of the intellectual contributions of Dr. SUN Ge in reference to her recent work on East Asia, Japan and China. Dr. SUN Ge, who has written on the subject of Asia and has extensive knowledge of Japanese intellectual history, especially left-wing intellectuals during World War II, studied the work of TAKEUCHI Yoshimi [1910-1977]. TAKEUCHI was one of the most important Japanese scholars in post occupation Japan and very active in the intellectual movement to democratize Japan. While others, particularly MARUYAMA Masao [1914-1996], who were committed to democratizing Japan via (Western) modernization, Tradition to look at Japanese modernization, TAKEUCHI Yoshimi, an expert of Chinese literature and particularly an authority on the father of modern Chinese literature, LU Xun [1881-1936], offered a different trajectory. LU Xun had saw social reality from the perspective of common Chinese people and examined the crisis of a semi-colonized China from a “local” point of view, especially how the common people apprehended processes of change and transformation. From that perspective, LU Xun had joined MAO Zedong [1893-1976], not as an ideologue, but as someone who was committed to the common people. According to MUSHAKOJI, TAKEUCHI wanted to apply this knowledge to Japan, eschewing the dominant perspective of looking at Japan in terms of Western modernity. For TAKEUCHI, democracy was only meaningful if it produced conditions for the common people to enjoy life. This realization necessitated going beyond Westernization. TAKEUCHI was interested in relocating the sources of democratization in Japan based on his reading of LU Xun. He revisited the theme of modernity that had been explored in a major symposium of intellectuals held in 1942 to “overcome modernity” —a ‘postmodern’ meeting, in MUSHAKOJI’s terms, critical of Western modernity, but also an attempt to “hail” Japan. The symposium became a basis to legitimize Japanese expansion in East Asia. TAKEUCHI reinterpreted the symposium from a different angle, that of modernizing left-wing intellectuals. MUSHAKOJI located Professor SUN Ge’s contribution as an attempt to reinterpret TAKEUCHI’s reading of the 1942 symposium. In terms of current relevance, MUSHAKOJI stressed the pervasive tendency in China as elsewhere “to accept the American way of life as modern and democratic” as a model of freedom and human rights. Neither LU Xun nor TAKEUCHI would recognize this equation. TAKEUCHI wanted to relate a conversation on modernity to Asia, one that was both receptive and critical, not just in a universalistic (Western) sense, but like LU Xun, premised on the reality of everyday life, of ordinary people.

Present Constellation

Against the background of recent conversations on the problematique of East Asian civilisation, MUSHAKOJI identified four central problems in our times. First, MUSHAKOJI underscored what he terms “a global crisis of Western modernity”, inextricably linked to the quest for alternatives. Paradoxically, while Western modernity was expanding, it was also being severely tested and questioned by postmodernists. However, there was a necessity to look beyond the French postmodernists for alternatives to Western modernity from both written and oral traditions in
Asia and Africa. Equally important was the need to historicize the present crisis but also interrogate the key assumptions of Western modernity. Typically, it is assumed the modern world is characterized only by Western hegemony based on a broad support for the universalistic values of the Enlightenment. These values are said to originate from a secularised Christian anthropocentric civilisational project which can be summarized by two ideal types: *homo oeconomicus* and homo politicus, the conceptual antecedents to extant notions of *Neoliberalism* and *Neoconservatism*, respectively. Another key assumption of Western modernity is the idea that human progress is led by the West. This idea is premised on Eurocentric universalism or the notion of Western exceptionalism. Unambiguously, this has materialized into the "White Man’s burden" (as in Rudyard KIPLING [1865-1936]), at the root of all forms of European colonialism. Western Enlightenment also adopts as its epistemological base the Aristotelian predicate logic or Logos. Upon closer scrutiny, however, this logic is only a part of the *tetra-lemma* of Buddhist logic. In other words, Logos does not exhaust the possibilities of knowledge, but is presented as such in Western modernity. Furthermore, Western Enlightenment is based on a dualism between epistemology and ethics. Accordingly, ethics assumes the free individual with universal human rights, and the Westphalian state modified by the process of democratization, recognizing the pre-eminence of state-civil society contract. Against this backdrop, the global age is characterized by the crisis of the Westphalian system, which causes the crisis of Enlightenment ethics.

The second major problem of our times is that the global crisis challenges the Western project under American hegemony. To be certain, even President BUSH is critical of the Westphalian model, which is a crucial element of Western modernity in favour of empire. Hence, intellectuals in Asia need to be strategic and must have a common front with intellectuals from Europe in designing alternatives to Western modernity, because the Neoconservatives under BUSH are themselves challenging important elements of the modern project. We should not challenge the good aspects of modernity, MUSHAKOJI urged.

A third key problem lies with the tendency to define non-West as the Other to be modernized by the West. Following ABDEL-MALEK’s critique of Orientalism, MUSHAKOJI insisted, it is important to challenge this tendency of embracing Western historicism. In this context, SUN Ge’s studies have been very important. Many Japanese left-wing revolutionaries were accepting to be "others" by applying the Marxist/Western model of history to Japan: they saw themselves as the Other of Western modernity.

The fourth problem complicating the present global crisis is the tendency of the non-West “us” to treat the West as “others”. This practice is especially pervasive amongst "fundamentalists" of various shades. The binary logic of Othering is counter-productive and undermines possibilities of forging resistance on a global scale.

**Non-Western Asia**

This background offers a useful framework to structure discussions about “non-Western” Asia. In the first instance, Pax Americana has Generated a counter-hegemony seeking alternative worlds. Non-Western civilisational projects acquire an important role in this context. The Western modern civilisational project is conceived as an offshoot of a line of heterodox religion-civilisational projects—from Judaism to Christianity in its varied (Roman Catholic, Protestant, and other) forms to Atheism. Although an integral part of the so-called Axial Age, other religions/civilisations have been treated as uncivilized “others” –objects of Orientalism and colonialism. The global crisis of Western modernity requires that non-Western axial civilisations provide epistemological and ethical bases to
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complement critically the secular state-based civilisational project. In particular, MUSHAKOJI stressed the Islamic World, India, and China—three great civilisations—should provide the intellectual resources for alternative epistemology and ethics, supplanting modern Western Enlightenment epistemology and ethics.

East Asian Alternatives to Western Modernity

MUSHAKOJI offered several examples of alternatives that had been generated within East Asia to underscore the availability of vast civilisational resources to overcome Western modernity, particularly in its present instantiation. These alternatives included Mysticism which has been studied by Western anthropologists to recognize the transcendental aspects of civilisations. Marxism, but especially, dialectical materialism, acquires a yin/yang-epistemology in the Maoist Theory of Contradictions. Modernity, characterized by the West as industrialization, is interpreted by the Donghak (a peasant uprising against foreign domination in Korea in 1894) as the age of equality among people. Humanism, characterized as human freedom in the West, is defined in terms of human warmth and light by the Buraku (one of Japan’s minorities) Liberation Declaration. These examples demonstrated the presence of alternative understandings of universalistic values within the East Asian civilisational context.

Anti-Colonialism as Common Heritage

Above all, MUSHAKOJI emphasized, citing OKAKURA Tenshin [1862-1913] that “Asia is one”. OKAKURA was a close friend of Rabindranath TAGORE [1861-1941], one of India’s foremost intellectuals and a great proponent of independence from Britain. The central idea in OKAKURA’s thinking is that Asia is diverse in reality but one, sharing the common heritage of anti-colonialism. Present-day civilisational projects can all be traced to projects generated during the encounter between colonialists and anti-colonialists. However, MUSHAKOJI saw Japan as an exception to the degree that anti-colonialism against the West had turned to colonialism for Japan. The crucial point is that all alternative civilisational projects of the anti-colonial period can find their origin in the respective traditions of each society. The traditions are either classical or popular. ZHOU Enlai [1898-1976] represents the former: MAO Zedong, the latter. In India, the difference between TAGORE and Mahatma GANDHI [1898-1948], can also be interpreted in terms of these general orientations. Anti-colonial projects have three general tendencies. They are sometimes modernist, trying to absorb Western values; sometimes nativist, rejecting totally any Western values; or radical in their effort to grasp the problems at their roots, be it related to Western modernity or endogenous traditions.

Illustrations

MUSHAKOJI offered several illustrations from East Asia to stress the importance of recovering intellectual resources to imagine civilisational alternatives, notably the concept of He = Wa (和) and its relation to Japanese xenophobia. The concept of “wa” or post-chaos, post-diversity harmony had been introduced from Confucianism by Prince SHOTOKU [573-621] in the 6th century as a key value to stop inter-ethnic conflicts and build a unified nation. The concept of “He” is also found in one of the Four Books of Confucianism, Chung Yun (中庸). It defines “he” (和) as Post-Chaos Harmony in contradistinction to “chung” (中), a state of original harmony which precedes chaos. Japan changed its name to Wa-koku (和国) or country of post-chaos harmony in opposition to China, the
pre-chaos country of “chung” (中国).

It was when Japan decided to close its door and reject all Westerners trying to colonize Japan that the concept of “wa” was completely reversed—from harmony in diversity into harmony because of homogeneity. This interpretation of closed door “wa” was used to justify aggression in the 1930s, and is still the basis of the notion of internal harmony amongst the Japanese, combined with a xenophobic rejection of all foreign migrants. There was, however, a revival concept of multi-ethnic “wa” at the time of 1945 defeat when the Japanese Constitution proclaimed the rights of all peoples to live in peace, as well as in the 1990s when Japan adopted the concept of human security, a post-Westphalian concept based on endogenous security of all security communities, state or non-state.

The Donghak (東学) “Kyongchon Aiin”

The Donghak (Eastern Learning) movement in modernizing Korea evolved into the peasant uprising of 1893-94. This was the occasion for the movement to build an egalitarian society in the region under its control, liberating the Bukchon untouchables and establishing Gender equality. Its project slogan was Kyongchon Aiin (敬天愛人) or to be revered to Heaven and love people. The Donghak project of Kyongchon Aiin was a new reading of the concept of “Jang-ai” (兼愛), meaning love based on Common Benefit of difference proposed by Motse (the founder of a non-Confucian school of thought in the 4th century). It is interesting to note that the same concept was also given a new meaning in the anti-colonial project of Pancha Shila proposed by Jawaharlal NEHRU [1889-1964] and ZHOU Enlai. The latter had probably in mind the concept of “jang-ai” when he proposed the principle of “equal mutual benefit”. Kyongchon Aiin was also adopted in Japan by SAIGO Takamori [1827-1877] who was opposed to the modernizing policies of the Meiji Government and lost the Seinan War in 1877. Genyousha, and then the Black Dragon Society, which are at the roots of the Japanese right-wing movements, were planning to support the Dong Hak peasant uprising. Genyousha was originally supporting an equal alliance among China, Korea and Japan, but became the spearhead of Japanese colonialism and aggression in Korea and China. MUSHAKOJI drew the important inference that the concept of “Kyongchon Aiin” has also influenced the contemporary North Korea Juche project. It stresses “ai” (love) as a corollary of “chajusong” (自主性), self-based autonomy. This is an example of an anti-colonial concept reinterpreted in the global hegemonic context of today.

The Popular Tradition and the Organic Intellectuals

MUSHAKOJI closed his presentation by offering key recommendations to intellectuals in Asia for constituting counter-hegemonic projects. Principally, they have to guide their intellectual creativity in such a way that they arrive at an organic interaction between classical and popular traditions in the face of common adversary—the colonial/hegemonic aspect of the West. The intellectuals whose intellectual activities are developed under the classical tradition have the advantage to engage in a dialogue with the West and find common ground with intellectuals in (Western) civil society. Needless to say, these intellectuals are constantly facing the danger of being coopted. Intellectuals familiar with the classical tradition also have the advantage of knowing the finer aspects of the Western Enlightenment tradition, one that is both reflexive and critical. MUSHAKOJI cited the examples of ZHOU Enlai and Nehru in this regard. On the other side of the equation, intellectuals associated with the popular tradition tend more to be free from Western rationalism and essentialism. Their intellectual activities are based on their empathy with the
people which stressed identity and dedication to the community; associated with the marginalized cultures and peoples, these intellectuals have the advantage of communicating with the marginalized people (the multitude) in the West, since they can emphasize with them. LU Xun represents this tendency. The intellectuals of the popular tradition also have the advantage of developing endogenous projects, but they also face the danger of a total rejection of Western modernity, making them embrace a totally exclusivist discourse, as with the extreme right. In conclusion, MUSHAKOJI stressed the need for Asia to mobilize with the various projects it has Generated in its anti-colonial past, and build an inter-paradigm dialogue between the classical and popular intellectuals on their respective projects (for example, Juche and civil liberty). These efforts have the potential to join the anti-hegemonic historic bloc, represented, for instance, by the World Social Forum, and contribute to the elaboration of a multicultural and multi-ethnic civilisational project. This is the task of the organic intellectuals of Asia.

Suresh SHARMA, “Indian Civilisation and Asia as a Matrix of Civilisation”

Professor Suresh SHARMA opened his remarks by restating the relationship between Folk and Classical aspects of civilisation addressed by Professor MUSHAKOJI as a vehicle “to identify the possibility of the emergence of a new kind organic intellectual”. In his reformulation of the relationship, SHARMA saw a key difference between East Asia and Western Asia. This difference, he conjectured, was “perhaps so large that it does not get noticed”. In most of Asia outside of East Asia, the use of indigenous languages in high intellectual discourse, particularly when it relates to modern context has been more or less discontinued. Even when this happens it happens on a small scale. By contrast, the survival of language in East Asia, despite very successful modernization, is a remarkable fact. This situation is in very sharp contrast to the case of India, Pakistan and most of the Middle Eastern world.

SHARMA believed that this difference has some far-reaching implications for the relation between language and the mobilization of civilisational resources. China was saved by Chinese culture during Cultural Revolution despite the brutal assault in public spaces. Some radicals argue that life in China goes in cycles. This is a telling statement since it allowed a good chance to go back to previous history.

SHARMA tried to spell out and clarify the implications of the main proposition salient to the symposium: “Asia as a Matrix of Civilisation”. For SHARMA, the proposition comprises three critical categories: Asia, Matrix and Civilisation. The idea of “Asia” that the proposition seems to focus upon is clearly directed to things beyond its Geographical contours. True, Geographical contours themselves have never been absolutely clear or stable. In fact even today the thresholds and boundaries of, as to what constitutes Asia remain uncertain and somewhat fluid. Asia as a distinct historical and cultural-civilisational demarcation different from Europe is manifestly a consequence of the Modern process. The term “matrix” encodes the sense of final ground of repose-sustenance, and in a muted sense, perhaps also origin. It conveyed a sense of something being “more rooted”. But with “Asia as a matrix” one has to have a sense of the nature and salience of the Modern transformation. Asia is ultimately a “modern” construct. The term “projects” carries the baggage of a mission. He preferred the term “lineages”.

Of the three terms, civilisation is the only term whose origins and semantic force stand at a clear remove, somewhat independent of Modernity. The intensely complex and implicated historical-intellectual transactions between Asia and what could be termed variably as the West, Europe, and Modern civilisation cannot be understood
in a meaningful way without reference to the idea of universals in non-European civilisations.

**Clash of Universals**

With this initial probe into the meaning of key concepts, **SHARMA** attempted "to explore the deep and profound tension between the epistemes of universals of Modernity and the universals of civilisations prior to it". This would necessitate reflection "upon the possibilities of conversation between different civilisational categories, modes of comprehension and validation. Perhaps from that kind of consideration," **SHARMA** stressed, "one could begin to look at the possibilities of remaking, in however small a measure, a different way for the world in our times". This intellectual exercise would entail four salient historical-epistemic cardinals: (1) requirement for a conversation within and between civilisations/cultures; (2) the relationship between Universals as a human quest and Modern universality; (3) the nexus between Universals of civilisations and Modern universality; and (4) the complex interactions among Universality, distinctness, diversity and identity.

One of the most intriguing aspects of the idea of universality, **SHARMA** stressed, is that it is not contingent upon civilisational encounters. He gave the example of the idea of nothingness, represented in "zero". This idea has been represented in both the Indian and the Mayan contexts, but the extraordinary thing is that this absolutely identical form of representation is found from completely unrelated beginnings. Similar examples can be cited in the interaction between mathematics and aesthetics.

**SHARMA** explored the relationship between form and nothingness by examining the work of the great Indian painter, Syed Haider REZA, now living in France. He is the great painter of “nothingness”—post-chaos unity [harmony]. **SHARMA** saw a connection between REZA’s attempt to connect form and nothingness and the [Indian] discovery of the idea of zero, the marker between space and non-space.

**Folk/Classical Nexus**

A large part of **SHARMA**’s presentation was devoted to the explication of the complexities of the concept of civilisation and the interaction between the Folk and the Classical. He saw a close proximity between the notion of space and civilisation. Space was inseparable from [cultural] resource. **SHARMA** discussed lineages to the term and the connection of civilisation to “ultimate source” with a reference to life and energy.

**SHARMA** stressed the intricacies of the processes of negotiation between modern and the non-modern. In this context, he conjectured the enormous difficulty [almost impossibility] of comprehending the “moment of the first encounter” between the modern and the non-modern outside of Europe. This encounter involves negotiations with something “completely unknown”. What intellectual resources are available to analyze it? This is a profound question inseparable from human fortitude. Obviously, there is a “banality of descriptions” that range from characterizing physical features to contrasts with the known. However, at a deeper level, there is “something that is fundamental to humanity that makes encounters intelligible”.

**SHARMA** proposed that one possible avenue to comprehend encounters with the unknown was to recognize universality. “No matter what the trajectory of historical progression: no matter what language they [strangers] speak: no matter how limited is one’s range of experience,” **SHARMA** stressed, “the idea of universality is there”. He also believed that there were “possible attributes of universality”.
SHARMA offered a nuanced reading of the relationship between the Folk and the Classical, utilizing examples and illustrations from the Indian context. In the first instance, he proposed that there was a close link between the marking of the distinction between the two, on the one hand, and the relationship that was posited between universal/local or Folk and the Classical. He questioned an absolute demarcation between the two, citing examples of TAGORE and GANDHI, who often operated simultaneously within both universes. TAGORE’s attempt to set up the first major university [Shantiniketan] in India without state funds allowed a conversation “in a sustained way” between different modes of thought at a time when that idea was entirely new. TAGORE’s example disrupts the distinction between Folk and the Classical. SHARMA gave specific examples of TAGOR’s deployment of scholars from a variety of locales and traditions: his reworking of ancient texts and popular culture: and reliance on the Classical tradition, both Western and Eastern as illustrations of the classification. Similarly, Gandhi’s use of recitations from the Ramayana makes classification between Folk and the Classical untenable. A central point raised by SHARMA was that the separation between the Classical and the Folk was created by modernity. However, it was very difficult to sustain boundaries between the two.

SHARMA also gave the example of the great Persian poet FIRDAUSI [934-1020] author of Shahnama [Book of Kings] as an illustration of the problem of applying modernist classification between Folk and the Classical to non-Western civilisations. To contextualize, he offered an historical analysis of the displacement of Arabic by Persian as the language of High Islamic culture. Yet, FIRDAUSI’s poems were recited today by the ordinary people of Iran. FIRDAUSI had escaped the confines of High Culture and become an integral part of everyday experience. Is it Classical or Folk? FIRDAUSI sets the benchmark of classical Persian literature, especially at a time when all lines of transmission had been subdued. The Shahnama offered an opening for the renewal of Islamic culture. Clearly, there are distinct languages for rulers as well as for peasants, but the relationship between the Classical and the Folk is very complex. In this vein, SHARMA also provided the example of the Greek appreciation of the Egyptian civilization, while recognizing social distinctions.

SHARMA also provided examples from Indian music to illustrate the nexus between the Folk and the Classical. Finally, he examined the etymology of terms to show the confluence and overlap between the two ledgers of civilisation in the Indian context. Implicit in his analysis was an awareness of the deeply historical nature of both “traditions”. Logos cannot be understood outside of place or location.

Mustapha Kamal Pasha, “After Orientalism: Islamic Civilisation in a Neo-Imperial Context”

Professor PASHA introduced his presentation by stressing the need for a critical interrogation into the theme of the symposium to avoid essentialist interpretations of civilisation. Rather than taking culture [and civilisation] as a self-sustaining, self-reproducing sphere, he saw a close nexus between culture [and civilisation] and politics. PASHA raised two initial questions to orient his remarks: (1) what have we lost with [Western] modernity? (2) What are the implications of silencing the past?

PASHA proposed that we have taken one particular version of modernity to the exclusion of others. Modernity has multiple registers and sites: there are real tensions within modernity. However, only one cultural project within Western modernity has reached fruition, more Jacobian in content than the heterodox legacy bequeathed by
VICO or HERDER. On the other hand, there has been a silencing of the past and there are various forms of silence. The recovery of civilisational discourse in the Western centre recently [reference to HUNTINGTON and FUKUYAMA], is a form of silencing of alternative visions.

Based on VICO’s notion of *ricorso*, PASHA saw a recursive quality to human phenomena, not as repetition but a return to the past with self-selection. On these terms, the recovery of hegemonic civilisational discourse was linked to the reconsolidation of spatial and cultural [Western] boundaries. This discourse was tied to the “return of oriental essentialism” and the process of Othering of the non-West). A major consequence of the oriental essentialism was the reinforcement of Western exceptionalism. This had deep implications for politics and the production of alternatives. PASHA interpreted HUNTINGTON and FUKUYAMA as organic intellectuals of imperial power. These and other intellectuals had effectively remobilized cultural essentialism to consolidate hegemony.

PASHA also identified a connection between the recovery of civilisational discourse and the “globalisation of the colonial form”. In his view, we have already seen throughout history bifurcated zones between the ‘civilized’ and the ‘barbarians’ or between the saved and the ‘damned’. However, the ‘new barbarism thesis’ leaves no hiding places. In this frame, the figure of the Muslim as “uncivilizable” is central. As a panacea, civilisation can take the form either of brute force [Palestine, Iraq or Afghanistan] or in the shape of secularism. The only way in which Muslims can become a part of [Western] civilisation is to give up Islam.

The return of oriental essentialism was quite surprising. After the post-orientalist turn and the cultural turn in the social sciences, a new reflexivity was noticeable in virtually all the disciplines, including anthropology, Geography or cultural studies. Edward SAID’s formalization of Anouar ABDEL-MALEK’s original insight about Orientalism had injected self-scrutiny. Anthropology lost its lost monopoly over culture, except perhaps over ethnography. The study of culture became dispersed. Anthropologists were taken to task for their complicity in empire-making and colonial savagery. Furthermore, feminist critique offered new strategies for understanding the social world. After Jacques DERRIDA [1930-2004], the hierarchy between knower and known within Cartesian language was challenged. The pervasive hold of Eurocentrism became less severe. However, despite these changes, Orientalism appears to have staged a dramatic comeback.

In the study of Islam, in particular, “neo-orientalism” has apparently absorbed orientalist critique, and with new strategies of survival, regained ground it had lost. PASHA proposed two principal reasons for the rise of Neo-Orientalism. In the first place, post-orientalist critique focused mainly on culture, not politics. Cultural critique acquired an autonomous existence, independent of politics. In fact, SAID’s principal point was lost. Literary critique increasingly became detached from the question of how power was [continuously] shaping knowledge (à la Foucault). In the second instance, however, there was a deeper [internal] reason for the redeployment of historicism to negate post-orientalist critique. To be certain, historicism is the essential component of a modern mode of thinking; we cannot conceive of modernity without historicism. There were two main forms in which historicism works: (a) its reliance on presentism and (b) the denial of other (non-historicist) modes of knowledge. Presentism denies multiple modes of history and recognizes only a singular present [namely the West] which is the destination of history. The multiplicity of the past is erased: the modern relegates the past to the realm of tradition. In turn, historicism authenticates only certain kinds of [rational] knowledge (à point elegantly underscored by the eminent Indian thinker, Ashis Nandy). Myth, story-telling, folklore—is reduced to the realm of the non-rational.
ENCOUNTERS WITH ISLAM

Both elements must be seen in the context of the West’s problematic relation to the Islamic World. Islam is viewed as a different civilization with little connection to the West. In fact, the problem of apprehension lies inside the West, in its self-construction. Islam offers the contrast. Prominent scholars interpret Islam as a problem for [Western] modernity, whether in the formulation that Islam lacks civil society [Ernest GELLNER] or its inability to separate social spheres outside Faith, or in its inability to follow the path of liberal feminism with regard to questions of Gender. Lately, Islam is primarily recognized in terms of violence. Islam’s contributions to civilization are largely relegated to the role of mere “transmission” of the wisdom of the Ancients to Europe. In short, there is a “natural attitude” of aversion towards Islam.

In historical terms, however, the encounter between Islam and the West is a complicated affair. As with Europe’s encounter with the New World, religion has been the primary interpretative screen. It is not modernity’s encounter with the non-modern, which runs as the hegemonic narrative, but a religious encounter between Christianity and the non-Christian world that colours perception. For long, Islam was seen as an “impostor” or “heresy”. Recent scholarship to find sources of Islam in Hagarism (as in the works of Michael COOK and Patricia CRONE) continue to build upon a tired theme. The inseparable affinity between Judaism or Christianity and Islam is denied in favour of wild speculation. More significantly, the Christian encounter with Islam proceeds from a position of Christian weakness, not strength—the major source of anxiety and misgiving. Orientalism comes to maturity at a much later stage when the tables were turned against the Islamic World with the advent of European colonialism. Before that fateful time for Islam, however, there was no uniform Western recognition of Islam.

PASHA also stressed that Islam’s claim to monotheism also contributed to Christian unease. This is reflected in the language to designate Muslims: Saracens, Muhammadans, Moors, Turks, etc. but rarely Muslims. In short, it was not possible to talk about the civilisational encounter outside of power.

SECULARISM

In the context of neoliberal globalization, the biggest challenge confronting the Islamic World springs from the assumption that without secularism there are no prospects to modernize Muslims. This assumption is sustained by the notion that there are no autonomous spheres outside religion within the Islamic civilisational context. This hegemonic view refuses to acknowledge the deep effects of capitalist rationality, Westphalian state-building or the advent of mass media on the social and cultural fabric of Muslim society. At the root of the problem is a Protestant reading of Islam [and religion in General] in which multiple forms of negotiation between Faith and Modernity are not permissible. Secularism, hence, become the only solution to resolving the problem.

Between the Scylla of neoliberal globalization and the Charybdis of secularism, there is very little room for generating alternative civilisational projects. At the same time, the fracture of political authority and the corrosive impact of authoritarian forms of rule in the Islamic World [usually under the aegis of imperial power] deepen the crisis. Despite these challenges, the diversity and richness of lived Muslim experience and new attempts to connect the popular and Classical vectors of Islamic civilisation offer tremendous promise. Several projects are underway, both in the old centres of the Islamic civilisation, but also in the West with Muslim migrants showing the way with imagination and creativity.
Roundtable Discussion

The presentations were followed by a wide-ranging discussion on varied topics including cultural identity; the relevance of Marxism in globalizing times; neoliberalism; and the possibilities of counter-hegemony in Asia. All participants contributed to the lively conversation. A summary of the principal comments is presented here.

Professor HANOCHI Seiko, a Gramscian international political economist at Chubu University and an expert on Gender and globalization, drew attention to neoliberal globalization and its increasing capacity to produce informalization of the labor force and people on the move. A facet of this trend is the emergence of exclusivist notions of identity within Japan, partly as a response to migration. According to HANOCHI, Japanese identity was more complex before the advent of modernity. Many cultural traditions coexisted. However, with the rise of a Western kind of state, Japanese identity is becoming more restrictive. In this context it was a challenge to create an alternative world to respond to neoliberal globalization.

NISHINAKA Seiichiro, a Visiting Researcher at CAPP, appreciated the broad-based discussion in the presentations. He stressed the enormous difficulty in present times to distinguish between “Eastern” and “Western”. It was quite problematic to contrast “what comes from the West and what comes from the East.” Based on his research on migrants in Japan, NISHINAKA observed that many refugees and migrant workers from many countries, including the Islamic World, were drawn towards Islam and in neighbourhoods with sizeable Muslim migrant workers, such as migrants Indonesian workers, many Japanese were Getting “Islamized”. Outside Japan, the processes of the transformation of identity were also noticeable, especially in terms of the internationalization of Islam and its multiple manifestations in the present-day civilisational context. He believed that Muslims in Japan were poised to play a role. On the other hand, there were no uniform patterns of identity. His research on migrant refugees and workers offered a different perspective. For instance, Iranian refugee workers were very critical of their own country. Furthermore, things appeared very different from different locales. Seen from Japan, the opposition between Christianity and Islam was largely constructed in the West. From the Western perspective, however, this opposition was linked to the perception of growing intolerance of Islam towards Christianity. In General, NISHINAKA surmised, there is a General tendency to build more walls between religions. Intolerance was becoming a serious issue. There is also a connection between migration and greater intolerance, which was becoming a more serious issue. NISHINAKA also raised questions about Gender and minority rights within the Islamic context, noting especially the specific problem of the Kurdish population in Turkey.

Professor MIYANAGA Kuniko, an expert on globalization and identity at Tama University, saw the differential impact of globalization on various societies. Within the larger theme of the symposium, she insisted, the notion of “projects” makes sense, underscoring the difficulty under globalization and the specificity of responses to globalization. However, MIYANAGA found “Asia as a Matrix” a bit puzzling. She also recognized the “paradoxical” relationship between the global and the local. On the one hand, as the world was integrating under globalization, but at the local level world, the world was disintegrating. The increasing gap between the global and the local gave the current situation a paradoxical character. Globalization was Generating new forces at the local level.
MIYANAGA recognized that the term “projects” put the emphasis on [local] culture, different forms of civilisation, and relations between Self and Other. A paradox was also apparent in relations between individual and collective identity.

Professor MURUKAWA Tetsushi, who is a leading scholar of East Asia at Meiji University, geared his remarks to intellectual history, specifically, the legacy of Marxism in East Asia. The major question was how to assess the influence of Marxist thought in Asia. One reason for this question, MARUKAWA proposed, was the absence of Russians in recently organized symposia about Asia, but there were other reasons as well, particularly the salience of Marxism in the first half of the 20th Century. During this period, Marxism and Nationalism were the dominant ideologies in Asia. MARUKAWA suggested that the Bolshevik Revolution was perceived in Europe as an Asian phenomenon: from the East Asian perspective it is not seen in those terms. In East Asia, the major problem which developed historically was the opposition of nationalists who were aiming at building a socialist society and those who were not. Tension between the two types of nationalists was intensified during the Cold War. MARUKAWA also observed that civilisations in the Old World were perceived as territorial spheres. It was important to fully understand the relationship of these civilisational spheres to nationalism that developed historically during the first half of the 20th century.

Director MUSHAKOJI concurred with Professor SHARMA on the closeness between the Classical and the Folk, especially outside the West. The modern Western educational system in particular had developed a clear distinction between specialists of classical traditions and scholars studying the sphere of folk culture. At the same, MUSHAKOJI noted, that in countries like Japan, the Classical tradition is basically exogenous: it is the Folk tradition that is endogenous. Perhaps, the situation is more accentuated in South Asia, but many friends in Southeast Asia, as in the Philippines, point out that the discussion on “civilisation” is not very useful as they were trying to resist being part of an exogenous, High Civilisation. MUSHAKOJI emphasised that we need to look at how the endogenous civilisation interacts with the exogenous civilisational currents. In both India and the Islamic World, the patterns of interaction were very different from those in East Asia.

MUSHAKOJI also agreed with PASHA on the importance of not detaching culture from power. He was especially interested in Foucauldian notions of biopolitics and pastoral power. In the so-called “rogue states”, a designation he repudiated given its ideological and simplistic character, pastoral power was an important civilisational force. Hence, in both Iran and North Korea, this form of power was instrumental in resisting American power under the ’Pastor’ George W. BUSH.

Commenting on HANOCHI’s observation on changing identity, MUSHAKOJI agreed that the animist tradition is very strong in Korea and Japan. In both cases, it was more a part of the Folk tradition than the Classical tradition. He offered the important insight that in the Japanese formula, the Emperor provided the link between the two traditions to address the political problem of building state power in the shadow of European colonialism. However, there are other noticeable elements, particularly the deployment of Shintoism in state building combined with capitalist rationality. A similar combination can also be found in Toyotaism that tries to conjoin capitalist rationality with a particular formulation of [top-down] hierarchy and belonging. In recent times, there have been other variants of animistic currents in Japan that can be found in the New Religions. Some of these projects have also been anti-modern. MUSHAKOJI gave the example of a woman shaman, DEGUCHI Nao [1837-1818], the founder of Omo-
to religion, follower of nationalist Shinto and critic of the Meiji Reformation, whose movement represented itself as an anti-modern new religion and offered support to the poor who have been eliminated from modernization.

Migration, MUSHAKOJI argued, is an important source of civilisational projects. Migrants carry with them possibilities of alternatives. He had a “strong feeling” that in the Japanese instance a new, alternative form of multiculturalism would be built mainly by migrants. Already, the Japanese Brazilians (those who had returned from Brazil) were playing an important role in the Nagoya region. Schools with migrants that did not have the Confucian Japanese educational system recognized individuality. The impact of migration was also felt on popular culture and the introduction of new musical (Samba for example) art forms into Japan. One positive effect of migration would be to produce non-authoritarian forms of living.

SHARMA returned to the theme of the distinction between the Classical and the Folk by linking it to the relation between exogenous and endogenous aspects of civilisation. The place of origin of the Western civilisation was the extreme periphery of Europe with greater proximity towards the East than the West. A good part of Greek heritage was transmitted via the Arabic language. The locus of the Western Classical tradition was a very small part of Europe. Stressing the historical nature of cultural transmission, SHARMA also gave the example of the Islamic Empire in the Turkish region. The language of the Classical civilisation was Persian, with greater cultural prestige attached to it than Arabic. This was also evident in the context of the Islamic High Culture in India, with Persian as the principal language. In other words, the relationship between the exogenous and endogenous aspects of civilisation was quite complex. The making of modern Europe was marked by several strands. In this context, “Asia” in Greek served as the boundary where something else begins. In the time of the anti-colonial struggles, “Asia” becomes a space of resistance to European colonialism. Japan’s victory against Russia in 1905 was celebrated by a range of people across Asia. It also provided impetus to the idea that the instrumentality of capitalism was not the prerogative of Europe: Japan was seen as a successful example. However, SHARMA added, for GANDHI this was never a cause for celebration. In this vein, he never supported Subhas Chandra BOSE (1897-1945) in Japan.

SHARMA also responded to previous comments of MIYANAGA and MURUKAWA, respectively. He saw “paradox” as a situation where no conversation was possible between two contradictory entities. Commenting on the relationship between increased mobility and increased intolerance, SHARMA saw this as a consequence of “anxieties surrounding the politics of identity”. In the present [globalizing] context, “existential details are becoming uniform.” A key example is the manner in which English is displacing other languages, something that was unthinkable in the past. Quite likely, other languages would not survive. The driving force was the fact that “Modernity utilizes one language”.

PASHA re-examined the “centre-periphery” metaphor, but saw a distinction between cultural boundaries and territorial boundaries. Drawing upon the work of TU Weiming, he gave the example of “Cultural China.” He also stressed the changeability of civilisational boundaries. The West, in his words, “was once a province”. Greece became centre of Western civilisation much later. It was important not to reify boundaries. With regard to the Islamic civilisation, PASHA further noted that its boundaries had not only changed but its center had also shifted over the millennium. The idea of civilisation also gets purified with a different generation. Civilisation is continuously reinterpreted and there was no memory of a “pristine” past: the past also becomes something else—it becomes another place. The center of the Islamic civilisation was originally Mecca and Madina. Later, it shifted to Damascus, then to
Baghdad. The religious center may have remained the same, but not the civilisational center. It is not surprising to find the High Culture of Islam associated with the Umayyads, and later, the Saffavids, Ottomans, and Mughals. The role of Persian, as SHARMA had noted, was quite pivotal. PASHA also underscored the nexus between the Islamic civilisation and cities. Civilisation is tied to cities, like Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad, Delhi, or Lahore. Cities were the cultural centres. With the decline of cities, the Islamic civilisation experienced decline, especially after the Mongol sack of Baghdad in 1258. In the South Asian context, a symptom of decline is noticeable in the subordination of Indo-Islamic architecture and the ascendancy of architecture from the Gulf States of the Middle East. PASHA saw a connection between the rise of Salafi [fundamentalist] Islam and change in notions of space. An implication of this change is the subordination of direct experience of indigenous [South Asian] culture.

In reference to East Asia, PASHA noted that Japan had historically seen itself in relation either to China or the West. Despite Japanese intentions, the center of gravity was shifting once again to China. Japan does not want to give up its identification with the West. China’s problems are much deeper and bigger than Japan, but it is reemerging as the center in East Asia. After decades of relative calm, PASHA surmised that there was great anxiety in Japan about China’s resurgence.

Shirine JURDI, a peace researcher from Lebanon, spoke of the complex relation between Gender and minorities. Based on her own research on the problematic role of religion amongst women of the Druze minority community in the Levant, she stressed the historical character of the problem of minorities in a conflict zone in the Middle East. The interaction between ethnicity and minority status was a difficult one to grasp in a region deeply impacted by various civilisational currents. Many of the traditions of minority communities, including the Druze were “invented traditions”. Religion was not a static force but was constantly changing to fit into the regional matrix. The cultural heritage of the Druze was in conflict with new social forces. Furthermore, JURDI proposed that the Druze were “transcending cultural boundaries”. With regard to Gender, she stressed the importance the Druze gave to the question of equality unlike other sects.

MIYANAGA questioned the use of the term “invented tradition”, since it had a negative connotation. It had the potential to downplay the creative process of cultural adaptation. Would it not be appropriate, she queried to call this process “reflexive modernization” (an obvious reference to the works of Ulrich BECK and Anthony GIDDENS)? The latter would be a more positive way capturing the process of social transformation. MIYANAGA also noted that in her view, the conditions of women worldwide had deteriorated.

MARAKUWA returned to the question of the relation between Marxism and Nationalism in East Asia. Situating the analysis in an historical context, he highlighted the impossibility of discussing Asianism in Japan without reference to the Bolshevik Revolution [1917] as a turning point for developments within Japan. He noted that the Japanese right-wing and the Black Dragon Society were actually favourable to the first Russian Revolution [1905]. However, they parted with Marxism over the question of the Emperor in Japan, given their strong belief in the Emperor. The Bolshevik Revolution and the Emperor could not co-exist. This brought about a clear split between the Japanese right-wing and those who were supporting the Bolshevik Revolution.

MURAKAWA also noted that the situation of nationalism in Japan was very different from the situation in South Asia and the Muslim World. A major source of the difference is that even before the Bolshevik Revolution Japan directly experienced two wars. Two aspects are relevant here. First, Japan’s victory over Russia was perceived
SHARMA cautioned that the reception of the Japanese victory over Russia in 1905 was not only different in Asia, but also in Europe. Events in Europe were a matter of Universal History. By contrast, Japan’s victory over China was merely a matter of local history. SHARMA also questioned the assertion that Japan could easily (despite its intention) leave the Sinic cultural sphere. It is impossible to survive without cultural resources. He gave several illustrations to underscore this point.

MUSHAKOJI provided the historical backdrop for Japan’s decision to join the Western cultural sphere. He especially noted the time of the Sino-Japanese truce after the war which worried the European powers enormously of a potential alliance between China and Japan. Those fears were misplaced since Japan decided to imitate the West and demanded reparation from China, in the footsteps of colonial powers. Japan clearly had the opportunity to apply a different set of principle, including the Pancha Shila. Instead the Japanese State shifted its centre to the West and became a colonial power in place of joining China and becoming an anti-colonial power.

MUSHAKOJI also provided a background to the 1923 split between the Anarchists and the Bolsheviks, the two sides of the left-wing movement in Japan. The Japanese “untouchables” joined the Socialists movement on the model of the Levellers movement in England in the 17th Century. After the major earthquake in 1923, the Bolsheviks triumphed in the debate over the direction of the left movement. Given the bureaucratic nature of thinking and institutional structure, the differences between the Left and the Right were not entirely extreme. In the current climate, Neoliberalism and the right-wing have a close affinity in Japan.

The historical context of the relation between Marxism and Nationalism attracted considerable commentary. MUSHAKOJI linked the issue to the various Afro-Asian conferences in which interesting symbols and behaviour were noticeable, separating Marxists and Nationalists. The former tended to embrace Western modernity, while the Nationalists sought resources in Indigeneity. To the degree that Marxism shares the Enlightenment promise, the Communists in India, for example, shared the cultural accoutrements of modernity. MUSHAKOJI observed that even in the current political climate, the nationalists, especially ultra-nationalists, stressed indigenous symbols of representation, including attire.

PASHA underscored the point that both Marxism and Nationalism were “Western” constructs. In the Chinese context, these were available dominant alternatives linked to issue of whether to look inwards or elsewhere. With the apparent decline of Confucianism, the second alternative was more attractive. However, within a few decades Communism itself had run into similar problems and Chinese intellectuals were able to apprehend this situation long before the political elite. PASHA also gave the example of conscious attempts to look for exogenous sources for renewal, as in the case of Pakistan. After the break-up of the country in 1971 and shattering of the Two-Nation Theory [which presented Hindus and Muslims as two separate nations], the political elite in Pakistan decided to relatively abandon South Asia and embrace the Middle East, specifically, the Gulf. In addition to the forging of strong economic links, the cultural centre of gravity also began to shift outside South Asia, resulting in major social and cultural mutations, including language, dress, cuisine, and architecture. This process produced some bizarre cultural effects, including the incubation (later under state patronage and in the context of the Afghan war against
the Soviets) of Islamisation of state and civil society. The crisis of identity Pakistan experienced after 1971 Germinated new Salafi (fundamentalist) forces that are now a big challenge.

In the concluding part of the roundtable discussion, the question of counter-hegemonic projects was also raised. MUSHAKOJI saw a new role of Marxism in the present situation, citing a new book on the Fifth International by noted Egyptian scholar, Samir AMIN. The book eschews Bolshevik inclinations and has more anarchistic and multi-focal leanings. MUSHAKOJI proposed that for the organizers of the Fourth International, the end of the 1970s marked the end of age of decolonization. Since 1980s, notably after Margaret THATCHER and Ronald REAGAN and their neoliberal project, we have entered the age of recolonization. The global Intifada [uprising] of the period of decolonization has been displaced by passive resistance. With the loss of the Motherland/Fatherland of the proletariat, Socialism is no longer tied to the functioning of a massive bureaucratic apparatus. This has also ushered in a new role for the intellectuals. In different parts of the world, new social movements are emerging, notably the present Bolivar Revolution in Latin America and peasant unrest in China. These movements challenge neoliberalism and the growing gaps between the rich and poor. Intellectuals in China are more sensitive to the needs of the peasants. There are new possibilities for a new decentralized socialism linked to identity politics. Against this background, the Right/Left distinction was obsolete.

PASHA interpreted China’s historical pattern in non-linear terms, often following a pendulum. However, social trust in China was disappearing. He questioned the assertion that Japan had become a neoliberal society given the presence of high social trust. This may be the aim of certain social forces, but was not likely to succeed in Japan unlike Britain where social trust had virtually collapsed. Neoliberalism, if successful, would produce a horrible outcome in Japan.

MURUKAWA cited the argument that the success of neoliberalism rests upon a strong state, which was present in the Chinese case. The idea of a strong state was also linked to the Orientalist concept of Oriental Despotism, a highly politicized cultural interpretation. When we look at the recent change from inside China, it appears that the Chinese have gone from a revolutionary phase to the phase of “developmental despotism”. With the critique of Stalinism, especially the rejection of the “cult of personality”, China has entered a new era. This is a reality we need to address and to interpret more imaginatively.

MUSHAKOJI concluded the session by reiterating the importance of the problem of social trust. However, he cautioned that there were positive and negative aspects of social trust. In the latter instance, it can become the basis of hierarchy and exploitation. Finally, he stressed the need to develop new epistemic communities, like the World Social Forum. Given the present global constellation, this was a very important undertaking.
THE SECOND SYMPOSIUM
RECONSTRUCTING ASIANISM

Programme

December 2, 2007

13:00–13:15 Opening Remarks

HAYAO Takanori, Visiting Researcher, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership, Osaka University of Economics and Law, Japan

MUSHAKOJI Kinhide, Director, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership, Osaka University of Economics and Law, Japan

13:15–15:15 Presentations

SUN Ge, Dr., Research Fellow, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China

USUKI Akira, Professor, Japan Women’s University, Japan

15:30–16:30 Remarks

MARUKAWA Tetsushi, Associate Professor, Meiji University, Japan

YONETANI Masafumi, Associate Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan

NISHITANI Osamu, Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan

16:00–19:00 Roundtable Discussion
Lists of Participants and Discussants

HAYAO Takanori, Visiting Researcher, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership, Osaka University of Economics and Law, Japan

MARUKAWA Tetsushi, Associate Professor, Meiji University, Japan

MUSHAKOJI Kinhide, Director, Centre for Asia Pacific Partnership, Osaka University of Economist and Law, Japan

NISHITANI Osamu, Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan

SUN Ge, Dr., Research Fellow, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China

USUKI Akira, Professor, Japan Women’s University, Japan

YONETANI Masafumi, Associate Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Japan
The First Symposium was supplemented by a second-symposium which provided an occasion for two major papers to be discussed with their writers who were unable to attend the main Symposium, Dr. SUN Ge and Professor USUKI Akira.

**Presentation by Dr. SUN Ge:**

The second-symposium discussed Dr. SUN Ge exposition on the question of the perspectives (shiza: 視座) on which any discussion on Asianism or on East Asia are based, stressing the fact that what can be seen depends on the perspectives adopted by one looks at Asia. She pointed out that the perspective on East Asia can focus on the common belonging to Pax Sinica. The Confucian World is a typical example of this view which tends, according to Dr. SUN Ge, to lead to a conservative approach. Another perspective which was somehow creative in Japan is to look at Asia from the point of view of modernity imposed on this region by the West.

Leave Asia and join Europe (Datsu-A, Nyu-Ou) is based on the wish to emulate Western modernity, and Japan is said to have succeeded in this attempt. Nevertheless, Dr. SUN Ge remarked that another perspective has been developed also in Japan after its defeat in 1945. This perspective looks at East Asia as the terrain of Japanese colonialism. Within this context where different perspectives exist, we have to develop a new perspective about Asia and East Asia, but this is not an easy task. In Japan, a revived interest in East Asia has a dangerous implication, a revival of a Japan-centered Asia. In Korea, Asia has been seen as China, Japan and Korea caught in between the United States and the Soviet Union. Asia viewed from China is quite different from the Japanese or the Korean perspective. China now wants to compete with the great powers, the United States or Europe and East Asia is absent from its self-centered image of the World.

When one broadens the concept of East Asia beyond the above three countries, the geographical definition of the range of East Asia becomes uncertain. One can include Viet Nam as another country influenced by the Chinese Civilisation. From that perspective, however, Mongolia must also be included. North Korea cannot be excluded, and then the Russia with its Far East Region must also be included. East Asia has long been part of the Soviet/US Cold War and the United States is since that time part of the Region.

Dr. SUN Ge singles out another perspective on Asia she recently found important by reading the Soviet period publications on the “Far East”. The Russian perspective sees East Asia as a unit in terms of its pattern of modernization. In dealing with the “Far Eastern Problems”, the Soviet Union, Mongolia, China, Vietnam, North Korea, South Korea and Japan are considered part of East Asia linked with each-other. This is why, Dr. SUN Ge argues that we must at least begin our inquiry with the East Asia of the Cold War Age.

If we want to find some common denominators between the countries in the undefined region of East Asia, we must look at the Soviet “Far East” which centre is the Korean Peninsula, divided into North and South Korea. She points out the fact that the Cold War was an ideological War where the Western media intentionally stressed the radical difference between the two parts of East Asia. This perspective can be shared by Japan and Korea but the present China does not see the world in a Cold War perspective. This perspective may be useful to analyse the rapid transformation of the world from before to after the Cold War. Dr. SUN Ge, insists correctly on the fact that there are newly emerging realities in the Region such as ASEAN plus Three and as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.
The Six Parties’ Talk on North Korea is another post-Cold-War frame of reference.

Based on the above considerations, Dr. SUN Ge made three points in conclusion of her presentation.

1) We must relativise the different perspectives within which East Asia has been conceived. The present perspective of the integration of East Asia has become trivialized and a total renewal of the idea needs the relativisation of the different perspectives covered by it.

2) To isolate East Asia forces China either to be excluded or divided since this country is equally related to North Asia, to South Asia, and to West Asia. It is useful to relate East Asia to the Eurasian continent so that China can be included and East Asia finds new connections with Europe.

3) The point Dr. SUN Ge wishes to single out is the necessity of an historical perspective. This permits new ideas to emerge not only on the total structure of the region but also in concrete issues presently at hand. According to her, there is a tendency among intellectuals in China to follow the American approach to contemporary history which makes it impossible to understand the most tense and critical periods of the region. She also point out the distortion of the American image of North Korea defining it only in terms of dictatorship and poverty. The DPRK was quite prosperous until the fall of the Soviet Union and its past historical experience under Japanese rule cannot be overlooked in understanding this country. She correctly points out the fact that we must beware the influence of Western media and put into question the West in our discussion on East Asia.

**Presentation by Professor USUKI Akira**

Professor USUKI discussed the Asianism in Japan of the 1930s focusing on OHKAWA Shumei and his approach to Islam. The 1930s was an age when Japan developed an interest in Islam as a group of people who were constituting one third of the Asian continent where Japan had a military-political interest, especially in connection with its invasion and occupation of China.

Professor USUKI remarked that Islamic studies was led by the Great Japan Islamic Society (Dai-Nippon Kaikyou Kyoukai) which was an institution for the training of Japanese spies, and most of the publications on Islam was guidebook-like presentations about the Muslim communities in China and other parts of the Asian Continent. OHKAWA was studying Islam from an entirely different context focused on pre-Modern Islam. This is, according to Professor USUKI, a very interesting approach of one known as a leading propagator of Asianism of his time.

Professor USUKI pointed out that the major characteristics of the interest in Japan about Islam was as a major cultural community which may be used against the Communist “threat” Japan was fighting against in China. In that sense, the Muslim Communities (Kaikyo-ken) was divided into North, South, and West Asia, with special emphasis on the Muslim community in China. Professor USUKI stresses the difference of OHKAWA with this pragmatic interest in Islam prevailing in his time.

OHKAWA’s scholarship was the object of a high esteem not only by TAKEUCHI Yoshimi who was interested the Asianism of OHKAWA, but also a leading authority on Islam like IZUTSU Toshihide. OHKAWA did not mix his research on Islam with his activities to promote Asianism. He was, according to many scholars studying him, an orthodox Orientalist who was reading all the major works on Islam in the West, especially in Great Britain and
Germany. Professor **USUKI** remarks that this omission of the French Islamic studies may be one cause of OHKAWA lack of reference to the Sufi Tradition in spite of its key role in the dissemination of Islam in the world.

Another reason of this important commission, according to Professor **USUKI**, is that OHKAWA was interested in Islam as a Civilisation which merges religion and politics. He was therefore mainly interested in the institutional Islam rather than in the spirituality of the Sufi tradition. For OHKAWA Islam represented a religion which met with his civilisational project to build in Asia a civilisation where religion and politics constituted an undividable whole. Besides, he considered Islam as a religion belonging to the same family as Christianity and Judaism to the West, and Asia meant to him India and China.

Based on these considerations, Professor **USUKI** concluded that OHKAWA was interested in Islam as a third civilisation bridging Europe and Asia. OHKAWA had no experience of visiting the Muslim World, and for him Asia meant India beyond China.

In any case OHKAWA was unclear about the relationship between Asia and Islam, and Professor **USUKI** concluded his exposition by stressing the importance, for us, to deepen our analysis of his conception of Asia and Islam taking into consideration the basic ambiguity shown in OHKAWA’s Asianism.
RECONSTRUCTING ASIANISM

Remarks by Three Commentators

Following the presentations by Dr. SUN Ge and Professor USUKI, short remarks by three commentators followed. The first commentator, Professor MARUKAWA focused his comments on the importance to include the Soviet Union in any attempt to analyse the historical development of Asianism. He referred to the remarks of Dr. SUN Ge about the Soviet publication on "Problems in the Far East Asia" where he found interesting that Taiwan is not specifically mentioned. According to Professor MARUKAWA, the anti-Government intellectuals arrested by the Taiwan Government during the Cold War were reading eagerly Lenin once they went out of incarceration. The Soviet Union was very much part of their concern about the future of East Asia.

Professor MARUKAWA turned to the presentation of Professor USUKI and pointed out the fact that, including OHKAWA, the Japanese right wing of the 1920s called then the New Right, has been called "New" in that it was defining itself in opposition to the Soviet, whereas traditional right wing in Japan had been supportive to the Russian revolution before the assassination of the Tsar and the Siberian conflict where the Japanese Right opposed the Bolshevik Regicide and supported the Japanese anti-Soviet intervention.

For the traditional Right in Japan, the Russian Revolution had been identified as a reaction to Western influence similar to the Meiji Restoration. The impact of the emergence of the Soviet Union had been critical in defining the Japan-centered ideology of OHKAWA. The divide between left and right becomes even more clear following the Economic crisis of 1929. Whereas the left seeks an ideal solution to the crisis in the Soviet Union, the right seeks an ideal solution to the crisis in the building of the Manchuguo, Puppet State of Japan.

Professor MARUKAWA, concluded his comment by pointing out the importance of the different definitions of the concept "civilisation". This concept is differently defined by FUKUZAWA Yukichi who defines it positively and by the right wing ideologue UCHIDA Ryouhei who defines it negatively. As TAKEUCHI Yoshimi pointed out, are we Japanese capable of critically define this concept? This is a contemporary question in view of the Japanese acceptance of the American identification between the "civilised countries" respecting democracy and human rights and the others defined as uncivilised. Professor MARUKAWA points out the resent anti-North Korean opinion in Japan which follows the American definition by stigmatizing the DPRK as an uncivilized State. It is crucial for us Japanese to reflect more seriously about what is meant by "civilisation".

Following Professor MARUKAWA, Professor YONETANI made three points in his comments. The first point regards the need to take up the internal contradictions among Asian countries when we discuss Asianism, and renounce to define Asia only in opposition to the West. The dualism East vs. West has characterized Asianism and its easygoing way to ignore internal contradictions among Asian States. As Dr. SUN Ge pointed out, it was impossible for Japan in the 19th century to develop friendly relations both with China and with Korea.

This contradiction existed in the 19th century in connection with the Sino-Japanese War. The same contradiction was presented in the 1930s, and remained a major concern during the Cold War. This problem is implied in Professor MARUKAWA’s remarks about the failure of OHKAWA to grasp the meaning of the Chinese Revolution. OHKAWA, and more generally the Asianists of his time failed to deal squarely with the relation of Japan with China or with Korea, and ignored this crucial problem.

Following Professor MARUKAWA, Professor YONETANI presented his three points comment. His first
point was about the insufficiency of treating Asia within a dichotomous opposition between East and West. He pointed out the many differences and contradictions which exist among the different States in Asia which are ignored due to the over-simplification introduced by this dichotomy. The illusion that one has overcome the differences among Asian States was common to the Asianist discourses of the 1930s including OHKAWA. Japan entered into a bilateral setting between Korea and its Great Power neighbour, China. Asian solidarity was a discourse used by the Asianists which covered the contradictions between Sino-Japanese and Korean-Japanese relations.

As Professor MARUKAWA pointed out, OHKAWA missed the true meaning of the Chinese Revolution and omitted China and Korea from his Asianist perspectives. For OHKAWA and many other Asianists, the opposition between East vs. West made it possible for them to focus on South Asia and West Asia, pointing out the solidarity among the colonized Asian peoples against the West. The problems existing between Japan, China and Korea were omitted from their perspectives. Professor YONETANI pointed out that this scheme was not only crucial in the Asianism preceding Japan’s defeat in 1945, but also prevailed in the discourse on the Third World which prevailed during the Cold War, and supported, for example, the Bandung Conference. There were many hidden contradictions, between India and China, Between China and the Soviet Union, and between the anti-Imperialist discourse and the realities of inter-State relations in Asia.

The second point made by Professor YONETANI regarded the relationship between Asianism and the economic network formation in the region. As pointed out recently by researchers like MATSUURA Masataka, the Asianism of the 1920s and 30s was strongly influenced by the development of economic networks in that period. Japan was interested in expanding in Asia where the networks of Chinese and Indian diasporas were developing regional networks including the China Towns in Yokohama and Kobe. The setting up of educational institutions sponsored by the Japanese for the training of diaspora intellectuals such as Koa-Kai (The Association for the Promotion of Asia) and of the Toua-Doubun-Shoin (East Asian Common Culture Institute) reflected this interest in exerting Japanese influence on these emerging diaspora networks.

Professor YONETANI remarked that, although he was not certain about OHKAWA’s position in this connection, his impression was that OHKAWA was interested in how to abrogate unequal treaties, a theme on which he wrote his doctoral dissertation, and how the mobilization of the diaspora networks could be useful in counteracting Western imperialist expansions.

The third point raised by Professor YONETANI regarded the question of the identity and responsibility in the Asianist discourse. OHKAWA was dispensed from prosecution at the Tokyo Trial due to his mental disorder, and this unique occasion for Asianism in Japan to be judged was missed on that occasion. This is not a simple question of war crime but a deeper question related to the definition of Japanese Fascism as a “system of irresponsibility” as MARUYAMA Masao called it.

The major concern of TAKEUCHI Yoshimi was not a simple ideological labelling of Asianism but a deeper analysis of the subjective realities underlying Asianism, clarifying the self-awareness and responsibility of Japanese Asianists towards Asia.

This is not only a matter regarding the Japanese Asianism of the 1930s, but is a contemporary problem. For example, the secular internationalism of the Socialist Bloc, led by the Soviet Union, failed in its attempt to integrate the Central Asian Islam nations and Afghanistan. The Japanese Red Army failed in its attempt to create links of
solidarity in Lebanon and Palestine. Any secular attempt to develop a non-Islamic solidarity in the Islamic world is bound to fail, and this is where the question of identity, self-awareness and responsibility is a contemporary problem beyond the past Fascist Asianism. This was his third question.

Following Professor YONETANI, Professor NISHITANI took the floor with one single remark regarding “political imagination”. “Asianism” was proposed by certain intellectuals, and certain groups of States, with a specific political imagination. This is why the different problems mentioned by Professor MARUKAWA and YONETANI emerged, and at the root of this imaginary process exists the question of how the political imagination of “Asianism” led to a fixed image of “Asia”, leading to a fundamentalist idea on this region. Such fixation of the image of Asia cannot be detached from the political and intellectual structure underlying this fixation.

Professor NISHITANI finds a similar problem in the case of the “War on Terror” of President BUSH. This image of the World where everything is projected on a world screen where there exists a fixed image, opposing the good civilized world opposed to the bad terrorists, is carefully designed by the United States to suit its hegemonic interests guaranteeing the stability of the global market.

Professor NISHITANI finds a similarity with the Cold War time image of China, which is now accepted by many intellectuals in China, as pointed out by Dr. SUN Ge. We must read critically the underlying geopolitical calculations, and build an image of the reality, relativising the politically constructed images about how the world works, be it regarding the Russian Revolution, the Cold War, and the Global age which followed. Among other problems, Professor NISHITANI expresses his wish that we address the question of different types of phobia, the fear of Communism during the Cold War and the present fear of terrorism which have been propagated by America, a manifestation of its political imagination.

In response to the above three comments, Dr. SUN Ge replied by referring to E. H. CARR book on “The Twenty Years Crisis”. She mentioned that she was first uncertain about the possibility to relate her presentation to the discussion of Professor USUKI, but found that the problem shared by her with Professor USUKI related to the opposition between utopia and realism as treated by CARR in the inter-war years. In dealing with OHKAWA Shumei, Dr. SUN Ge mentioned her hesitation in adopting the dichotomies commonly used by left wing intellectuals for whom every positions are judged as right or wrong, left-wing or right-wing.

She stressed the fact that TAKEUCHI Yoshimi may not have been always right, but at least had been correctly defining OHKAWA not as a militarist, in spite of the mistakes he committed. OHKAWA behaved not as an ideologue of Japanese imperialism but as a thinker who wanted to understand behind the screen of ideological debates something more basic as was well described by Professor USUKI. TAKEUCHI was unable to find a good answer to his question, but was able to state that it was indispensable to visit the Tien Tan Park (天壇公園) if one wanted to understand the Spacial breadth and fluidity of Chinese thoughts. She referred to the limit of Western Sinology, shared by some Chinese intellectuals’ self images, which define the intellectual debates in China only in terms of “human rights” and “democracy”.

Dr. SUN Ge concluded that, for her, the problem faced not only by OHKAWA in the past, but by all of us in the contemporary situations, is to find how we can think based on what we perceive about the realities we experience corporally, without falling in the trap of essentialisation of these realities.

Then Professor USUKI reacted to the remarks addressed to him by the commentators. He first took up
the attitude of OHKAWA about the October Revolution and the Soviet Union. He writes positively about the solidarity between Asia and the Soviet Union in his book on “The Problems related to the Rebuilding of Asia”. Although he follows the general trend of the right-wing negatively orientated towards the October Revolution, OHKAWA may have had a special position about this question.

Professor USUKI reported about the consequence of the contacts the Japanese intelligence community had in Manchuria with Jewish and Muslim refugees. It was in that context that YAMAUCHI Masayuki wrote his essay on "Sultan Galiev" and that a hope about Islamic socialism emerged among some Japanese intellectuals interested in the marriage between nationalism and socialism. This hope withered with the development in the Soviet Union where Sultan Galiev was purged.

The question raised by Professor MARUKAWA, also relates to a point made by Professor YONETANI, is of great importance. It is the problem of the Chinese Revolution and the Asianist avoidance to deal squarely with China by formulating the problem in the context of an East West dichotomy. The role of China was in a sense too great a problem for OHKAWA, and it is true that he took part in the approach to “Overcome Modernity” by turning the Chinese question into a sub-problem of the "Great East Asia War" against the United States. However, in dealing with the complexities and contradictions within Asia, OHKAWA was aware of different approaches such as Turanism and Pan-Islamism.

As to the second issue mentioned by Professor YONETANI, OHKAWA was aware of the diasporta economic networks when he was writing his doctoral dissertation. His initial opposition to a war against the United States was also based on this interest. This has an additional dimension regarding Judaism, but there was a plan to build in Manchuria a Jewish State, thus inviting in Manchuria Jewish capital from the United States. This plan wanted to rely on the Jewish diaspora, and is interesting in that it shows that the right wing in Japan wanted to avoid collision with the United States.

As to the question of political imagination based on geopolitics raised by Professor NISHITANI, Professor USUKI said that we have to reflect on the Japanese version of political imagination which may or may not resemble the American imagination. There has been in Japan a line of reflection linking the pre-1945 tradition of Colonial Policy Study and the area studies which emerged in the post-1945 Japan. We must study critically this line of thinking which underlies the Japanese attitude vis-à-vis Asia.
Roundtable Discussion:

A general discussion followed, Several participants raised different points of view, about the two presentations and the three comments.

The discussion was opened by the following comments by Professor ONUMA Yasuaki. In referring the comments of Professor NISHITANI he raised the question of the role of ideology in the development of the plurality of perspectives mentioned by Dr. SUN Ge. The “in depth” study of Islam by OHKAWA, is nonetheless ideological in justifying the expansionist war of Japan by ignoring China.

The analysis of Professor NISHITANI refers to “America” which exercises its political imagination, Professor ONUMA wanted to know who was called “America”, the Government, the Corporate world, or the media. He pointed out the importance of the recipients of the messages constructed by different actors. TAKEUCHI, for example, divided the Japanese War of invasion against China and the War with the United States and Great Britain which followed, recognizing the Japanese responsibility only in the former case. This ideological construct is differently received by us, and this is where a distinction between a right-wing interpretation and a more uncommitted one becomes possible depending on the mind-set of the receiver. Professor ONUMA made an additional remark about the bias in our definition of “East Asia”. In Japan, “East Asia” is identified with North East Asia, and South East Asia, which includes Indonesia with its important Muslim population, is forgotten.

Professor NISHITANI reacted to Professor ONUMA, and explained what he meant by “America”. One of the major characteristics of America is the overlap between its political and economic decision-makers. America is managed, rather than ruled, by a managerial elite combining public relations with marketing. It is meaningless to say that American neoliberalism is not working well when this superpower forces all the countries of the world to emulate it.

Professor YONETANI turned back to the question of the multiplicity of perspectives, and to the definition of East Asia mentioned by Professor ONUMA, pointing out that Asia here in Tokyo was different from Asia as seen from Australia where Indonesia could not be ignored. In Australia the existence within its society of the Chinese or Muslim diasporas, a question already discussed in connection with economic networks, plays an important role which is absent in Japan.

Turning back to the discussion on OHKAWA, Professor MARUKAWA suggested the study of how modernist thinkers turned into anti-modernism and fundamentalism as a possible line of research in the future. OHKAWA began as a researcher using scientific methods but turned to a sentimental Japan-centrist, TAKEUCHI was after all asking only one question, can Asia develop values capable of putting into question Western “civilisation”. He was interested in the Japanese Romanticism’s reaction to the Meiji “modernism”. In many cases, what is now called “fundamentalism” has been developed by people who have been modernists and had been disillusioned by modernity.

Professor USUKI supported the idea that “fundamentalism” is developed by people who have experienced modernity, and what is called Muslim Fundamentalism has emerged on the basis of experiencing Western modernity. There is different definition of fundamentalism proposed by MATSUMOTO Kenichi who sees in it a position going beyond nationalism. This is an interesting approach but he applies it only to Islam, treating it as a
homogeneous monolithic civilisation.

Turning to the question of the definition of East and South East Asia and the treatment of Indonesia, Professor USUKI pointed out the fact that “South East Asia” had been used by the American strategists in fighting against the region occupied by Japan during the War in the Pacific. As to the problem of diaspora networks, Professor USUKI stressed the importance to relativise Japan by adopting the perspectives of the expanding Muslim diaspora in Japan, within which exists many “illegal” migrants.

Dr. SUN Ge returned to the question of Asia and East Asia, by mentioning the lack of a clear definition of what constitutes “Asianness”. She mentioned her experience with Indian and Chinese researchers who met to discuss Asia with a grant from Japan, but did not see Japan as a key country in this region which future depended more on China, India and Russia.

MUSHAKOJI, while agreeing about the vagueness of any regional definition of the Asian sub-regions, added another definition of Asia defined by the United States as an “arc of insecurity” linking Israel and Japan at its two ends. This region covering North East, South East, Central, South and West Asia (Middle East) is one vast region with a common tradition of anti-colonialism which has been in alliance with Africa and Latin America.

The discussion was then broadened to the floor. Professor Glenn HOOK asked two important questions. The first concerned the multiple perspectives about Asia. The definition is determined by the political power relations within which the definition is made, why, what for, and for whom determines which country is included in “East Asia”. For whom do we define Asia?

His second question was about responsibility. It was said that OHKAWA did not relate to the Japanese invasion in Asia, but then who can be said to have been responsible for the aggressions? Was it only the military or the political leaders of the time? Can there be “pure” manipulators of thoughts, including the thoughts of the opponents, when such discourses become the tools for those who conduct the aggressions?

Professor USUKI replied about “responsibility” that for him OHKAWA has been responsible for the Japanese expansion given the fact that his statements were used for pro-expansionist propaganda, but he was not a fundamentalist according to the definition by MATSUMOTO. As to the question on “East Asia”, Professor USUKI mentioned that for him all regional definitions were made intentionally by somebody. He mentioned that he could explain why the Middle East was constructed by the Americans but he was not clear about “East Asia”.

Then Dr. SUN Ge replied that for her any epistemological question had to be answered based on realities, in a “Zachlich” manner. For her what is most important about being “Zachlich” is the correct grasp of the historical structure of the cognitive space where different discourses emerge.

She then moved to the question “For whom Asia?” which she found extremely meaningful. For her “Asia for the Asians” is meaningless, and it is only when we can define “Asia for the humankind” that the definition of Asia becomes meaningful. The past definitions given by Confucian scholars or Japanese Asianists are not valid in this sense. People ask her if we can build East Asia as the Europeans built Europe. They seem to think that they had some common identity which we do not have in Asia. For me, Europe was built by countries with different interests and ideas, as a consequence of an intellectual fight. “Political imagination” worked there, and this is where Asia may resemble Europe in having to fight over Asia, not by imitating Europe but through our-own intellectual encounter.

Professor SUZUKI Norio asked Dr. SUN Ge about the possibilities of a certain innovative creativity
which existed at the origin of Asianism in China and Japan, with such concepts as “Ta-Dong (Dai-dou)” in China and “doubun” in Japan. The creative imagination to learn from past historical examples of creative thinking seems to be weak in India, China and Japan. TAKEUCHI provides a case of such creative effort made within a specific historical context, according to Professor SUZUKI.

Professor SUZUKI addressed the following question to Professor USUKI. In connection with the interest of OHKAWA to Islam, the speaker points out the isomorphism between the Chalifate in Islam and the Emperor in State Shintoism, where both roles represent the identity community in communication with the transcendent “Other” Allah or Heaven.

Dr. SUN Ge replied to the first question of Professor SUZUKI addressed to her, by asking him about what he meant by historical context, was it in terms of a historical conception or of historical sensitivity or historical reality?

Professor SUZUKI replied that what he meant was the historical moment in which an attempt was made, in China and in Japan to develop about world order a set of common knowledge. Dr. SUN Ge accepted this explanation and said that she recognize, the existence at the period when KANG Youwei (康有為) and LIANG Qichao (梁啓超) were in exile in Japan. This generation lived through the end of the Ching Empire which was not a modern nation, whereas Japan was in the process of becoming one. The following generations also found it useful to build a common knowledge on modern state building, but this took different forms. Professor SUZUKI complemented the remarks by Dr. SUN Ge by referring to the creation of the Society to Promote Asia (Ko-A Kai) in response to Kang Youwei linking a Japan in advance to China with China following Japan. Dr. SUN Ge remarked that to define China as a late-comer to Japan is incorrect, and that China developed itself in a context specific to it. Professor SUZUKI specified that Japan was trying to enter into the Westphalian World Order whereas China was not, the Japanese Asianists feared that a too strong China would be dangerous for Japan. Japan tried not only to become a nation state but to imitate the Western great powers by expanding and annexing Taiwan, Korea and North East China, expanding its borders. Dr. SUN Ge said that she began to understand what the speaker wanted to point out. She found that this was a crucial problem which needed to be tackled within an entirely new conceptual framework. Even now, the fear of an expanding China exists in and out of China, and all nation states, including Japan and Korea are potentially expansive states. Equality among nations is crucial in principle, but in reality Korea was perceived as a small country by many Chinese and such undesirable aspects of reality should not be overlooked. We have to develop an approach which takes care of both general principles and complex interests competing in different concrete settings, in such a way that unrealistic critiques of nationalism, imperialism or colonialism is replaced by a “Zachlich” approach to reality.

After the dialogue between Professor SUZUKI and Dr. SUN Ge, Professor USUKI replied to the question of the same speaker addressed to him. He explained that he agrees in general with this interpretation of OHKAWA’s interest in Islam, although the implications of this similarity demand more qualifications on details.

Professor NISHITANI returned to the questions related to geopolitics. Asia is for him defined within the worldwide expansion of the Occident, which included the post 9-11 new Occident. Asians are seen as second grade citizens when they accept being treated as Asians. If they refuse they are treated as ignorant slaves. Following 9-11, Islam has come to be treated as the object of Western expansion replacing Asia, and we must take into consideration
this geopolitical reality.

Professor YONETANI returned to the question of responsibility. He is not interested in condemning OH-KAWA, but rather seeks to clarify the basic vagueness accompanying Asianism and the role of the Japanese Emperor. The Constitution is a vague referent defining the role of the Emperor but it sustains the "system of ambiguity" of MARUYAMA Masao.

Professor MARUKAWA returned to the question of "Asia for whom?" He mentioned that this was the most unexpected question of the Symposium. He was looking at the questions of Asianism in connection with the October Revolution in Russia. The Agro-centric ideology (Noh-Hon Shugi) was a response to the proletarian revolution. It was expanded into an anti-Western ideology by the Japanese Romanticist movement. Under these circumstances, the responsibility about Japanese expansionism may be the weakness of the left. It was through external pressures that the Japanese Romanticist movement was overthrown. He agreed with Dr. SUN Ge that Japan is still under the colonial rule of the United States, and it is within this time-space context that we have to deal with the question of eliminating the prevailing vagueness within which we operate.

Dr. SUN Ge intervened on these interconnected questions. She took up the question of Fascism and war responsibility common to Germany and Japan. She pointed out the fact that in spite of a clear difference between Germany where this question received a national concern and Japan where a national attempt to avoid it, the question remains unsolved even today in Germany, Dr. SUN Ge pointed out that resent findings show that the attempt to absolve the Emperor during the Tokyo Trial was not only maintained by the United States but was rather shared by all the major allied powers for different reasons. In this international historical context, it is not easy to define the locus of historical responsibilities, using "Zachlich" evidence. Our task, is to develop our "Zachlich" research on Asianism and Asia in such unclear and complex contexts.

MUSHAKOJI made a few remarks before concluding the Symposium. He first took up the necessity to relativise some key concepts used in determining good vs. bad agents in the "Arc of Insecurity". Democracy, Freedom and Human Rights are Western enlightenment values defining the penalized "others" as undemocratic. Foucault distinguishes pastoral and disciplinary powers. The former correspond to "undemocratic" DPRK and Iran with pastoral power regimes opposed to "democratic" Japan with a neoliberal disciplinary regime. The problems in the American-defined "Ark of Insecurity" is the good vs bad dichotomy which should be treated rather as a question about how disciplinary and pastoral powers can proceed towards a more secure and just world.

He then pointed out the problems regarding responsibility in the systems of ambiguity like Japan, and pointed out the macro-historical difference between the West where historical experiences of heterodoxy turning into orthodoxy after fights between political imaginations. As pointed out by Shmuel Noah EISENSTADT, Christianity, a Jewish heterodoxy came to rule Pax Romana. Protestantism, a heterodoxy in the Pax Romana ruled by the Roman Church, led the emerging Capitalist modernity. Atheism with the Dialectical Materialism of the Soviet Communism challenged American hegemony, as a heterodoxy as seen from the Christian West. Asia shares with Japan a tradition of ambiguity, even if the extremely diffused system of ambiguity is particular to the Emperor system of Japan. A common denominator in Asia, where heterodoxy = non-Western cultures was turned into post-colonial orthodoxy is unfortunately not shared by Japan which failed in its imitation of the West to become a colonial power and is still, as Dr. SUN Ge pointed out in a colonial state of the United States.
A third point he made regarding the question of class and nationalism raised by Professor MARUKAWA, is the lack of egalitarian conceptualization which Johan GALTUNG was critical about Japan according to MUSHAKOJI. The historical development in Asia following the West has proceeded in the direction of egalitarian treatment among classes and nations. However, in Japan there remains a strong tendency to insist on defining difference among nations, and also among Japanese citizens in the recent years when the Japanese ambiguous egalitarianism became the object of criticism by the Neoliberal elite. It is difficult for the Japanese to recognize national responsibility which puts Japan on a lower level, and turns the individual raising this question into an "un-Japanese" citizen. We have to develop a "Zachlich" intellectual attitude in this unfavorable context for any reflection on national responsibilities.

MUSHAKOJI, thanked all the participants for their contribution to clarify the diverse aspects of the problem of Asia and Asianism, inviting all to continue a critical dialogue about the issues discussed which all deserve further dialogue.