



# JOURNAL OF DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS

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# RIGHTS WITH RESPONSIBILITY

*Syed Hamid Albar<sup>1</sup>*

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**T**he issue of Rights and Responsibility is widely discussed and debated. This is not something new as conceptually, rights and responsibility affect us all. Whether we are individuals, or several groups in society, or the government, all should be committed to rights and responsibilities.<sup>2</sup> It is extremely important for a multi-racial, multi-cultural, and multi-religious country like Malaysia to have a clear understanding and appreciation of this concept. The preservation of human rights must be carried out in the context of maintaining peace, security, stability and prosperity.

It is necessary, in fact vital, to engage in actions that are considered right, so long as those actions do not impinge on the rights of others or are not against established laws or, for that matter, contrary to the norms or the established value systems of society. Mahatma Gandhi, when hearing about the human rights declaration by the UN, is said to have commented that his illiterate mother had remarked to him that there could be no rights without responsibility.<sup>3</sup>

The shared objectives of rights and responsibilities are to achieve the well being, peace, security and prosperity of any nation. Rights and

responsibilities can take on very subjective definitions, and differences between societies will definitely be there. These differences arise because each individual in society and governments perceive the philosophical underpinnings of human rights, ethics, morality and responsibility in different ways. However, these differences are minor and do not stray from the general philosophical foundation of human rights and responsibilities enshrined in the United Nations Declaration.<sup>4</sup> The UN Declaration addresses the issue of human rights, while incorporating the issue of human responsibilities with different emphasis. But the emphasis is there, nevertheless.

The issue of human rights has come to dominate world politics, especially in the post Cold War era. Prescriptions by newly established international institutions and other forms of mechanisms, to emphasize how nation states should treat their own citizens is now a very vital component of international relations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was largely ineffective in the pre Cold War period, has in the post Cold War period been used by the developed countries to exert pressure on the developing countries to accept their norms, standards and values. This has created ideological conflicts between the developed and the developing countries.

No one should be against democracy. Freedom is an important ingredient for a stable, progressive, productive and moral society. Malaysia is not against human rights, but our view is that no country should be forced to accept standards or practices which are opposed to its own laws or established value systems.

It is the responsibility of the government to create awareness and to take proactive measures to incorporate human rights values into our daily life. The 1993 Bangkok Declaration says that Asia-Pacific governments:

recognize.....that States have the primary responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights through the appropriate infrastructure and mechanisms, and also recognize that remedies must be sought and provided primarily through such mechanisms and procedures.<sup>5</sup>

In a plural society such as Malaysia, reaching a consensus on rights is challenging, if not difficult. Such a consensus is necessary to maintain unity and stability. While there may be different interpretations and perceptions of human rights, as a concept, human rights is neither peculiar to any culture nor the sole domain of any particular country. No individual or country can claim exclusivity on human rights, for they are universal. However, the norms and precepts for the observance of human rights vary from society to society and from one period to another within the same society.



At the time of independence, most Malaysians were poor and without access to social services. Malaysian society was stratified by differences in class, religion and race. There was a great disparity between the urban and rural populations. Many had predicted then that our new nation would not last and would be doomed to go the way of other politically unstable and economically vulnerable newly independent countries. However, they have all been proven wrong. Malaysia is a sovereign state, a politically stable nation with a steadily growing economy that had endured the 1997 crisis. Most importantly, Malaysia is a harmonious multi-racial society.

In the quest for modernization, we have chosen moderation. Moderate and pragmatic development policies have been the key towards this goal. To the best of the government's ability, all the needs and aspirations of our multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious society were taken into consideration but not all sectors could be accommodated without infringing on the rights of a particular group in society. There has to be a constant give and take between the various groups and very often, one group will have to subsume its short-term concerns to accommodate the other groups for long-term peace, security and stability.

Through it all, Malaysia has maintained its democratic system. It has held fair and free elections since its independence. It also has a vibrant civil society. The number of non-governmental organizations, labour unions, trade associations and think tanks are on the rise.<sup>6</sup> Admittedly there have been political discords, economic crises and social discontentment in our nation, over rights, opportunities and inequity. However, these were managed successfully, and differences have been overcome and resolved through consultations, dialogues and consensus-building, in the spirit of give and take. Central to it all was the paramount interest for the nation.

There is global agreement on core human rights values. However, contentious "fringe issues" surround the core. Over the years, debates between developed and developing countries have ensued on the question of how to promote and protect human rights. Western theory on human rights is deeply influenced by market capitalism, political liberalism and individualism. It puts great premium on civil and political rights but there is insufficient recognition of the need for socio-economic entitlements. On the other hand, many developing countries contend that there can be no meaningful enjoyment of human rights if poverty is pervasive and hunger and disease all encompassing. Rights to basic necessities and to development are entitled to the same protection as civil and political liberties.

The question constantly asked by developing countries is whether there is a need to be of a certain level of development before the necessary environment can be fostered for the full enjoyment of civil and political

rights. For many, meeting basic needs of food, shelter, education, and health remain a daily struggle. In such a situation, civil and political rights have little meaning without their social and economic underpinnings.

The concept of rights with responsibility has been debated for centuries. In Islam God reminds us in Surah Al-'Asr, verses 1-3 that man is in the state of loss except for those who have faith and do righteous deeds and those who advice about the truth and exercise patience. Many great leaders and thinkers too have been associated with the concept of rights and responsibility:

1. Samuel Taylor Coleridge spoke about it as early as 1831 when he said that "There are no rights whatever without corresponding duties".
2. Gerald W. Johnson, once said that "No man was ever endowed with a right without being at the same time saddled with responsibility".
3. More lately Abraham Joshua Herschel in 1905 in his book *Who is man?* talks about "inalienable obligations" that comes with "inalienable rights".
4. Eric Hoffer, "The basic test of freedom is perhaps less in what we are free to do than in what we are free not to do".
5. Virginia Woolf, "To enjoy freedom we have to control ourselves".
6. And there is even an American saying that says, "the right to wave your fist ends where your neighbor's nose begins".

Whilst we accept the universality of the principles and philosophies of human rights, we should never in practice and application abandon our norms cultures and values or our social and economic background. The truth is that even in countries that are supposedly the greatest advocates and champions of human rights, hypocrisy is practised and double standards prevail in dealing with racial and religious issues. Prejudice and bias abound towards minority groups, and even in the enforcement of the law.

Malaysia subscribes to the universality of human rights, but not as a license to do anything without regard to the rights of others. The rights of the majority are just as valid as the rights of others. Our society as a whole has the right to protect itself from the unbridled exercise of rights by certain individuals or a minority group, which can contribute to the collapse of morality and the structure of human society. We do not want rights to be exercised irresponsibly. The Malaysian government sees it as its continued responsibility to apply, adhere and advocate the concept of rights with responsibility.

Concepts and principles are always easy to advocate, but what will be more relevant is to match these with the realities. One cannot disagree with what Thomas Paine said: "Establish the Rights of Man; enthrone equality, ... let there be no privileges, no distinction of birth, no monopolies, make safe the liberty of industry and trade, the equal distribution of family inheritance".<sup>7</sup> But how far or how much of these laudable principles are really practised by individuals and states? This has made discussions on this subject fascinating as well as perplexing. The ideals seem to be always in conflict with the realities. Therefore pragmatism is desired when confronted with the issue of rights. It is more acceptable to exercise our rights but with responsibility. This would mean taking into account other relevant factors in the execution of what are considered as our rights.

Living within defined borders means that one has elected to live in a peaceful and ordered society governed by rules and laws. Thus any system of laws from the time of the Code of Hammurabi gives "rights" to citizens to act in a certain manner, so long as that manner does not contravene the code. During the time of the Greek city states and Imperial Rome, discriminatory codes existed, giving different rights to different classes of citizens. Even religions prescribed on the rights of its adherents and the responsibility that goes with it. Laws exist in order to protect and preserve civilized society. Thus when speaking about rights, responsibility is a part of it.

The Magna Carta for example, when it was signed in 1215, was for the purpose of protecting ordinary citizens of that time, and to settle the differences between the feudal king and the landed barons. It defines rights together with the responsibilities required to be observed.<sup>8</sup> These concepts (ultimately through common law over the centuries) granted rights and obligations to all citizens. However "rights" and "responsibilities" in the modern sense made its appearance and were enforced by the courts through the 1689 Bill of Rights. What made the English Bill of Rights to be considered as a step forward in the development of the modern concept of human rights, is the philosophical application as expounded by the work of Thomas Hobbes and subsequently by John Locke.<sup>9</sup>

Malaysia is moving towards liberalisation. More and more of its policies reflect the changing times and mood of the people. We should also shape our own human rights model based on our needs and experiences. Malaysia has always argued for pluralism and relativism, whereby the country's social context should determine the content of its laws and policies.

It is significant to note that the 1999 Human Rights Commission of Malaysia Act defines "human rights", as being the fundamental liberties

as enshrined in Part II of the Federal Constitution. Being a country with a heterogeneous population, it is inevitable that rights of the individual are enshrined in the Federal Constitution.

It is not difficult to fathom from the list of the fundamental liberties enshrined in Part II of the Federal Constitution that the fundamental liberties guaranteed in that part of the Constitution must meet with the requirements of protagonists of human rights in any civilised country. Human rights is therefore not a novel concept to Malaysia and Malaysians. Instances are not infrequent, when the Judiciary has come to the aid of a citizen, with a complaint that there has been a violation of this fundamental liberty, by the authority in power. The enforcement of an individual's entrenched and fundamental right under the Constitution has in numerous instances been met with a prompt application of the prerogative writs of *habeas corpus* or *certiorari*. Orders made by Ministers of the Government affecting the entrenched fundamental rights of a citizen have been readily ordered to be quashed, and in some instances, with an appropriate award of damages against the Government. One need only look into the reported cases in the local law journals to see how the Courts of this land have come to the aid of the citizen towards safe-guarding his entrenched fundamental rights.

The awareness and recognition of the fact that freedom of any kind has got a positive and a negative aspect, has necessitated the Government of the day, in many countries which subscribe to human rights values, in principle, to provide for some form of restraints to such freedoms. The negative aspect of freedom which such countries have found a need to provide for a restraint is that, such freedom as afforded to its citizens should not endanger the economic security of the nation, as well as the well being of its citizens.

The Government of the day is committed to the protection of all its citizens and to ensure that they enjoy the liberties conferred upon them in a manner which does not affect the peace and security of the nation. Towards this end, the Government will expect every citizen to ensure that he or she exercises his or her entrenched fundamental right without it being an impediment or a threat to their fellow citizens, and/or the nation. This then is the co-related duty of the citizen, which the Government will expect in exchange for the rights, or liberties conferred upon the citizens by the Constitution.

The freedoms, as afforded to the citizens of this country, have therefore to be balanced against the general security of the nation, the general moral standards as applicable to the society and the existing political and cultural background of the nation. It is therefore incumbent upon each and every citizen of Malaysia (and for that matter, of any country) to avail of the

liberties afforded to him/her, with such restraints as will be necessary, towards ensuring national security, economic security, social security and above all, peace and order in a multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-lingual and multi-religious society.

A majority of us are no longer looking in a world that fits into the old left-right political mode. Globalization, liberal democracy, trade liberalisation, human rights all envisage the creation of a world society, i.e. a society that is based on multiplicity and not homogeneity. Globalization as a driving force represents the criss-crossing of sovereign national states with transnational actors, with various powers, circumstances, identities and networks, which at any time can undermine the sovereignty of nation states. In other words, today, local events or occurrences may not have purely local consequences, but instead can affect the whole world. It is thus necessary that, when deliberating on the subject of rights with responsibility, we remain conscious of this new force. If not, we will be overtaken by events that can cease to be under our control. One will not be able to exercise one's own option or choice in one's desire to achieve freedom and democracy, as one perceives it and which is suited to one's needs.

It can easily be argued that it is true that one cannot achieve absolute freedom in the exercise of one's individual rights as it is always subject to constraints or limitations imposed by the State, provided by the constitution or other written laws. There is always a need for us to re-organize our lives and actions, our organisations or institutions.

We are not proposing to deal with each one of the liberties afforded to a citizen of this country by our Constitution. It is appropriate to mention the sentiments expressed by our Court when talking about the right to freedom of speech, in the context of our law of sedition, as entrenched in our Sedition Act. Raja Azlan Shah, as Sultan Perak was then, said:

"We must resist the tendency to regard right to freedom of speech as self subsistent or absolute. The right of freedom of speech is simply the right which everyone has to say, write or publish what he pleases so long as he does not commit a breach of the law. If he says or publishes anything expressive of a seditious tendency, he is guilty of sedition. The Government has the right to preserve public peace and order, and therefore, has a good right to prohibit the propagation of opinions which have seditious tendency. Any government which acts against sedition has to meet the criticism that it is seeking to protect itself and to keep itself in power. Whether such criticism is justified or not, it is, in our system of Government, a matter upon which, in my opinion, Parliament and the people and not the courts that should

pass the judgement. Therefore, a meaningful understanding of the right to freedom of speech under the Constitution must be based on the realities of our contemporary society in Malaysia by striking a balance of the individual interest against the general security or the general morals, or the existing political and cultural institutions. Our sedition law would not necessarily be apt for other people but we ought always to remember that it is a law that suits our temperament.

Critics of the Malaysian government may point to the relatively slow pace in the pursuit of human rights in the country and the greater weight being given to responsibilities over rights. Malaysia also may continue to be the subject of foreign government and NGO annual reports on human rights. But such criticisms failed to appreciate the overriding rights of the community over that of the individual. Malaysia would continue to be rooted in the tradition of community responsibility. And we make no apology for that. It would indeed be the height of irresponsibility if not folly, on the part of the Government to allow the pursuit of human rights to the extent of destroying the country's social fabric that the Government has been nurturing over the last 40 years.

The Malaysian Government is following with serious concern the alarming trend in the exercise of so called human rights in developed countries. It would appear that the wisdom of the once cherished concept of rights with responsibility has been conveniently forgotten. It would appear too that "societal progress" is measured by the degree to which such rights is allowed to be exercised, however ridiculous they are in the context of a civilised society. We shudder to think the day when the demand of individual (human) rights in the West will be such as to turn back the progress of civilisation to the dark days of anarchy, disorder and decadence.

We must not lose sight, in our eagerness to follow the examples of others, we may lose whatever we have or possessed. We must always be able to create a balance between rights and responsibility.

It is important to mould human rights values for our country that suit our culture and values. Following blindly simply to be in fashion with others may not bring the result we intend to achieve. The Malaysian government has at all times been committed to and will continue to be committed to human rights values, but with the balance struck as declared by the courts of the land. We must always ensure that peace, security, law and order will continue to be the way of our practice of freedom and democracy. Freedom per se is not an end in itself. It requires a shared understanding of limits and entails assumption of responsibility for the consequences of one's actions. Responsibility is the inevitable and necessary criteria for a meaningful

freedom. The government will always be wary and conscious of the goings on in other parts of the world where there is little or no restraint on individual freedoms or rights, in fulfilment of its duty to protect its citizens. Rights cannot exist without restriction and without responsibility. A reciprocal stress upon responsibilities to balance rights does not in any way excuse us from our obligation to promote human rights.

There is much yet to be done for our people in the economic and social sphere. This is also human rights. We need to improve upon our good record in the observance of civil and political liberties too. There is no country in the world that does not need to do the same. The struggle to enhance human dignity is an endless journey, for the horizon keeps on changing. We aspire for more and newer rights even as we progress.

Many developing countries were robbed and denied of their basic rights for hundreds of years. We had to struggle to regain our dignity and reclaim our freedom from the colonisers that now pontificate. They have short memories indeed. They also have poor eyesight. They cannot see some of their own present day shortcomings, because they are so busy preaching others. Let us not breed antagonism among the people towards the State as it is most unhealthy and inhibiting. Our common goal should be the forging of a bond between people and state that will bring about trust and goodwill, and not one of suspicion and enmity.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> This article is a result of a keynote address given by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, Datuk Seri Syed Hamid Albar, at the 'Rights With Responsibility' forum. The forum was organized by the Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM), at the Dewan Tun Hussein Onn, Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC), Kuala Lumpur, December 10, 2000.
- <sup>2</sup> "The protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, consonant with the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is guaranteed under the Malaysian Constitution". Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, website <http://www.kln.gov.my/>
- <sup>3</sup> Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand. *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. Cambridge University Press, London, 1964.
- <sup>4</sup> A number of States have set up their respective national human rights institutions in ways that seem to reflect the current government perception of the prevailing human rights situation. Even the United Nations uses the term 'institution' to describe a domestic human rights mechanism. This term includes those institutions that have the following functions: educational and promotional activities; provision of advice to governments on human rights matters; and investigation and resolution of complaints of violations committed by public (and sometimes private) entities. See Asia Pacific Human Rights Information Center (Hurights), Japan Osaka. "Government Human Rights Work: National Human Rights Institutions". In Jefferson R. Plantilla and Sebasti L. Raj, SJ (Editors) *Human Rights in Asian Cultures Continuity and Change: A Regional Report in Support of the UN Decade for Human Rights Education*. Chapter 11.

- <sup>5</sup> The Bangkok Declaration of 1993 was a statement of the governments in the Asia-Pacific region which was made in preparation for the world conference on human rights.
- <sup>6</sup> Helen Nesadurai and Diane Stone. "Southeast Asian Think Tanks in Regional and Global Networking". In *Panorama: Insights into Southeast Asian and European Affairs*. Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Vol. 1 2000, pp. 19-35.  
May, Bernhard. "Think Tanks in ASEAN-EU Relations: European Perspective". In *Panorama*, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-44.
- <sup>7</sup> Paine, Thomas. *Rights of Man: Being An Answer To Mr. Burke's Attack On The French Revolution*. Watts & Co., London, 1937.
- <sup>8</sup> The *Magna Carta* or 'Great Charter' was signed by King John of England (1199-1216). This charter affirmed that monarchs were subject to established law, confirmed the independence of the church and the city of London, and guaranteed nobles' hereditary rights. For more on this, see political and military transformations in Europe between the period 1200-1500.
- <sup>9</sup> The complex and diverse intellectual movement called the Enlightenment applied the methods and questions of the Scientific Revolution of the 17th century to the study of human society. The English political philosopher John Locke (1632-1704) argued that governments were created to protect life, liberty and property, and that the people had a right to rebel when a monarch violated these natural rights.



# JAPAN'S CULTURAL DIPLOMACY TOWARDS THE ASEAN REGION (1977-1997)

*Mala Selvaraju*

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## INTRODUCTION

‘Cultural exchange’ is a phenomenon which tends to occur, naturally and spontaneously, to one degree or another, whenever different peoples come into contact with one another. In certain circumstances these kinds of cultural exchanges can have profound geo-strategic, political and economic implications. Yet culture can also be employed, deliberately and consciously, as a vehicle of state policy, both at the elite and popular levels. This was particularly evident during the age of imperialism but it also continued throughout the Cold War and post-Cold War periods. Cultural diplomacy can influence and even assimilate regional elites and by enhancing the image of the power concerned, can make its ideology or its policies more acceptable, and its products more attractive. In this latter sense, officially sponsored “cultural exchange” tends to merge with “public relations”.

During the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, Japan made vigorous attempts to destroy the cultural legacy of its Western rivals in Asia, promoting its own version of Pan-Asianism and propagating the Japanese language and Japanese culture in the territories it occupied. In some former colonies, such as Singapore, Japanese was made the official language and all citizens

were required to master it. Japanese newspapers, radio broadcasts, music and other entertainment proliferated. Japanese street signs replaced those in European languages. Japanese fashions became very much in evidence.

These policies, often enforced with draconian severity, aroused much resentment among many Southeast Asians, although they were undoubtedly popular with some people. With the Japanese defeat and the collapse of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere, the regional impact of Japanese culture rapidly declined. Japan also entered a period of deep self-reflection about the character and direction of its wartime cultural policies. Nevertheless, official institutions for the promotion of cultural exchanges with Asian countries, such as the *Kokusai Gakuyukai* founded by Prince Konoe Fumimaro in 1935, continued in existence throughout the postwar period.

The situation began to change in the 1970s. On the one hand, Japan's re-emergence as a major economic (and potential military) power promoted renewed interest in Japanese culture throughout the region (and also in other areas of the world). On the other hand Japan, cautiously at first, began to give more consideration to the role of "cultural diplomacy" in promoting its interests in the ASEAN region. In Tokyo, there was, in various quarters, uneasiness over Japan's exclusive preoccupation with the economic aspects of its regional ties. It was also realized that many Southeast Asians feared the possibility of a Japanese military revival. At the same time, the 1970s witnessed a resurgence of Japanese interest in their own Asian heritage and an increased desire to explore the roots of their country's history and culture.

This article provides an overview of Japanese-ASEAN cultural relations, between the years 1977-1997 against the background of the geo-strategic, political and economic ties. It also attempts to give some indications of the success or failure of Japanese cultural diplomacy towards the ASEAN powers, and will try to examine the image of Japan currently held by the people of the region.

## **OBSTACLES TO COMMUNICATION AND DIFFERING PERSPECTIVES**

Culture in its broadest sense, can be defined as "way of life", encompassing customs, traditions, philosophies, values, belief systems, attitudes, languages, literature, arts and crafts.<sup>1</sup> Even in the absence of militarist colonial rule, some of the obstacles to Japanese cultural dialogue with Southeast Asian countries have persisted into the contemporary era. These should not be overstated, but they cannot be ignored. Japan is a relatively homogenous society, with a single national language and belief systems derived from Shinto and Buddhist traditions. This, combined with the effects of long periods of relative isolation, has made it sometimes rather difficult for

Japanese to interact with people from foreign countries. ASEAN, in contrast, has a rich diversity of peoples, languages, religious beliefs and popular traditions. Virtually every ASEAN country is, to one degree or another, multiracial. In Indonesia and Malaysia, Islam is the predominant religion, although Hinduism, Buddhism and Christianity are also practiced. The Philippines is a Roman Catholic country with an important Muslim minority. Thailand and Burma are Buddhist with Muslim, Christian and animist minorities. Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia are secular socialist states where the majority of the population is deeply attached to some form of Buddhism, although Christianity and Islam are also found. Indonesian and Malay are the official languages of Indonesia and Malaysia although Chinese, Tamil and English are widely spoken. Thai is the official language in Thailand. Burmese is the official language of Burma. Both countries have substantial minority groups which speak other languages. In Singapore, English is the official language, although Chinese, Tamil, Malay and many other languages are employed in daily life. In the Philippines there are eight major languages.

All this tends to be rather confusing for Japanese, although one Foreign Ministry official interviewed by the present writer remarked that the diversity of ASEAN culture provides excellent opportunities for Japanese to learn about the wider foreign world and accustom themselves to dealing with foreigners.<sup>2</sup> The experience of multiethnic states like Malaysia and Singapore, some feel, might provide useful model for Japan itself as it moves towards a more racially and culturally diversified society.

It is also noticeable that Japanese and Southeast Asians tend to be interested in rather different aspects of each other's societies. A survey conducted by Dr. Elena Samonte in 1993, for example, showed that the largest group of Japanese in the sample taken (13%) declared themselves chiefly interested in ASEAN religion.<sup>3</sup> A Japanese Foreign Ministry survey of the ASEAN countries in 1987, in contrast, found that Southeast Asians were attracted to traditional Japanese cultural forms such as the tea ceremony and flower arrangement, or of Japanese films, music and sports.<sup>4</sup>

## **JAPANESE APPROACHES TO CULTURAL EXCHANGE AFTER THE FUKUDA DOCTRINE**

The cautious, modest, self reflective attitude which has tended to characterize Japan's postwar approach to cultural ties with Southeast Asia, at least at the official level, was evident in Prime Minister Fukuda's speech in Manila in 1977, at the end of his ASEAN tour:

"This is no one-way street, serving only to introduce Japan's culture to our neighbors. We are also introducing the ancient and glorious cultures of Southeast Asia to the Japanese people. It goes without saying that the promotion of this two-way cultural exchange between Japan and the ASEAN nations should be further intensified."<sup>5</sup>

This attitude has been stressed by almost every Japanese Prime Minister since that time. During his ASEAN tour in 1989, Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita declared that:

“Cultural exchange in the broadest sense is the foundation enabling people to transcend the value and systemic differences separating them and to achieve true mutual respect and understanding as human beings”<sup>6</sup>

Prime Minister Hashimoto, in a speech given in Singapore in January 1997, insisted that Japan's relations with ASEAN should be built on the basis of partnership and mutual benefit.<sup>7</sup> During his speech he proposed the formation of a Multinational Cultural Mission to reinforce multilateral cultural cooperation among ASEAN member countries and Japan. The ASEAN member countries agreed to this suggestion.

Cultural exchange programs between Japan and Asian countries have been extremely varied in character, but have tended to focus on particular areas of interactions. The flow of students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, to Japan from the entire Asian region has been, throughout the postwar period, quite substantial, increasing dramatically after the announcement of the Fukuda Doctrine. The *Kokusai Gakuyu Kai*, for example, established by Prince Konoye in 1935 to promote Japan's cultural relations with Asia by providing intensive, high quality language training to emerging regional elites as a prelude to study at normal Japanese universities, was expanded and completely reconstructed after Fukuda's speech in Manila. Since its inception, this institution, operating as an organ of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, has graduated a very large number of students, many of whom, well versed in the Japanese language and Japanese affairs, now occupy key positions in their home countries. Tables 1 and 2 shows the accumulated number of students from the year 1937 - 1987 who were enrolled in this school from various regions in the world.

**Table 1: Cumulative Total of students at the Kokusai Gakuyu regions, 1937-1987**

No.	Country	Foreign students	Trainee	Total
1.	Asia	6552	812	7364
2.	Europe	177	54	231
3.	America	33	32	65
4.	North America	171	28	199
5.	South America	105	33	138
6.	Océania	11	5	16
Total		7049	964	8013

Source: *Kokusai Gakuyukai 50 nen shi*, Zaidan Hojin Kokusai Gakuyukai, 1986, p.82.

**Table 2: Cumulative Total of students at the Kokusai Gakuyu Kai from various countries, 1937-1987**

No.	Country	Foreign students	Trainee	Total
1.	Afghanistan	11	9	20
2.	Burma	100	38	138
3.	Cambodia	24	28	52
4.	China	2660	12	2672
5.	Hong Kong	384	4	388
6.	Israel	1	6	7
7.	Iraq	6	1	7
8.	Iran	6	3	9
9.	India	91	108	199
10.	Indonesia	843	173	1016
11.	Japan	36	4	40
12.	Korea	89	23	112
13.	Laos	12	10	22
14.	Malaysia	509	29	538
15.	Nepal	2	8	10
16.	Pakistan	33	90	123
17.	Philippines	126	62	188
18.	Kuwait	5	0	5
19.	Saudi Arabia	24	0	24
20.	Singapore	165	13	178
21.	Sri Lanka	17	36	53
22.	Syria	4	2	6
23.	Turkey	1	12	13
24.	Thailand	930	133	1063
25.	Vitenam	473	8	481
Total		6552	812	7364

Source: *Kokusai Gakuyukai 50 nen shi*, Zaidan Hojin Kokusai Gakuyukai, 1986, p.83.

Since the mid 1970s, Japanese national and private universities, as well as many other bodies, have also been providing language training, undergraduate programs and post graduate degree courses to increasing numbers of foreign students, most of them from Asia. A very large number of these students are funded by *Monbusho* Scholarships, ADB scholarships or grants from private foundations and companies such as the Association of International Education, Japan (AIEJ), Matsushita, Fuji Xerox and others. The Japan Foundation and other organizations have tended to focus their attention on academic exchanges and on programs for regional opinion leaders.<sup>8</sup> Table 3 and 4 show the number of foreign students enrolled in Japanese institutions both, from the five ASEAN countries and Asia as a whole in the years 1980-1994.

**Table 3: Number of Foreign Students in Japan from the world, Asia and ASEAN 5, 1980-1994**

Year	Total	Asia	ASEAN 5
1980	6543	5229	689
1982	8117	6481	793
1983	9523	7665	939
1984	10697	8699	1138
1986	14960	12697	1849
1988	20373	17804	2528
1989	23816	21139	2779
1991	45066	41559	3652
1993	50801	46635	4297
1994	53511	49277	4447

Source: *UNESCO, Statistical Yearbook, Various issues.*

Note: Figures for 1981, 1985, 1990, 1992, 1995-1997 was not available.

**Table 4: Number of students in Japan from five ASEAN countries, 1980-1994**

Year	ASEAN 5	Indonesia	Malaysia	Thailand	Philippines	Singapore
1980	689	138	143	240	98	70
1982	793	145	156	319	107	66
1983	939	175	204	378	119	63
1984	1138	197	343	408	123	67
1986	1849	344	678	539	200	88
1988	2528	574	983	616	267	88
1989	2779	672	1050	681	290	86
1991	3652	1032	1142	898	477	103
1993	4297	1115	1879	808	396	99
1994	4447	1077	2057	812	399	102

Source: *UNESCO, Statistical Yearbook, Various issues.*

Note: Figures for 1981, 1985, 1990, 1992, 1995-1997 was not available.

The anti-Japanese movements in Thailand and Jakarta in the early 1970s had prompted the Japanese government to set up cultural centers in Bangkok and Jakarta.<sup>9</sup>

The Fukuda Cabinet, as part of its expanded cultural exchange programme, established the ASEAN Cultural Fund in 1978. The Ohira Cabinet introduced the ASEAN Youth Scholarship Program in 1980 and Regional Studies Promotion Program in 1982.<sup>10</sup> Prime Minister Nakasone followed suit with the 21st Century Friendship Program in 1984. This program is designed to foster mutual understanding and establish friendly ties between the youth

of ASEAN and Japan. It is a cultural program which involves a one-month stay in Japan, during which participants are exposed to the host country's lifestyle and culture. Every year about 800 students benefit from this program.<sup>11</sup> Apart from that, the Japanese Foreign Ministry organizes a Youth Invitation Program, whereby young people from Southeast Asia, visit Japan for a two-week stay to deepen their understanding of Japan and to promote friendship and good will.<sup>12</sup>

Japan itself has borne the greater part of the financial burden for these programs. While some observers see this as an indication of a grand strategic plan to control, or at least influence, the development of regional perceptions of Japan, others view it as simple generosity, colored by mixed emotions of residual war guilt and Pan-Asianist sentiment. Japanese cultural grant aid provides funding of up to 50 million yen per project, for the purchase of equipment and materials for the promotion of cultural and educational activities. So far, Japan has donated a substantial amount of aid to the ASEAN countries for the purpose of introducing their cultures to Japan and vice versa. Table 5 shows the amount of assistance Japan has contributed.<sup>13</sup> Such assistance has included supply of language laboratory equipment, audiovisual facilities, television equipment, and Japanese language self study aid to schools, universities, cultural centers, and ministries in the ASEAN region. In 1982, Japan donated 45 million yen to the Singapore Education Ministry for the preservation of cultural heritage treasures. In 1996, 49 million yen was extended to the Bali Cultural Center in Indonesia for audiovisual equipment. In 1991, 47 million yen was extended to schools in Terengganu State in Malaysia for development of audiovisual laboratories. In 1981, Japan donated 50 million yen to Philippines Cultural Center for audiovisual equipment.

**Table 5: Japan's Cultural Assistance to ASEAN countries (in million Yen)**

Country	Year	Amount
Indonesia	1977-1997	1,732,000
Singapore	1979-1988	580,000
Thailand	1977-1997	1,561,400
Philippines	1977-1996	1,469,300
Malaysia	1978-1997	1,281,500

The Japanese government has established Japan Cultural Centers in Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta and an office in Manila.<sup>14</sup> The Japanese are also very active in Singapore, despite the absence of an official cultural center. For example in 1995, a broad range of personnel exchange programs

was carried out to mark the 30th anniversary of the independence of Singapore.<sup>15</sup> Among the main activities carried out by the Japan Cultural Center in Kuala Lumpur are:

- Providing scholarships/grants for study and research in Japan
- Conducting Japanese language programs to train Japanese language teachers and other interested persons
- Donating Japanese language equipment to schools and institutions to enhance their existing Japanese language program<sup>16</sup>

Under the aegis of the Japan-ASEAN Comprehensive Exchange Program, Malaysia, to mention but one example, has participated in a series of exchanges, including sports, arts, music and culture. Exchanges of scholars, including some for the purposes of joint research, have also taken place and seminars have been organized. Assistance has been extended to foreign students pursuing education in Japan. Assistance for Japanese language education has also been given.

Malaysia's Look East Policy, which places emphasis on the finer aspects of our own eastern values in our approach to develop a modern economy, should not be overlooked in this context. The program is aimed at providing Malaysians with opportunities to learn the work ethic of the Japanese, through the acquisition and occupational skills and hands-on training in private companies and institutions throughout Japan. Returning Malaysians have shown significant changes of attitude and a more favorable view of the Japanese.

**Table 6: The flow of people between Japan and ASEAN**

	1980	1990	1992	1994	1996
Japan to ASEAN	369, 989	1, 519, 793	1, 648, 224	2, 032, 072	2, 475, 148
ASEAN to Japan	98, 201	314, 808	362, 245	316, 075	331, 571

Source: Ministry of Justice, Japan, 1997, Cited in *ASEAN in figures*, JETRO, 1998.

Table 6 reveals a vast difference between the number of Japanese who visit ASEAN countries and the number of people from ASEAN who go to Japan. The principle reason for this is that Japan is a high cost country and few people in ASEAN countries are rich enough to go there unassisted.



Sister City relationships have also facilitated exchanges of people. By 1997, Indonesia had 7 sister-city arrangements with Japan. Malaysia had 2, the Philippines had 21, Thailand had 2 and Vietnam had 1.<sup>17</sup> "Cultural Festivals" have also had an impact. Sometimes they have been carried out on quite a spectacular scale. Some 110,000 Japanese traveled to Indonesia in 1995 for the Japan-Indonesia Friendship Festival designed to exhibit Japanese culture and technology.<sup>18</sup> A large number of Indonesians visited Tokyo for a similar event in 1997.

## EFFECTIVENESS OF JAPAN'S CULTURAL PROGRAMMES

How effective have these programs been in changing JAPAN'S image in the ASEAN region? It goes without saying that it is essential, from the Japanese point of view, that all this activity produces some positive results. The geo-strategic, political and economic importance of the region to Japan has been discussed at length elsewhere in this thesis. From Tokyo's point of view, the significance of the ASEAN region is likely to grow in the future. The realization of the European single market in 1992 and the creation of the North American Free Trade Agreement strongly suggest that the world is moving towards greater regionalism, transcending protectionism and promoting intra-regional free trade. In East and Southeast Asia too, a new bloc may gradually take shape. If this development were to take place, Japan would, of necessity assume a central role. For this reason alone the Japanese need to cultivate the friendship of their Asian neighbors more vigorously.

## PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY<sup>19</sup>

How do people in the ASEAN countries currently view Japan and the relationship of their region with it?<sup>20</sup> Have ASEAN perceptions of Japan changed over the past decades? These matters are of great interest to the Japanese government and in 1978, 1983, 1987, 1992 and 1997 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducted detailed studies of popular attitudes to Japan in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore. Quite clearly, the Japanese government wished to assess grass roots opinion in order to analyze broad general trends and assist it in fine tuning policies towards the region. These surveys were very detailed, concerning general issues, security, economic relations and cultural exchange. The present writer obtained the results directly from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.<sup>21</sup> To her knowledge, no other writers on Japan—ASEAN affairs, have drawn on the information the surveys contain. Undoubtedly, opinions of elite groups are equally important. However, to the knowledge of the present writer, polls of this nature have not been conducted by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Southeast Asia. The writer did not have neither the time nor the resources to conduct such polls herself.

Among the main questions asked were:

1. How do you acquire knowledge about Japan?
2. How do you think Japan is securing its national security?
3. How do you foresee the future of Japan from a military standpoint?
4. How would you describe Japanese characteristics?
5. What do you think about Japanese living in your country?
6. Do you think Japan is trustworthy as a friend?
7. How do you feel about Japan during World War II?
8. Which areas do you want Japan to make efforts in the ASEAN region?
9. How much do you think Japan's economic and technical cooperation is contributing to development in your country?
10. Which areas do you think Japan's economic and technical cooperation should be directed to in your country?
11. How do you feel about Japanese companies coming to your country and establishing factories?
12. Why do you welcome Japanese presence in your country?

The survey shows (Table 7) that the greatest proportion of ASEAN people acquire their knowledge about Japan through the electronic (television and radio) and non-electronic media. The latter consist principally of academic and non-academic reading material including newspapers, magazines and books. School textbooks in most of the ASEAN countries touch upon some aspects of Japanese history and society. The first impression about Japan students in ASEAN countries would receive from their textbooks when they read the history of their country is that the Japanese have been, in the recent past, aggressors and militarists. Most of the Malaysian history textbooks, for example, explain the Japanese invasion and occupation in detail. In the standard Malaysian history textbook there is one chapter on "The Japanese Occupation" which touches upon the Japanese advance into the peninsular, the conquest of each state, the Japanese administration and its approach to various ethnic groups in the country. For example in one school history textbook, under the heading "misery during Japanese occupation" it is written that:

"The Japanese introduced trade and transportation restrictions. All main commodities were controlled through permits. In early 1943,

rationing was introduced. People were supposed to collect coupons in the Food Control Office in their towns. Fishermen were to sell their fish to Japanese officers.

Lack of commodities brought inflation. The High inflation rate made it difficult to do business. So people had to plant their own food like tapioca. Lack of food led to malnutrition and many people died of sickness."<sup>22</sup>

Japanese postwar economic development and JAPAN'S role in the regional economy is also mentioned briefly. Not all information about Japan is negative or statistical. Among the positive points mentioned about the country are the Japanese victory in the Japan-Russia war of 1904-1905, which is presented as a lesson showing that Asians are capable of defeating a Western power. It is also noted that Japanese Occupation inspired nationalism among the people in Southeast Asia and that when the Japanese left the nationalist groups stood up against the colonial powers. According to the Malaysian textbook cited above:

"The slogan 'Asia for Asians' taught the locals that Westerners too could be beaten. However, the Japanese Occupation in our country and our neighbors stimulated a sense of nationalism and inspired the people to work towards independence."<sup>23</sup>

In the 1980s one of the most popular TV dramas in Malaysia was the contemporary Japanese series *Oshin*, which was screened every evening. At the same time, Japanese Cartoons like *Doraemon* and animated programs such as the *Ultraman* are very popular. Most of these programs are dubbed into local languages.

The survey detailed below point to the decline in the importance of the non-electronic media in opinion formation throughout ASEAN countries.

**Table 7: Question: How did you acquire knowledge about Japan**

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Newspapers Magazines & Books	73 (92)	76 (73)	71 (73)	75 (85)	73 (78)
TV & Radio	75 (82)	73 (76)	55 (55)	64 (67)	82 (76)

Note: 1. Figures are in percentage

Note: 2. Survey of 1997 (1992 figures in brackets)

From Table 8 we can deduce that among the people of ASEAN, Japan is viewed as a modern country with an advanced economy and with a high standard of living. They perceive Japan as an economically generous country and as a country which does not wish to engage in war.

These replies might perhaps reflect preconceived ideas about Japan and dominant notions of what constitutes a successful state. Japan is regarded throughout the ASEAN region as an economic success story and is respected for this achievement rather than for its attainment of democratic values, which are generally seen as secondary in importance to the developing nations of Southeast Asia. Japan is not regarded as a model for "democratization" but rather as a model for development.

**Table 8: Question: Which of these words are best to describe Japan?**

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Country with beautiful nature	54 (34) (39) (28) (35)	40 (37) (40) (29) (42)	34 (46) (50) (41) (48)	49 (28) (39) (33) (40)	62 (53) (52) (42) (52)
Peaceful country	19 (27) (32) (26) (16)	19 (15) (13) (17) (12)	35 (29) (30) (32) (31)	10 (6) (10) (11) (11)	18 (19) (14) (10) (12)
Country with wonderful culture	45 (56) (43) (33) (28)	37 (31) (29) (33) (28)	37 (41) (35) (32) (31)	29 (20) (25) (28) (29)	30 (30) (11) (12) (17)
Country with high standard living	63 (48) (36) (35) (36)	65 (52) (41) (35) (48)	63 (63) (49) (34) (39)	73 (56) (49) (50) (59)	38 (43) (26) (24) (34)
Democratic	7 (10) (26) (14) (21)	11 (11) (15) (23) (18)	12 (16) (21) (19) (17)	7 (7) (10) (14) (17)	17 (17) (16) 912) (19)
Advanced economy	78 (78) (78) (76) (73)	53 (61) (54) (54) (55)	64 (62) (79) (40) (52)	63 (66) (47) (42) (48)	69 (69) (61) (62) (63)
Large population	10 (17) (15) (16) (28)	15 (15) (17) (22) (27)	11 (15) (9) (14) (24)	16 (12) (14) (20) (29)	13 (16) (7) 911) (16)
Enigmatic Country	3 (3) (2) (7) (7)	7 (2) (3) (3) (1)	5 (5) (1) (8) (5)	18 (6) (4) (5) (6)	9 (7) (5) (4) (3)
Economically selfish country	10 (10) (3) (8) (9)	7 (9) (9) (11) (11)	15 (8) (8) (12) (14)	10 (8) (5) (6) (7)	23 (28) (35) (40) (35)
Warlike country	2 (1) (2) (4) (8)	3 (3) (1) (1) (3)	5 (5) (2) (3) (4) (8)	9 (3) (1) (2) (3)	2 (2) (1) (1) (1)
Country with serious population	5 (7) (7) (8) (12)	5 (9) (4) (7) (16)	3 92) (3) (4) (8)	4 (3) (3) (5) (8)	7 (5) (3) (4) (10)
Country with Western thinking	4 (7) (8) (10) (10)	5 (1) (4) (4) (8)	9 (9) (7) (4) (15)	6 (3) (3) (6) (8)	9 (7) (7) (6) (7)
Others	1 (0) (0) (30)	(5) (2) (3) (61)	0 (1) (0) (48)	0 (68) (63) (54)	0 (0) (52) (55)

1. All figures are in percentages.
2. The first figure is for the year 1997, the first bracketed figure is for the year 1992, followed by 1987, 1983 and 1978

Table 9 demonstrates that, in general, ASEAN people describe Japanese as “hardworking”, “good mannered”, “respectful of traditional values” and “efficient”.

**Table 9: Question: Which words best describe Japanese characteristics?**

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Hard working	68 (94) (92) (84) (70)	79 (90) (85) (82) (67)	43 (62) (57) (95) (69)	63 (67) (69) (72) (60)	79 (75) (83) (77) (76)
Good manners	48 (37) (31) (27) (25)	46 (46) (46) (54) (48)	28 (24) (47) (82) (23)	46 (62) (58) (58) (51)	20 (25) (23) (17) (27)
Respect traditional values	44 (65)	29 (4)	23 (28)	27 (28)	42 (44)
Keep promises	29 (28) (28) (21) (12)	18 (16) (11) (16) (7)	26 (19) (22) (72) (17)	3 (2) (10) (12) (12)	17 (5) (17) (13) (14)
Considerate	6 (15) (28) (26) (24)	13 (9) (9) (13) (9)	11 (10) (18) (52) (9)	6 (2) (10) (10) (13)	8 (9) (11) (8) (12)
Efficient	30 (27) (29) (19) (7)	35 (35) (34) (40) (31)	35 (30) (47) (82) (28)	31 (29) (38) (41) (31)	31 (35) (45) (39) (35)
Strong unity	4 (28) (45) (33) (12)	25 (29) (29) (36) (32)	19 (29) (54) (87) (45)	30 (35) (50) (59) (29)	16 (18) (35) (27) (42)
Obedient	20 (15) (20) (17) (19)	21 (21) (14) (23) (20)	7 (8) (25) (74) (13)	11 (13) (17) (16) (15)	3 (4) (1) (1) (1)
Copying others	3 (8) (7) (11) (6)	7 (9) (9) (11) (16)	6 (8) (13) (41) (2)	7 (8) (13) (16) (14)	5 (10) (14) (19) (22)
Offensive	19 (20) (21) (13) (13)	17 (17) (15) (10) (10)	10 (21) (27) (65) (16)	10 (13) (19) (8) (6)	4 (2) (1) (1) (2)
Calculating	23 (16) (20) (21) (21)	4 (5) (5) (8) (11)	1 (6) (3) (61) (10)	2 (6) (7) (11) (12)	10 (17) (21) (16) (29)
Closed	4 (9) (1) (2) (1)	6 (3) (3) (4) (4)	4 (4) (5) (32) (3)	3 (4) (7) (7) (6)	5 (5) (6) (5) (8)
Arrogant	3 (4) (2) (2) (4)	4 (3) (4) (3) (2)	8 (8) (4) (25) (2)	4 (6) (6) (5) (3)	2 (2) (2) (3) (5)
Lack of faith	0 (2) (3) (2) (2)	4 (2) (1) (-) (1)	5 (4) (1) (28) (0)	2 (1) (1) (1) (1)	2 (4) (2) (1) (4)
Cruel	13 (8) (8) (10) (7)	4 (4) (3) (3) (9)	11 (2) (6) (31) (4)	6 (3) (4) (7) (5)	5 (3) (2) (0) (3)
Others	1 (0) (1) (1) (-)	4 (2) (2) (9) (-)	0 (2) (4) (-) (-)	0 (0) (0) (-) (-)	0 (1) (2) (-) (-)

1. All figures are in percentages.
2. The first figure is for the year 1997, the first bracketed figure is for the year 1992, followed by 1987, 1983 and 1978.
3. ‘Respect traditional values’ was not given as an option for the year 1987, 1983 and 1978.

The Japanese are, of course, very well known for their work ethic. This is one of the reasons why Malaysia implemented the “Look East Policy” and Singapore the “Learn from Japan Policy”, both of which were meant to encourage people to emulate Japanese approaches to work.

While there seemed to be a general consensus that Japan was a “peace loving nation” and would never become a “strong military power”, there was much confusion over what Japan’s defense policy actually was. Table 10 which refers to Japan’s national security, shows that a majority of respondents from all countries declared that Japan guaranteed its security by strong independent military power, which appears to show a lack of knowledge about Japan’s security relations with the United States.

**Table 10: Question: How do you think Japan is securing its national security?**

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Independently	30 (23) (51) (50)	33 (37) (30) (41) (30)	24 (28) (40) (38) (36)	31 (30) (31) (34) (26)	18 (12) (29) (28) (26)
Alliance with US & with SDF	14 (12) (21) (26)	24 (16) (25) (24) (25)	15 (20) (26) (29) (30)	19 (15) (21) (26) (22)	19 (17) (21) (22) (24)
Alliance with US & without SDF	2 (6) (2) (4)	8 (13) (4) (18) (26)	8 (13) (4) (12) (6)	4 (9) (4) (4) (4)	7 (4) (5) (5)
Don't know	20 (9) (8) (9)	8 (13) (4) (18) (26)	8 (13) (4) (12) (6)	30 (27) (33) (230) (38)	7 (17) (12) (240) (22)

1. All figures are in percentages.
2. The first figure is for the year 1997, the first bracketed figure is for the year 1992, followed by 1987, 1983 and 1978.
3. Answers for this question by Indonesians for the year 1978 were not available.

Memories of the Japanese occupation have not faded. In 1997, 33 percent of Indonesians, 32 percent of Malaysians, 35 percent of Filipinos, 41 percent of Singaporeans and 24 percent of Thais declared that they could not forget Japanese actions in World War II, and that in most of these countries unpleasant memories of the Japanese role in this conflict were becoming more entrenched, not diminishing. Generally speaking, between 1992 and 1997, there has been an increase in the number of Indonesians, Singaporeans and Thais who declared that they cannot forget the harsh memories of the war. The rise in these numbers was possibly caused by the controversy surrounding the apology for wartime atrocities given by Japanese Prime Minister Murayama in 1994. The reappearance of Japanese military forces in Southeast Asia (albeit under the United Nations flag) during peacekeeping operations in Cambodia might also have been a factor.

**Table 11: Question: How do you feel about Japan during World War II? Results for the year 1997**

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Can't forget as bad memory	33 (29) (36) (27)	32 (40) (25) (27) (33)	35 (37) (35) (20) (45)	41 (31) (25) (29) (21)	24 (18) (29) (23) (22)
Don't care now, while feeling bad	48 (52) (36) (28)	43 (33) (42) (42) (43)	36 (37) (54) (41) (38)	47 (44) (37) (34) (38)	46 (36) (40) (32) (29)
Don't care at all	12 (18) (27) (36)	17 (19) (28) (25) (17)	14 (11) (7) (36) (14)	3 (19) (30) (29) (27)	25 (27) (26) (27) (38)
Don't know	8 (2) (2) (9)	7 (8) (5) (6) (7)	13 (16) (5) (3) (3)	9 (4) (8) (8) (14)	5 (19) (4) (18) (11)

1. All figures are in percentages.
2. The first figure is for the year 1997, the first bracketed figure is for the year 1992, followed by 1987, 1983 and 1978.

Memories of World War II, to a certain extent, continued to influence regional perceptions of Japan's trustworthiness as a friend.

**Table 12: Question: Do you think Japan is trustworthy as friend?**

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Yes	37 (24) (36) (34) (51)	24 (21) (200) (29) (14)	25 (22) (29) (19) (23)	21 (15) (19) (17) (16)	31 (25) (15) (14) (14)
Maybe Yes	41 (64) (52) (53) (25)	59 (60) (56) (49) (57)	50 (49) (63) (58) (52)	42 (48) (50) (57) (44)	51 (41) (63) (64) (52)
Maybe No	9 (10) (5) (5) (8)	6 (4) (9) (3) (5)	14 (9) (3) (15) (16)	11 (9) (9) (10) (10)	12 (19) (15) (11) (18)
No	2 (1) (2) (2) (2)	3 (2) (3) (3) (4)	3 (5) (1) (4) (6)	7 (5) (4) (4) (5)	4 (4) (3) (2) (4)
Don't Know	12 (2) (4) (6) (14)	8 (12) (12) (10) (14)	8 (14) (4) (4) (6)	19 (22) (19) (12) (25)	3 (11) (5) (9) (12)

1. All figures are in percentages.
2. The first figure is for the year 1997, the first bracketed figure is for the year 1992, followed by 1987, 1983 and 1978.

It will be observed from Table 12 that in the 1992 survey, 64 percent of Indonesians, 60 of Malaysians, 49 percent of Filipinos, 48 percent of Singaporeans and 41 percent of Thais answered "maybe yes" compared to 24 percent of Indonesians, 21 percent of Malaysians, 22 percent of Filipinos, 15 percent of Singaporeans and 25 percent of Thais saying "yes". The rest answered 'Maybe No', 'No', 'Don't know'.

On questions pertaining to economics, all the polls show that the diverse peoples of ASEAN are aware of the fact that economic cooperation, trade and investment are the surest means to development. The benefits that the host countries obtain from foreign investment are enormous. Japanese investment is much sought after and its beneficial influence recognized.

In response to the question on "Which areas do you want Japan to make effort in the ASEAN region" Table 13 shows that the largest number voted in favor of economic and technical cooperation. The next largest number mentioned trade and investment. There has been very little interest in promoting a Japanese regional military role or encouraging Japanese participation in peacekeeping activities.

The trends revealed in these figures have been fairly consistent for a number of years. For example in the year 1993, more than 75 percent of the people in the region, ranked "economic and technical cooperation" as number one followed by efforts in "trade and investment". "Cultural exchange" ranked third while "peace maintenance" and "increase military presence to maintain peace and stability" ranked fourth and fifth.

It is interesting to note, however, that in 1978 and 1983, more than 50 percent of the people surveyed in the region and more than 70 percent of respondents in Thailand, wanted Japan to increase its military presence. This could, perhaps, reflect the tension brought about by the Sino-Vietnamese war and Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia. Nevertheless, despite the fact that Japan actually sent troops to Cambodia through United Nations in 1991, popular support in ASEAN for a Japanese military role had declined dramatically by 1992 and remained at very low levels in 1997. It will be recalled that it was around this time that the then Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew voiced his concern about Japanese forces being sent to Cambodia, commenting that it was like "giving liqueur chocolates to an alcoholic".<sup>24</sup>

**Table 13: Question: Which areas do you want Japan to take efforts in the ASEAN region?**

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Peace maintenance	14 (22) (44) (44) (39)	8 (6) (21) (27) (28)	38 (24) (28) (39) (24)	16 (9) (21) (33) (24)	9 (15) (9) (14) (14)
Economic & Technical	88 (89) (91) (89) (83)	80 (78) (83) (82) (75)	64 (90) (90) (68) (71)	71 (80) (77) (72) (68)	89 (89) (90) (85) (85)
Cultural Exchanges	21 (55) (22) (19) (19)	13 (17) (18) (17) (15)	21 (44) (14) (35) (29)	9 (12) (14) (18) (16)	19 (14) (12) (13) (10)
Trade & Investment	73 (28) (40)	58 (54) (61)	49 (21) (66)	49 (65) (64)	73 (72) (80)
Increase military presence	4 (6) (-) (45) (51)	20 (19) (-) (60) (61)	10 (19) (-) (58) (62)	6 (5) (-) (58) (62)	9 (6) (-) (74) (76)
Others	0 (0) (0) (2) (5)	0 (0) (0) (0) (0)	0 (2) (2) (2) (-)	2 (1) (2) (2) (-)	0 (1) (5) (1) (1)

1. All figures are in percentages.
2. The first figure is for the year 1997, the first bracketed figure is for the year 1992, followed by 1987, 1983 and 1978.
3. 'Trade and Investment' was not given as an option in the year 1983 and 1978.
4. 'Increase in military presence' was not given as an option in the year 1987.

Generally speaking, people in ASEAN countries welcome the establishment of Japanese industries. In response to the question "How do you feel about Japanese companies coming to your country and establishing factories" (Table 14), more than 80 percent of respondents of each ASEAN state replied "welcome" or "maybe welcome" the Japanese plants in their countries.



**Table 14: Question: How do you feel about Japanese companies coming to your country and establishing factories?**

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Welcome	63 (34) (58) (48) (56)	56 (65) (35) (57) (45)	42 (40) (44) (29) (51)	67 (54) (65) (53) (52)	50 (46) (50) (40) (35)
Maybe Welcome	25 (60) (35) (43) (32)	34 (29) (53) (37) (47)	45 (41) (47) (54) (37)	29 (39) (28) (39) (37)	38 (37) (35) (42) (40)
Maybe Not	3 (6) (4) (7) (5)	3 (6) (4) (2) (2)	7 (9) (6) (9) (6)	1 (2) (1) (2) (2)	8 (9) (6) (9) (9)
Not Welcome	2 (0) (2) (3) (8)	1 (1) (1) (-) (1)	2 (2) (3) (1) (1)	1 (0) (0) (1) (1)	4 (5) (4) (3) (8)
Don't Know	4 (0) (1) (6) (8)	3 (3) (7) (4) (5)	5 (8) (1) (1) (1)	3 (4) (6) (5) (8)	1 (3) (5) (6) (8)

1. All figures are in percentages.
2. The first figure is for the year 1997, the first bracketed figure is for the year 1992, followed by 1987, 1983 and 1978.

The Indonesians seemed especially happy with the Japanese contribution. More than 75 percent of Indonesians surveyed in 1997 answered "yes" to the question "How do you think Japan's economy and technical cooperation is contributing to developments in your country?" (Table 16). The Singaporeans, Malaysians and Filipinos all concurred that Japanese economic and technical cooperation was contributing to a certain extent to the development of their country. This perhaps implied that they wanted the Japanese to contribute more. The Indonesians and the Thais, however, were happy with the level of Japanese economic cooperation. These results have been consistent throughout the 1987, 1992 and 1997 surveys.

**Table 15: Question: How do you think Japan's economic & technical cooperation is contributing to developments in your country?**

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Fully	58 (68) (77)	35 (33) (25)	33 (29) (25)	41 (28) (41)	70 (69) (43)
Certain Extent	35 (30) (21)	50 (51) (61)	45 (45) (56)	50 (57) (47)	26 (26) (45)
Not Really	1 (1) (0)	7 (5) (3)	12 (18) (16)	2 (4) (3)	3 (2) (5)
No	0 (0) (0)	1 (2) (0)	1 (3) (2)	1 (1) (0)	0 (0) (1)
Don't Know	5 (0) (1)	7 (9) (9)	5 (6) (1)	6 (11) (9)	1 (3) (7)

Perceived employment creation was a major factor in the positive attitude towards the shift of Japanese industry offshore into ASEAN. In answer to the question, "Why do you 'welcome' or 'maybe welcome' (Table 16) the Japanese presence in your country", 80 percent of Indonesians, 72 percent of Malaysians, Filipinos, Singaporeans and 70 percent of Thais surveyed in 1997 mentioned that the Japanese presence in their country created job opportunities for them.

**Table 16: Question: Why do you 'welcome' or 'maybe welcome' Japanese presence in your country?**

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Job Creation	80 (86) (60) (53) (39)	72 (85) (56) (66) (75)	72 (75) (77) (54) (42)	72 (79) (65) (57) (67)	70 (65) (62) (56) (66)
Increasing business opportunities	41 (37) (30) (33) (28)	51 (57) (33) (38) (30)	41 (54) (65) (38) (30)	35 (31) (36) (33) (28)	27 (32) (34) (27) (28)
Produce cheap high quality goods	45 (40) (36) (37) (38)	33 (31) (23) (35) (30)	32 (30) (32) (28) (31)	16 (18) (24) (29) (21)	15 (13) (17) (19) (26)
Upgrading industrial technology	49 (76) (74) (60) (64)	49 (57) (58) (730) (58)	42 (36) (67) (23) (62)	37 (44) (52) (63) (54)	46 (61) (63) (50) (60)
Useful for regional development	11 (22)	16 (16)	10 (80)	25 (34)	24 (17)
Good effect on economy	30 (39) (29) (20) (22)	33 (23) (26) (28) (20)	18 (20) (48) (29) (27)	17 (30) (30) (23) (20)	40 (28) (24) (22) (24)
Contribution to social development	4 (14)	(8) (13)	(7) (13)	(3) (5)	(3) (7)
Others	1 (0) (0) (0) (1)	0 (0) (1) (1) (0)	0 (0) (1) (-) (1)	0 (0) (0) (-) (1)	0 (0) (1) (1) (0)

1. All figures are in percentages.
2. The first figure is for the year 1997, the first bracketed figure is for the year 1992, followed by 1987, 1983 and 1978.
3. 'Useful for regional development' and 'Contribution for social development' was not given as options in the year 1987, 1983 and 1978.

Many Japanese companies come to the region to set up labor-intensive plants and factories, which absorb both skilled and non-skilled workers. The increase in employment levels in all these countries could perhaps be taken as proof that popular perceptions are not mistaken. Other reasons given for supporting the Japanese presence was its perceived impact on the upgrading of industrial technology and on business opportunities.

There is a proverb which goes, "Give a man a fish and feed him for a day, teach a man to fish and feed him for a lifetime". A majority of people surveyed in all ASEAN states places particular emphasis on the importance of technological transfer and learning skills from Japan. Table 17 shows that most of the ASEAN people surveyed want Japan to direct her technical and economic cooperation towards human resource development and industrial development.

**Table 17: Question: To which areas do you think Japan's economic & technical cooperation should be directed in your country?**

	Indonesia	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Thailand
Agriculture	20 (34) (39) (45)	22 (26) (19) (24)	33 (36) (58) (35)	8 (3) (5) (6)	33 (38) (21) (24)
Energy	38 (45) (40) (44)	38 (32) (28) (31)	41 (44) (47) (47)	22 (13) (13) (14)	27 (33) (8) (6)
Human Resource Development	66 (74) (60) (28)	20 (26) (22) (25)	54 (47) (57) (17)	48 (56) (45) (52)	50 (38) (27) (20)
Public health, medical service	11 (17) (22) (14)	14 (18) (15) (20)	29 (26) (26) (10)	11 (6) (7) (8)	15 (14) (2) (4)
Public Infrastructure	24 (22) (28) (37)	27 (20) (27) (43)	27 (33) (44) (22)	12 (7) (13) (20)	18 (17) (7) (8)
Industrial Development	47 (60) (63) (46)	39 (35) (61) (68)	37 (35) (61) (21)	22 (23) (34) (30)	44 (41) (31) (32)
Environmental Protection	6 (17)	14 (12)	13 (12)	9 (6)	22 (21)
Others	1 (0) (0) (1)	0 (0) (0) (1)	0 (0) (0) (1)	1 (1) (0) (0)	0 (0) (0) (1)

1. All figures are in percentages.
2. The first figure is for the year 1997, the first bracketed figure is for the year 1992, followed by 1987 and 1983.
3. 'Environment Protection' was not given as an option in the years 1987 and 1983.
4. This question was not asked in the year 1978.

## CONCLUSION

From these surveys, it can be concluded that Japan's postwar cultural diplomacy and public relations towards the ASEAN region has been, on the whole, rather successful. While there is no (indeed, generally diminishing) enthusiasm for a Japanese military role in the region, even in the form of peacekeeping forces, Japan's image is a positive one. Her ODA, FDI and other contributions to regional economic development are highly appreciated, and it is expected that her further involvement in regional economic affairs will have beneficial results. Given the widespread hatred and suspicions of Japan that existed in the region in the 1950s and 1960s, this is no small achievement.

Of course, it might be argued that the views of people in the region have changed simply because the Japanese economic presence has brought tangible benefits. However, as the Japanese experience prior to the anti-Tanaka riots demonstrates, political, strategic and economic policies need to be appropriately "packaged" to be understood and accepted. This is generally difficult to do without the kind of energetic cultural exchange and public relations programs to which the Japanese government has obviously attached such importance.

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Khalid Haji Ismail. "Cultural Exchange Between Malaysia and Japan", *6th Japan-Malaysia Colloquium: In Search of New Cooperation in the Post Cold War*, 11-12 October 1994, Tokyo, p.1.
- <sup>2</sup> Interview with Kenji Kanasugi. Deputy Director, Policy Coordination Division, Foreign Policy Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18.12.98.
- <sup>3</sup> Elena Samonte. *Japan-ASEAN Relations: Heart to Heart Understanding*, JIIA Fellowship Paper, No.14, Japan Institute of International Affairs, 1995, p.11
- <sup>4</sup> File No. 97-24. *Public Opinion Survey of Japan in ASEAN*, MOFA, April 1997. This File was provided to the writer by Foreign Ministry Official.
- <sup>5</sup> Takeo Fukuda, Manila, 18.8.77.
- <sup>6</sup> Noboru Takeshita. *Japan and ASEAN: Thinking Together and Advancing Together*, Jakarta, 5.5.89.
- <sup>7</sup> Ryutaro Hashimoto. *Reforms for the New Era of Japan and ASEAN: For a Broader and Deeper Partnership*, Singapore, 14.1.97.
- <sup>8</sup> Interview with Stephen Leong, Director of Japan Studies Center, ISIS, Malaysia, 7.9.99.
- <sup>9</sup> Sueo Sudo. "From Fukuda to Takeshita: A Decade of Japan-ASEAN Relations", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol.10, No. 2, September 1998, p.134.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>11</sup> *Japan and ASEAN for the 21st Century*, MOFA, 1997, p.24.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p.25.
- <sup>13</sup> *Record of Cultural Grants to ASEAN*, Japanese Foreign Ministry File provided to the writer by Foreign Ministry Official.
- <sup>14</sup> *The Japan Foundation: Overview of Programs 1997/Annual Report 1996*, The Japan Foundation, Japan, 1988, p.44.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid*.
- <sup>16</sup> The Japan Foundation homepage, <http://www.nasionet.net/jfkl/> Date accessed: 12/10/99.
- <sup>17</sup> *Japanese Local Government International Affiliates Directory*, 1998. This File was provided to the writer by Foreign Ministry Official.
- <sup>18</sup> MOFA, Japan homepage. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/asean/pmv9701/indonesia.html>.
- <sup>19</sup> File No. 97-24, *Public Opinion of Japan in ASEAN*, MOFA, April 1997. This File was provided to the writer by Foreign Ministry Official.
- <sup>20</sup> Obviously it would be important to know how the programs have altered the image of ASEAN countries in Japan. Unfortunately, no materials are available on this matter.
- <sup>21</sup> All documents were in Japanese. They were translated for the present writer by a MOFA official.
- <sup>22</sup> Translated by present writer from, Sabiah Osman, Muzaffar Tate & Ishak Ibrahim, *Sejarah Tingkatan 5*, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, Kuala Lumpur, 1983, p.11.
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.11-15.
- <sup>24</sup> "Changes in Southeast Asian Views of Japan", *Japan Echo*, Vol, XX, No. 3, Autumn, 1993, p.45.

# IN SEARCH OF DURABLE SECURITY FOR AFRICA: AFRICAN LIBERATION AND THE PAN-AFRICANIST IDEALS OF JOMO KENYATTA (KENYA), KWAME NKRUMAH (GHANA), AND JULIUS K. NYERERE (TANZANIA)<sup>1</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION

Ghana's Nkrumah, for example, urged his people to seek the political kingdom first and all other things would be added to it: 'once the political independence has been achieved, the country's full potentialities can, and must, be explored'. Sadly, African nationalist leaders realized that it could be too late to attain the promised economic kingdom. Therefore, Nkrumah insisted that 'something in the nature of economic revolution is required'.<sup>2</sup>

This study, done with Africa's durable security in mind, is in the context of Pan-Africanism within African mass struggles as well as liberation, self-empowerment and the future leadership of the continent. Utilizing the

pre-independent liberating strategies of Kenya's late President Jomo Kenyatta, Ghana's late President Kwame Nkrumah, and Tanzania's ex-President Julius K. Nyerere, Pan-Africanism is seen as part of the liberating tools of Africans on the continent and of Blacks in the diaspora. For very clear underpinnings and articulation of what Kenyatta, Nkrumah and Nyerere deemed to be the "true" Pan-Africanist movement, this study relies heavily on the movements' definitions espoused by the three leaders as well as by George Padmore, Professors Ronald Walters and P. O. Esedebe.

In Nkrumah's search for African liberation and the subsequent continental unity, he urged (as quoted above) his fellow Africans to "seek the political kingdom first and all other things would be added to it".<sup>3</sup> Kenyatta and Nyerere, operating from the East African theatre of African politics, saw the need for economic freedom and continental unity within the context of Pan-Africanism. Yet, they wanted to see their realization or achievement through gradual approaches. Hence, at the 1964 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Annual Meeting in Cairo, Egypt, Nkrumah—supported by some radical African leaders—and Nyerere showed transparent public disagreement, as briefly explained here:

It was, indeed, on the issues dealing with African unity that Nkrumah and Nyerere shared fundamental differences. For example, at the July 1964 OAU annual meeting in Cairo, Egypt, Nkrumah, then President Sekou Toure of Guinea, Malian President Modibo Keita, and other known radical African leaders advocated a quick pace toward continental unity. Then, Tanzanian President Nyerere, however, urged his colleagues to pursue continental unity at a slower pace...<sup>4</sup>

While Nkrumah wondered if his fellow African leaders wanted the OAU to be an association like the United Nations, "whose decisions were sometimes ignored by its own members, adding, 'is it the type of association we want for ourselves in the United Africa [that] we speak of with such feeling and emotion?'"<sup>5</sup> Nyerere countered, "To rule out step-by-step progress in a march to unity is to rule out unity itself".<sup>6</sup> Most certainly, these early nationalist leaders of Africa's decolonization struggle meant well, although they saw differences in the approaches toward the realization of Africa's mass struggles for self-empowerment, liberation and future global leadership.

Consequently, utilizing the definitions of Pan-Africanism (which are integrated in the study and, which are also espoused by these leaders as well as by Padmore, Esedebe and Walters) this study amply underscores the enshrining of Africa's security as well as the Pan-Africanist ideals and goals of Kenyatta, Nkrumah, and Nyerere, within the context of Africa's liberation strategies, their successes and failures.

## KENYATTA, NKRUMAH AND NYERERE AS PIONEERS

The pioneers of modern African independence (or liberation) attached a great deal of importance to the struggles that they led for the decolonization processes of their respective nations. Former Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah, for example, linked the independence of Ghana to the total liberation of Africa as a continent when, at Ghana's independence, on March 6, 1957, he underscored, *inter alia*: "The Independence of Ghana is meaningless unless it is linked up with the total liberation of the African Continent".<sup>7</sup> In fact, three years after Ghana's independence, Nkrumah had not toned down his rhetorical assertions in support of African liberation. In a speech at Ghana's Parliament on December 16, 1959, he asserted: "Africa is marching forward to freedom and no power on earth can halt her now".<sup>8</sup> In addition to the foregoing verbal support, Nkrumah also lent Ghana's material, moral and spiritual support to the various liberation movements, most of which had their headquarters based in Ghana. Tanzania's ex-President Julius Nyerere, too, offered a lot of support to several of the liberation movements, many of which had offices in Tanzania. Kenya's late President Jomo Kenyatta, Dr. W.E.B. DuBois, Nkrumah and others were among the leading coordinators of the 1945 Pan-African Congress in Manchester, Great Britain. Also, since then, they actively supported African liberation activities publicly. However, the Kenyan leader, unlike Nkrumah and Nyerere, did not go out openly to wage a revolutionary banner in support of Africa's various liberation movements either on Kenyan soil or with Kenyan resources.<sup>9</sup> Even his support for the Kenya-based Mau-Mau movement was so negligible and so much in doubt that his April 8, 1953 conviction by a pro-British criminal court in Kenya, which sentenced him to a seven-year jail term, was questioned by real leaders of the anti-British Mau-Mau movement. Many Kenyan nationalist leaders, including the late Oginga Odinga, Tom Mboya and others spoke out openly against the imprisonment of Kenyatta as well because, at the time, he was neither a card-carrying member or a very active supporter of the Mau-Mau movement.<sup>10</sup> In fact, Kenya's major political party, the Kenya African National Union (KANU) refused "to form a government despite its electoral victory until Kenyatta was released [from detention]."<sup>11</sup>

However, the three nationalist leaders—Kenyatta, Nkrumah and Nyerere—sincerely wanted to see the continent of Africa liberated from colonial rule in order for the continent's leaders to end what the Ghanaian leader saw as balkanisation, about which he wrote the following:

Africa is clearly fragmented into too many small, uneconomic and non-viable States, many of whom are having a very hard struggle to survive...so long as we remain balkanised, regionally or territorially, we shall be at the mercy of colonialism and imperialism.<sup>12</sup>

In fact, the desire of the three leaders to see continental unity echoed in their respective national governance and leadership. Believing in the adage that charity begins at home, all the three post-colonial political leaders made sure that their own countries enjoyed unity before talking about continental unity. In Kenya, for example, the opposition Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) (just like the opposition elements in Ghana and Tanzania) was very much interested in a confederacy, whereby regional autonomy would be guaranteed. However, Kenyatta's KANU government "quickly moved to centralize the state apparatus: regionalism was abolished in 1964; a republican constitution was promulgated, followed by the abolition of the senate two years later. The new ruling class gradually consolidated immense power in the hands of the [Kenyan] executive..."<sup>13</sup>

In pre-independent Ghana (then called the Gold Coast), the opposition National Liberation Movement (NLM) and its leaders, led by then Dr. K.A. Busia and Dr. J. B. Danquah, the distinguished jurist, wanted a form of federation in a country of less than ten million people. To subvert this divisive and sectional political desire, Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP) government sought constitutional advice from the British government, for which Sir Frederick Bourne, with a lot of constitutional expertise in India and Pakistan, was sent to the then Gold Coast on September 26, 1954.<sup>14</sup> Nkrumah wrote about Sir Frederick's work in the following words:

The Constitutional Adviser completed his work and reported to the Governor on 17th December. In this Report he recommended the devolution of certain powers and functions to Regional Assemblies which would be empowered to plan their own developments and to apply for grants-in-aid from the Government...The regional assemblies would have no power to levy taxation and on all constitutional and traditional matters which concerned a particular Region, the traditional Council and appropriate Regional Assembly would be consulted.<sup>15</sup>

All of the foregoing maneuvering, on Nkrumah's part, was to ensure that his country would remain a united entity as it awaited independence from the British. As he protested to the British authorities, Nkrumah felt that his NLM opponents wanted to undermine stability and democracy by asking for a federal form of governance, adding: "I should like to emphasize, that nothing must be done to weaken the cause of democracy by reducing the status of our freely-elected Legislative Assembly through giving greater weight to the words of a minority as opposed to the decisions of the Assembly..."<sup>16</sup> In the end, Ghana achieved its independence and remained a united nation.



For Tanzania, in 1964, matters reached a heated political hiatus when Dr. Nyerere, as the prime minister, realized that if unity were not achieved for the nation and its neighbours, there could be no progress after independence. In fact, in that year, a *coup d'état* had ended the reign of the Sultanate in Zanzibar. Then, on mainland Tanganyika—ruled by Nyerere—there had been a mutiny in a section of the army on January 20, 1964, which had to be put down by force with the help of Brigadier Patrick S. Douglas, the British Commander of the Tanganyika Rifles Company. Speedily, Nyerere, in search of lasting peace through unity, announced on April 23, that year, that “the leaders of Tanganyika and Zanzibar had signed articles for the union of the nation of the nations. The new nation was named Tanzania, with Nyerere as its first president, and [Sheik] Karume as his deputy.”<sup>17</sup>

Although there was successful mobilization of the African masses for the liberation of the continent, the crucial fact was the respective approaches or tactics of these three leaders, particularly Nkrumah and Nyerere, both of whom were operating within the context of socialism. That was why, at the 1964 OAU annual meeting in Cairo, Nkrumah and Nyerere had a hectic confrontation when African unity was discussed since—as stated briefly above—they exhibited fundamental differences. As the radical African leaders, Nkrumah, Guinean late President Sekou Toure, Malian late President Modibo Keita and others, wanted to see African unity advance quickly, while Nyerere and other moderate African leaders wanted it to be done at a slower pace, adding that without a step-by-step approach to it, African unity seemed to be doomed.<sup>18</sup>

In spite of the differences in approach or style in the efforts of African leaders to promote African unity, it is an undeniable fact that Kenyatta, Nkrumah and Nyerere never lost their interests in pan-Africanism. In fact, it was within the context of Pan-Africanism that Nkrumah made his 1957 pronouncement, which called for his country's independence to become a springboard for the total decolonization of the continent. Most certainly, it is believed that Nkrumah's tough stance on the decolonization of Africa might have prompted the then British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, in speaking to the South African Parliament in February 1960, to state unequivocally that “the wind of change is blowing through this Continent.”<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, after attaining independence, many countries of Africa were yelling for so much political autonomy that they quickly opted for a republican status: Ghana had attained that status in 1960, but Kenya did it in 1964, while Tanzania and several other nations followed that route.

The post-independent African leaders were correct in their desire to correct centuries of wrongs. In fact, a heated discussion with Stuart Cloete, a white South African writer, Zimbabwean nationalist leader, Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole, was on target when he denied Cloete's claim: "Let us have no illusions, the black man hates the white. Above all he hates him for being white, because this is something he can never be."<sup>20</sup> Sithole, who played a very active role in Zimbabwean independence struggles, replied that nothing could be further from the truth, adding:

On a purely human basis the African accepts the white man. In the majority of cases it is the white man who does not accept the African. One of the reasons why the white man fears granting the African full independence is that the African may use [it] against the white man the hateful methods he has seen the white man use against the African. What the African hates in the white man is his unfair social, economic, political, and educational discriminatory practices which relegate the African to second- or third-rate citizenship in the land of his birth...<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, the political kingdom, as Nkrumah espoused, was achieved by many nations of Africa but, without economic independence, most of these nations became like birds in gilded cages: they had wings but they could not fly. For, in the heat of the struggles for independence, "African nationalists... did not seem to take the economic emancipation of their people very seriously."<sup>22</sup> Sadly, the economic plight of the decolonized nations of Africa and their people were very similar in their desire to the circumstances of Blacks in Africa, especially as "Black leaders in Africa and America fought relentless for political inclusion but without economic power. Therefore, their people have continued to be at the mercy of forces that they considered to be their oppressors: the European colonialists and white America."<sup>23</sup>

Winning political freedom without economic salvation in many African countries placed Nkrumah and many of his post-colonial indigenous leaders in very precarious situations. Professor Ronald Walters aptly summed it up in discussing Nyerere and Nkrumah within the purview of African-America's Pan-Africanist interests. He noted that one of the persistent influences from Africa was the then Tanzanian President Nyerere, "who, during the decade of the 1960s, maintained his Pan-Africanist principles as head of the government of Tanzania, long after Nkrumah had passed from the scene in Ghana and after the Pan-African Movement of East and central Africa had failed."<sup>24</sup> He added that to African-American Pan-Africanists, Nyerere "was a beacon of light in Africa, and when his government in 1967 released a Declaration on Self-Reliance Arusha (known as the 'Arusha Declaration') and its companion statement on education, Education for Self-Reliance, the effect was instant and pervasive."<sup>25</sup>

With socialist inclinations like Nkrumah, Dr. Nyerere's document, as explained by Professor Walters, "set out essentially a socialist direction that would govern those active in the party and especially those who would assume positions of leadership in the government of Tanzania."<sup>26</sup> After Nyerere retired gracefully from Tanzania's leadership on July 31, 1995, his critics claimed that he failed in his socialist experiment, a contention that he has honestly and painfully accepted. While Kenyatta abandoned the little socialist interests that he seemed to have acquired from his relationship with George Padmore, the West Indian apostle and propagator of Pan-Africanism, Nkrumah, on the other hand, was like Nyerere. However, he did mean well in thinking that he could evenly share Ghana's national cake and natural resources through socialism. Therefore, the Ghanaian leader minced no words when, in his published 1957 memoirs, Nkrumah wrote: "Today, I am a non-denominational Christian and a Marxist socialist and I have not found any contradiction between the two."<sup>27</sup>

In all instances, critics are quick to point out that ideologically and economically, Nkrumah and Nyerere failed. Yet, within the context of self-empowerment of Africa's future leadership, both leaders—like Kenyatta, with his minimal economic successes—paved the way for current leaders to continue from where they left off. In describing Nkrumah's experiment in Ghana as a myth in his book, *A Myth Is Broken* (1968), retired Major-General A.K. Ocran, one of Ghana's 1966 *coup d'état* leaders, offered some reasons that prompted his fellow soldiers to step into politics in Africa generally. He wrote, "Another pattern has been unfolding in contemporary Africa: as state [or country] after State has tottered and floundered, it has been the military which has stepped in, when all else seemed to have failed, to save these states [nations] from utter destruction."<sup>28</sup> To many observers, these characterizations are not fair to the genuinely progressive and patriotic leadership that Nkrumah and many other deposed leaders gave from the time of independence to the years of their overthrow.

## CONCLUSION

In retrospect, one can conclude impartially that Kenyatta, Nkrumah and Nyerere succeeded in empowering their people in a variety of ways and, in doing so, helped to lay the foundation for part of Africa's durable security for the future. Also, their policies, initially, promoted economic development, national growth and security, as they felt that through unity, Africa would be stronger. For example, in Tanzania, between 1961 and 1964, there were only 17 African medical doctors serving the entire Tanzanian (earlier called Tanganyika) nation. Through Nyerere's 1964-1969 five-year development plan, by 1980, there were 598 of such doctors serving only Tanzania's urban areas and 547 serving rural areas of the country.<sup>29</sup> It was a similar situation

with the shortage of nurses, teachers and other professionals at Tanzanian independence. In Kenya and Ghana, similar growths were experienced, hence it is not fair to conclude that the seeming difficulties that Kenya, Ghana and Tanzania, (particularly the last two nations), experienced should be lumped into a measure of failure on the part of these nations' first elected indigenous leaders. In fact, the latter had little or nothing to serve as existing yardsticks to measure their actions.

The desire of Kenyatta, Nkrumah and Nyerere to see a strong and secure Africa prompted them to collaborate in establishing the Organization of African Unity (OAU). To them, it is up to the future generation to continue their pioneering work, if Africa, as a continent, is to see prosperity and security in spite of the fact that the three leaders are now deceased.

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## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> A Revised Version of a Research Paper Presented by A. B. Assensoh, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Afro-American Studies, Indiana University-Bloomington, USA at the 16th Annual Pan-African Studies Conference of Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Indiana, April 9-10, 1999.
- <sup>2</sup> Assensoh & Alex-Assensoh, 1998:28; Nkrumah 1963:108; 1967:38.
- <sup>3</sup> Assensoh & Alex-Assensoh 1998:38; Nkrumah 1963:108; 1967:38.
- <sup>4</sup> Assensoh 1998:3.
- <sup>5</sup> Assensoh 1998:3.
- <sup>6</sup> Assensoh 1998:4.
- <sup>7</sup> Assensoh 1998:1; Nkrumah 1980:77.
- <sup>8</sup> Nkrumah 1967:1.
- <sup>9</sup> Assensoh 1998:34.
- <sup>10</sup> Assensoh 1998:36.
- <sup>11</sup> Gifford and Louis 1988:416.
- <sup>12</sup> Nkrumah 1965; 1964.
- <sup>13</sup> Gifford and Louis 1988:416.
- <sup>14</sup> Nkrumah 1957:240-243.
- <sup>15</sup> Nkrumah 1957:243-244.
- <sup>16</sup> Nkrumah 1957:245.
- <sup>17</sup> Assensoh 1998:122.
- <sup>18</sup> Assensoh 1998:3-4.
- <sup>19</sup> Gifford and Louis 1988:48.
- <sup>20</sup> Basil Davidson 1967:54.
- <sup>21</sup> Davidson 1967:55.
- <sup>22</sup> Assensoh and Alex-Assensoh 1998:28.
- <sup>23</sup> Assensoh and Alex-Assensoh 1998:28.
- <sup>24</sup> Walters 1997:64.
- <sup>25</sup> Walters, *ibid.*:64-65.
- <sup>26</sup> Walters, *ibid.*:65.
- <sup>27</sup> Nkrumah 1957: 2.
- <sup>28</sup> Ocran 1968:4-5.
- <sup>29</sup> Assensoh 1998:135-137.

# TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION: HAZE POLLUTION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

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## INTRODUCTION

The transboundary potential of pollution demonstrates that environmental problems are not simply a problem for domestic policies to tackle, but also involve regional and multilateral policies, as well as international organisations. These transboundary environmental complications brought on by pollution exhibit the mutual dependency inherent in the globalisation process. Laferriere (1994) argued that the globalisation of environmental problems is due to the transboundary nature of pollution as well as to the crises of depletion and reliance on co-operative mechanisms for problem solving.<sup>1</sup> As such, the globalisation of environmental problems challenges the ability of developing countries to take remedial action. Bryant and Bailey (1997) contended that globalisation has resulted in a greater general erosion of the ability of states in the Third World to dictate the pace and nature of economic development, and by extension, to control the extent of environmental conservation.<sup>2</sup>

Hurrell *et al.* (1992) and Benedick (1991) stated that developing countries have come to accept that environmental degradation within states is a matter of legitimate interest to the outside world, being both of international concern and of common concern to humankind. Many originally regional or local

environmental problems have grown in scale and are having broader international repercussions. The growth in scale undermines the economic base and social fabric of weak and poor states and thus exacerbates intra or inter-state tensions and conflicts. This can however, be effectively managed with the co-operation of all countries. To sum it up, the environmental crisis in developing countries is of widespread international concern, and the only way to improve the situation is to encourage the co-operation of all countries, globally.<sup>3</sup>

Lohani (1986) classified environmental problems as global, regional or local, based on their magnitude.<sup>4</sup> He further divided global problems into 2 broad types, depending on the remedy required. The first type involves deforestation and desertification, which are of global concern, but which must be addressed by countries individually. The second type, such as acid rain and ozone layer depletion demand a concerted effort from all countries. He believed that regional problems, which result from biophysical linkages among a group of countries, have little bearing and effect beyond the group of countries. An example of a biophysical linkage is river basin development. According to Lohani, regional issues are more significant and are accorded greater consideration in the context of developing countries.

## INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

Environmental degradation at the local level has been occurring for centuries, whereas global environmental problems surfaced only at the turn of the century. International co-operation to abate and mitigate global environmental problems was unheard of until recently. Even now, the actual result is far from satisfactory, although the record of organised international co-operation to protect the environment is superficially impressive. Tangible results of international environmental co-operation, fall far behind the destructive advance of deforestation, environmental contamination, the extinction of species and unique ecosystems, and the seemingly inexorable demands of human populations upon the capabilities of the environment for self-renewal (Caldwell, 1992).<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, what is unique and mystifying, is the ability of nations to co-operate to protect the global environment whilst it may complicate their domestic environmental management, may erode their sovereignty, diminish their financial funds and drain their personnel resources.

Caldwell (1988) stated that disposition and ability of national governments to make and honour agreements are fundamental for international co-operation.<sup>6</sup> This is an important issue since she believed that governments are being asked to co-operate in the implementation of international agreements in which national interests may be regarded as unclear or as adversely affected by a proposal. Hence, she said that perceived differences in national interests are the primary obstacle to all international co-operation.



As Barret (1991) indicated, co-operation does indeed take place and is often codified in international agreements.<sup>7</sup> Although some of these are woefully ineffective, such as the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (1946), others, such as the Montreal Protocol on Substances That Deplete the Ozone Layer (1987) have achieved quite impressive results.

Wallace (1984) stated that international co-operation is qualitatively different from policy-making within states.<sup>8</sup> She stressed that states continue to preserve their sovereignty, meaning that power rests largely with national governments, and the implementation of international agreements is primarily dependent on national agencies. However, it has been suggested that by consenting to the provisions in the agreements and by ratifying the agreements, individual country Parties actually release part of their sovereignty to the international community. Nonetheless, Johnston, cited in Bryant and Bailey (1997), reiterated the fact that the general unwillingness of states to surrender sovereignty remains a perennial obstacle to conflict resolution of environmental management issues on a global scale.

According to Wallace (1984), international co-operation is characterised by heterogeneity where the participants are diverse culturally, politically and economically. Because of their diverse backgrounds, negotiators often interpret agreements differently from others and hold different opinions of their implementation based on their own capabilities to implement. Hence, Wallace concluded that the participants' expectations of what is desirable or possible as the product of the agreement differ markedly from their interpretations of their commitment to implement. Most environmental agreements seem to provide for such diversity by displaying some form of flexibility. As a result, the implementation measures are not strictly dictated by the agreement but often left to the initiatives of the national governments that are given the flexibility to devise according to their own technological and financial capability.

In some cases, it is the lack of capability to implement the agreement that becomes the reason for a government not to co-operate. Here, the country might want to stall the implementation through negotiation by highlighting its shortfalls. For instance, in the implementation of Montreal Protocol (MP), developing countries succeeded in achieving a 10-year grace period in the ODSs phase out. This situation was observed by Keohane and Nye in Wallace (1984) who believed that governments sometimes engage in international co-operation on specific policy issues because they wish to change what other governments do. They hope to mould the international attitude towards the environment in a particular way. Sometimes their co-operation is seen as a defensive reaction to international developments, which they neither control nor fully understand.

Localised environmental problems, if not addressed at an early stage, will eventually grow into regional and global problems. Individually, deforestation activity may not harm the international community. However, collectively it might result in the release of substantial amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and consequently contribute to the overall warming of the earth. On the other hand, the transboundary nature of pollution, such as acid rain and haze will, without doubt, have an impact on neighbouring countries. According to Carroll (1988), a transboundary environmental problem arises when all or more of the benefits of any pollution-emitting activity accrue to one nation, while all or most of the costs of that activity accrue to the nation across the border. He further added that international environmental diplomacy represents an attempt to resolve such transboundary or transnational environmental problems to the satisfaction of the governments concerned.

Carroll's view is supported by a case known as the Trail Smelter Arbitration, between Canada and the USA, in 1938. The case was brought by the USA, which claimed compensation for the fumes (pollution) from copper smelter factories in Canada. This demonstrated the effect of the transboundary nature of pollution on the economy and health of countries affected by it. On a wider scale, forest fires in Indonesia in 1994, 1997 and 1998 created so much haze that shrouded not only the local area but also areas in neighbouring Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Brunei Darussalam, causing grave economic and health problems. Troubled by this, the international community pursued co-operation at the international level, since these environmental problems were no longer confined within the domains of national boundaries.

Charnovitz (1994) pointed out that it had long been recognised that international co-operation is essential to solve many environmental problems.<sup>9</sup> This is because many environmental problems cross national boundaries or involve areas beyond the regulatory authority of any one country. The identification of global environmental problems has not only increased the urgency for nations to act concertedly because they are potentially serious, but it has also been recognised that they are problems that can only be dealt with by global co-operation (Garner, 1996).<sup>10</sup>

## **ASEAN CO-OPERATION TO ADDRESS THE HAZE PROBLEM**

The recent haze problem in the South East Asia is one example of transboundary environmental pollution. The haze developed from the land and forest fires in Sumatra and Kalimantan. It became the most serious environmental problem ever faced by the ASEAN member countries, in particular, Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore. Ironically, this is in fact not a new phenomenon. Uriarte (1998) pointed out that the haze episodes from forest and land fires have occurred over the last fifteen

years with increasing acreage of affected forest each year: in 1987 (49,000 ha), in 1991 (119,000 ha), in 1994 (162,000 ha) and in 1997 (over 300,000 ha). Some sources even indicated that during the 1997 episode, between 800,000 and 4.5 million ha of forests and bushes in Sumatra and Kalimantan were burnt. Thick smoke and smog had spread across the skies of neighbouring countries, lingering for several weeks.

In this regard, the ASEAN region, as early as 1990, has acknowledged the need to co-operate on transboundary pollution. The Kuala Lumpur Accord on Environment and Development was adopted by the ASEAN Ministers on 19 June 1990, which called for *inter alia* effort towards the harmonisation of transboundary pollution prevention and abatement practices.

The Singapore declaration, which was formulated at the conclusion of 4th Meeting of the ASEAN Heads of Government in January 1992, stated that ASEAN member countries should continue to enhance environmental co-operation, particularly on the issue of transboundary pollution and [...] forest fires [...].

The need for co-operation to address the haze issue was reiterated within the Singapore Resolution on Environment, which was issued at the end of the 5th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment, on 17-18 February 1992. Here, the ASEAN Ministers for the Environment agreed to harmonise policy directions and to step up on operational and technical co-operation on transboundary air. They also agreed to undertake, develop and implement specific programmes relating to haze caused by forest fires.

The first informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in Kuching, Sarawak on the 21st October 1994, marked the beginning of a more visible effort by the ASEAN member countries to address the continuous problem of haze. Here the ministers agreed to enhance co-operation to manage natural resources and control transboundary pollution within ASEAN, to develop an early warning and response system and to improve the capacity of member countries in these areas.

As a follow up from the decision made in Kuching, Malaysia hosted the ASEAN Meeting on the Management of Transboundary Pollution in June 1995. The Ministers agreed to an ASEAN Co operation Plan on Transboundary Pollution. The Plan addresses three programme areas: transboundary atmospheric pollution, ship-borne pollution and transmovement of hazardous wastes. The Plan is very significant, based on the fact that it laid down concrete measures and activities to be taken by individual countries. More importantly, it identified the national focal points, which deal with atmospheric pollution. This arrangement enables immediate and effective action to be taken when the region is again faced with atmospheric pollution, in particular, haze pollution.

The momentum for greater co-operation gathers speed rapidly because of the magnitude of the impact the 1997 haze had on the health and economy of four countries (Brunei, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia). A special ministerial meeting called the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Haze (AMMH) met in Singapore, in December 1997, specifically to address the haze problem. The meeting adopted the Regional Haze Action Plan (RHAP). The main objectives are to prevent land and forest fires through better management policies and enforcement; to establish operational mechanisms to monitor land and forest fires; and to strengthen regional land and forest fire-fighting capabilities and other mitigation measures. The meeting concluded that the RHAP should focus on preventive measures, regional monitoring mechanisms and fire-fighting capabilities to ensure its effective implementation. The RHAP entrusted Malaysia with the task of co-ordinating the implementation of preventive measures, while Singapore was to co-ordinate the region's early warning and monitoring systems used to detect the outbreak of land and forest fires. Singapore was also to provide the necessary data to support enforcement activities. Indonesia was entrusted with the task of co-ordinating the implementation of various measures to strengthen national and regional fire fighting capabilities. Nonetheless, the RHAP stipulated that each ASEAN country develop their own National Plan that encapsulates their respective policies and strategies, in order to prevent and mitigate land and forest fires. The RHAP further evolved with the formation of two Sub-Regional Fire-fighting Arrangements (SRFA); one for Kalimantan (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia and Malaysia) and another for Sumatra (Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore). The Haze Technical Task Force was also formed to monitor the implementation of the RHAP.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HAZE POLLUTION

The haze affected the health, economies and environment of the countries 'trapped' under its thick, suffocating fume. The incidence of respiratory-related diseases seemed to have increased with the severity of the haze. There were also studies that suggested that the haze had had an adverse impact on the harvest of certain crops such as oil palm and certain vegetables, which had produce a lower yield. During the height of the haze incident, the number of flights out of and into the affected countries were reduced due to poor visibility. Information on the haze situation was quickly transmitted throughout the globe, which subsequently affected the flow of tourists into the region. In addition, the fire that caused the haze destroyed the forest, which resulted in the loss of a tremendous amount of precious biological resources, besides the release of carbon dioxide, and other greenhouse gases, which contribute to global warming.

The impact of the haze on regional health, economy and the environment has always been the subject of many studies. However, the significance of the haze on the international relations has been neglected.

Firstly, the haze problem in Southeast Asia is a globalized environmental problem. Most of the land and forest fires, which contributed to the haze phenomenon, originated in Kalimantan and Sumatra. What started as a local environmental problem in Indonesia gradually affected her neighbours, that is, Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Singapore. The magnitude of the problem was so great that Indonesia was not able to tackle it alone. She required the assistance and co-operation of neighbouring nations, as well as of the international community. In fact, at the United Nations, Malaysia had voiced the need for international support to mitigate this problem. The Malaysian Foreign Minister, during the 49th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, addressed the Southeast Asian haze issue. He declared that "at the Rio-Summit, the developed countries declared that the tropical forests belong to the whole world [...] if indeed the tropical forest is the heritage of mankind, the responsibility for its protection must necessarily be collective [...]"<sup>11</sup> (Abdullah Badawi, 1994).

The international community did assist either bilaterally or through international organisations such as the United Nations Environmental Programme. However, the significance of the haze to the study of international relations is the ability of the ASEAN member countries to forge co-operation without touching on the sensitive issues of sovereignty and the sacred tradition of non-interference. This is an important aspect of international co-operation. As stated by Caldwell (1988) earlier, the disposition and ability of national governments to make and honour agreements are fundamental for international co-operation and the perceived difference in national interests is the primary obstacle to all international co-operation.

It can be seen that until now, there is no agreement being developed to legally bind the ASEAN member countries to be responsible for the future occurrences of haze. Nonetheless, the mechanism for soliciting co-operation from ASEAN member countries, and in particular from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, is established through the formation of the RHAP and monitored by the HTTF. Although the Plan is not legally binding, it nevertheless has gone through tedious processes of discussions and negotiations, illustrating the sensitivity of the issue at hand. The Plan which provides detail operational mechanisms was only adopted in 1997, when the haze situation became serious, indicative of the desperate situation faced by these countries. Prior to the Plan, since 1990, the member countries were satisfied with only issuing statements calling for action to address the haze problem. Could the decision to adopt and implement the Plan be seen as a sign that the ASEAN member countries are no longer sensitive to the notion of sovereignty and are willing to overlook the sacred tradition of non-interference?

Before providing the answer to this question, we must be clear that the haze incidence that affected some countries in the region resulted from the land and forest fires within another country. Hence, does the implementation

of the Plan mean that there is an element of external intervention at the national and local level? Not quite; this "intervention" never occurred. All the Plan did was to facilitate the movement of resources from one ASEAN member country to another, in order to mitigate the haze problem. The role of neighbouring countries was limited to co-ordination only. The nearest equivalent to an "intervention" was when Malaysia sent her fire fighters to help Indonesia contain the forest fires. Other than this, all other provisions of the RHAP are supposed to be carried out by each country's own institutional and organisational capability. Nonetheless, through the HTTF, Indonesia's neighbours provided the assistance needed to mitigate the land and forest fires, which have been the sources of the haze.

The Indonesian State Minister for the Environment recognised the immense problem at hand. Recently, he stated that "Indonesia, because of its vast landmass had difficulty in taking preventive measures against forest fires. We can do with more helicopters to get to the fire sites quickly and we would like to have teams ready all-year-round to rush to these areas, but the remoteness of these areas makes it difficult. We intend to overcome these problems with the assistance of ASEAN members". (NST, 5/4/2000).<sup>12</sup> The inability of Indonesia to independently handle the haze problem reflects the very nature of globalised environmental problems. The situation described by the Indonesian Minister also supports the argument made by Laferriere (1994) that the transboundary nature of pollution forces affected countries to rely on co-operative mechanisms for problem solving.

In this regard, the co-operative mechanism that was to be in place needed to take into consideration the non-interference principle held by the ASEAN member countries. The approaches taken by the member countries to solve the haze problem have shown that subtle co-operation among the ASEAN member countries can still achieve the objective of mutual benefit and yet, at the same time, keep the sacred tradition of non-interference intact. Although these arrangements have worked quite well to contain the haze problem, there are steps to channel such arrangements into a legally binding commitment. For example, the formulation of an ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution could be one such legally binding commitment.

There are, however, problems associated with such agreements. In July 1985, ASEAN member countries signed the ASEAN Agreement on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. However, the Agreement, until today, has yet to be implemented. Another regional agreement, which is related to transboundary air pollution, is the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP). The LRTAP was adopted in 1979 to address air pollution in Europe. The LRTAP is a framework convention and its sets no numerical goals, limits, timetable for abatement measures or enforcement provisions. Commitments are established in weak language. It created a framework for co-operation and for development of pollution control measures. Six protocols have been established under the Convention.

One for instance, is related to financing the co-operative programmes for monitoring and evaluation. Such arrangements, as argued by Young (1994) and Princen (1996), have been cited in the Environment Working Group, 2000. International environmental regimes such as those established under the provisions of the 1979 Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution (LTRAP) and its subsequent protocols are properly understood as systems of rights, rules, and relationships designed to bring order into the interactions of sovereign authorities, rather than as systems of property rights intended to bring order into the interactions of property owners. Therefore, can the proposed ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (AGTHP) become a reality?

In this regard, the formulation of the AGTHP can only be visualised if intervention in the area of environmental problems is treated differently from other politically related subjects and therefore not perceived as interference. As reiterated by Surin, the Thai Foreign Minister, the ASEAN policy of non-interference will remain, but issues with a potential to "spillover" to neighbouring countries have to be redefined as they are no longer "exclusively domestic" (STAR, 23 July 2000).<sup>13</sup> He added that the ASEAN countries have to decide, with sincerity, candour and full commitment, to co-operate among themselves, in order to make the region more effective, resilient, stable and confident in solving problems of this nature.

Regrettably, environmental problems are still approached from a 'sovereignty' angle; the notion of sovereignty, which forms the basis of the non-interference principle upheld by the ASEAN member countries, gets in the way of collective problem-solving methods when dealing with natural resources (as in the haze issue). In this case, intervention to provide support and assistance must be treated very cautiously and should not be construed otherwise. Nonetheless whatever precaution that each member country takes, there are bound to be differences in perception, within each country, over the support given by other member countries. As cited by Hogwood and Gunn (1984) perception is defined as a highly subjective process, and, it therefore follows that different individuals, groups or interested parties may perceive the same stimulus differently through a different conceptual basis. Hence, as Carrol (1988) argued, perception equals reality in the context of politics and diplomacy. As such, it will take great amount of discussion and negotiation among the ASEAN member countries to finally single out environmental problems as a subject devoid of political interest.

## CONCLUSION

The haze problem in South East Asia has remarkably exposed the spirit of solidarity amongst the ASEAN member countries when faced with a common problem. Although the mechanism of co-operation took time to

materialize in the form of the RHAP, it nevertheless, reflected that the ASEAN member countries are "willing" to keep aside the sacred entity of "sovereignty" and the non-interference tradition, to co-operate for their common welfare. The proposed Agreement on Haze, which would bind the ASEAN member countries legally, might come into existence earlier if it is in the form of a framework agreement like those of the ASEAN Agreement on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and the LRTAP. Then again, if the existing arrangements to address the haze problem worked well, the member countries might not want to proceed with an agreement, which would legally bind them and expose the contentious issue of the "non-interference" tradition. Whatever it is, inter-relationship between ASEAN member countries need to be reviewed vis-à-vis environmental conservation and protection, because environmental issues have become global issues.

### NOTES

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- <sup>11</sup> Abdullah Badawi (1994), Statement at the 49th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, 1994. Foreign Minister of Malaysia.
- <sup>12</sup> The *New Straits Times* (5/4/2000) "Haze: Indonesia names four firms".
- <sup>13</sup> The STAR, (23/7/2000), "Surin: Some issues need to be reviewed".



# IN SEARCH OF PROGRESS AND SECURITY FOR AFRICAN WOMEN IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM: A HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY OVERVIEW<sup>1</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION

**T**his study is to underscore the sad and insecure multi-faceted circumstances in which African women vastly find themselves today. This is in spite of the fact that most of the nations of Africa are independent from foreign domination and, in the words of the late President Kwame Nkrumah, in spite of Africans having the right "to govern or misgovern themselves".<sup>2</sup>

It is also part of the study's objective to point out some of the gains that African women have made-even if limitedly-in the post-colonial era. Additionally, the prognosis for the future would include suggestions for the sustainable light that, in the quoted editorial, most of these women want to see.<sup>3</sup> This is imperative, as it is the consensus of many women, that the advent of independence has meant more woes for them than what

they experienced in colonial times, as pointed out in November 1994 by Uganda's Merab Kiremire, at the time, a consultant at the Finnish International Development Agency (FINNIDA).

In her paper, presented at a workshop on "Women, Children and Conflict in Africa", at the 1994 Dákar Regional Preparatory Conference, Kiremire, *inter alia*, lamented:

Even though African women had access to decision making in some indigenous African communities, this seemed to cease with the coming of African states' independence. Post-independence governance hardly included women, as almost all parliaments and cabinets were predominantly male. A clear demonstration of this unfortunate omission is seen at the first Organization of African Unity summit, which was attended by an all-male Heads of State delegation. Although the situation has slightly changed since 1963, according to a study commissioned by the Netherlands in Lusaka in 1993, only 2 countries, Mozambique and Seychelles, had more than 15% female parliamentary representation.<sup>4</sup>

Statistically, it is further demonstrated that it was only after 1993 that the first African women were elected as Prime Ministers and, sadly, one of the two was soon assassinated. However, Botswana had been one of the exceptional African countries, where a woman has held the high profile position of Foreign Minister, while perfunctorily Uganda appointed Africa's first substantive female Vice President in November 1994. Unfortunately, only four countries on the continent—namely Burkina Faso, Burundi, Senegal, and Tanzania—have achieved at least 10% of ministerial level positions.<sup>5</sup> The Mozambican example, referred to in Kiremire's 1995 statement above, was both serious and apt, because, at the time of President Samora Machel's death in a plane crash on October 20, 1986, Mrs. Graca Machel, as Mozambique's First Lady, was also her country's first Education Minister, a position she held by virtue of her competence, qualifications and an active member of the ruling Frelimo liberation movement.<sup>6</sup>

West Africans may argue that in the early radical post-independent regimes of Ghana's late President Kwame Nkrumah, Guinea's late President Sekou Toure and Mali's late President Modibo Keita (among a few others), women were seen as very useful players in the ensuing political game. In Ghana, for example, not only were market women mobilized in support of the socialist regime of Nkrumah, but also well-educated Ghanaian women were given prominent positions. One example is the appointment of Mrs. Susan Alhassan, who became the cabinet member responsible for social welfare activities. In retrospect, one may recall that the Social Welfare Ministry in Ghana later submitted the required legal memorandum which helped in creating

the Maintenance of Children law, by which the Ministry sought and received the legal sanction for fathers to help in maintaining their children.<sup>7</sup> In a radical departure from the norms of polygamy, whereby men often held the upper hand in marital affairs, the Convention People's Party regime of Nkrumah inserted in its 1962 Seven-Year Economic Development Program, the controversial assertion that the ruling political party and its leadership would promote equality between the sexes.<sup>8</sup>

Indeed, Nkrumah's willingness in offering high profile cabinet-level and partisan political party positions to several women of Ghana was in consonance with his contention that the very "degree of a country's revolutionary awareness may be measured by the political maturity of its women."<sup>9</sup> As a socialist, Nkrumah's words were a paraphrase of what an earlier writer has explained as coming from a similar statement made by the Utopian socialist of France, Charles Fourier, who lived from 1772 to 1837.<sup>10</sup>

Several initial meaningful efforts were made by some leaders in Africa to help bridge the yawning gap between men and women in public affairs and national leadership. However, this study adds on more information, by analyzing all of the relevant factors, from primary and secondary extant sources. It suggests further avenues that can help to solve the conspicuous dearth and limitations in female representation in African governance today, as well to limit the abuses they undergo as we approach the new millennium.

## DOCUMENTED PLIGHT OF AFRICAN WOMEN: AS REFUGEES AND POLITICAL PARIAHS

If African male leaders were the ones who were gang raped by marauding soldiers, if they had to watch their children suck at their breasts till there was nothing left then lay down to die, if their daughters were to the ones who had to sleep with [some] peace keepers for a bar of soap, wars would probably stop tomorrow. African women want a new investment in peace processes and justice for all they have suffered. They say the darkest hour comes before dawn. We have been through the darkest of times, and we owe it to ourselves and generations to come to work towards a sustainable light.<sup>11</sup>

The foregoing powerful but disturbing statement is culled from an *African Woman Magazine* editorial titled, "African Women and Conflict: The Trumpets of Peace versus the Drums of War".<sup>12</sup> It is not merely a powerful statement about the plight of many women in Africa today, but it is also a serious indictment of the inaction that the dominant male leadership on the continent

seem to exhibit in the face of some of the sexist, degrading and very helpless circumstances in which many of the members of the female citizenry continue to find themselves.

Also, the statement from *African Woman Magazine* was not an exaggeration. An October 1993 study of Somali women refugees in Kenya, published in *News from Africa Watch*, can confirm the specific plight of the Somalis in these words:

these women are being raped both because they are refugees and because they are women...it is their gender which motivates their attackers to target them—as women—and to do so with sex-specific form of abuse, rape.<sup>13</sup>

The sad situation, in these instances, is that while the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the staff of the commission have tried unsuccessfully to protect these African women refugees from sexual predators, indigenous African regimes and their leaders do very little to help ameliorate the situation. For example, in the sad plight of Africa's women refugees, *News From Africa Watch* reported that, in the case of Somali women refugees in Kenya, the local authorities

have not provided sufficient protection or security to the refugee camps, nor prosecuted a single individual—whether a soldier, police officer or bandit—responsible for the abuse [against women refugees]. Moreover, an official in the Office of the [Kenyan] President has callously accused Somali refugee women of fabricating the claims of rape to 'attract sympathy and give the government negative publicity', and has mistakenly claimed that the police have received no rape reports.<sup>14</sup>

Although these unfortunate and sad circumstances of the African women refugees have emerged out of civil war situations, there are still several instances of atrocities against women in places where there are no such wars. These situations are escalating because several countries in Africa either do not have appropriate protective laws in place or have refused to become signatories to existing international conventions which, specifically, protect women. A typical example is the cases of Sudan and Djibouti, both of which have, reportedly, not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. It is also on record that the two African nations have refused to sign the 1967 Protocol on Refugees, through which both male and female refugees receive adequate protection.

As it is widely known, such male African writers as Kenya's Professor Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Nigerian Nobel Literature Laureate Wole Soyinka, and Professor Jack Mapanje of Malawi, among others, have on varied occasions been subjected to arrests and detentions without trial in their respective nations in Africa. Ngugi discussed his own plight in *Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary* (1981), and Soyinka's fate in civil war Nigeria was recorded in *The Man Died*. Mapanje too celebrated his detention and release under Kamuzu Banda's Malawi in a poetic volume. On the surface, it seems as if, mostly, African men suffer these political detentions, which have appropriately been termed by Ngugi as "a punitive act of physical and mental nature....an act of psychological terror".<sup>15</sup> Yet, wives, children and other family members of the detained men suffer deprivation of all sorts. In fact, in some countries, wives of men hiding from political arrests and detentions are seized as proxies until their men are captured.

Apart from going through these punitive and psychological sufferings because of the arrests or detentions of their husbands or loved ones, many of Africa's women suffer other forms of humiliation throughout the continent. They include female writers, as was the unfortunate plight of Egypt's Dr. el-Cede, whose literary works have either been censored or banned in her own country since the presidency of the late Anwar Sadat. In an interview, it was reported that since el-Cede found

the medical profession too commercial and narrow-minded, she turned to writing when she thought she would be more effective. Many of her books, including *The Hidden Face of Eve* and *Women at Point Zero*, sold well abroad but were banned in Egypt.<sup>16</sup>

In her own explanation, the Egyptian female writer told her readers:

Because I linked family and sexual oppression of women to international oppression, my books were banned. I find it extraordinary that I live in a society that can encourage pornography but opposes the analysis of the sexual oppression of women."<sup>17</sup>

As confirmed in the available literature, both the highly educated and the lower-educated African women can suffer at the hands of the politically powerful and armed persons anywhere on the continent. Mike Adjei, a Ghanaian journalist, has taken the time to document several of the abuses that occurred under the two military regimes of, now, elected President Jerry John Rawlings of Ghana. In *Death and Pain in Rawlings' Ghana: The Inside Story* (1993), Adjei offered the contrasting situation.

For example, Justice (Mrs.) Cecilia Koranteng Addow, a high court Judge of Ghana, was among the four Ghanaian citizens—three High Court Judges

and a retired officer of the Ghana Army, with the rank of a Major—who were singled out for abduction and murder in an execution-style, allegedly, because of the suspicion that they were opposed to the then military regime. The nursing mother was, on June 30, 1982 seized from her home by junior officers of the Ghana Armed Forces—reportedly in the company of the ruling military council, Mr. Joachim Amartey-Kwei—and, together with the three others, shot to death on the Accra Plains; their bodies were partly burned in order to disguise their identity.<sup>18</sup> For his alleged role in the murders, the ruling PNDC member Amartey-Kwei was arrested and later, executed.<sup>19</sup>

In contrast to the well-educated and highly placed women having their share of instant but unnecessary justice, market women in Ghana, who sold food and other societal needs, could also become casualties of military excesses. An example was Madam Larmiokor Adjebu, a 63-year old seller at Ghana's Kaneshie New Market, who was killed by two stray bullets meant to kill a young boy, who had challenged armed military men when they wanted him to sell his *domedo* (roast pork) at their controlled price. As Adjei reported, when Adjebu was hit by the bullets and she "fell, the soldiers left without attending to her and she subsequently bled to death. The [local] Kaneshie Police removed the dead body later."<sup>20</sup>

## THE GOOD OMEN FOR AFRICAN WOMEN IN DIPLOMACY

Professor Ali A. Mazrui and Alamin M. Mazrui, in their 1998 study, have offered very salient perspectives on gender issues. They have stated their opinion as, "African women have made their mark on African foreign services more firmly than on African Parliaments."<sup>21</sup> The main reason for this assertion, where African women are concerned, is that they tend to be interested in foreign languages, which are needed in the foreign services of the various countries. The Mazruis confirm this, as they wrote, "Competence in two European languages (Euro-bilingualism) is often a major credential for rapid promotion in the diplomatic service."<sup>22</sup>

It is very fascinating that Liberia led the way in the promotion of a woman to the highest levels of diplomacy. The Mazruis confirm that too, as they wrote that the African woman, who makes it diplomatically, does not necessarily have to be Euro-lingual, adding:

Indeed, it was not entirely accidental that the first African woman to be a major diplomatic success had the English language as her *mother tongue*. This was the Liberian woman, Angie Elizabeth Brooks [Angie Brooks-Randolph, when she married], who in 1969 became President of the United Nations General Assembly...<sup>23</sup>

Making a distinction that her gender had something to do with her diplomatic successes, including her position as Liberia's U.N. Ambassador at the time, Ms. Brooks-Randolph—who was also the first woman and African, to preside over the U.N. Trusteeship Council—reiterated, "I am proud of my continent, my country and my sex [gender]".<sup>24</sup> It is also on record that, in 1970, Idi Amin saw the wisdom in appointing Cambridge-educated Lawyer Elizabeth Bagaya, who happened to be known as Princess of Toro, as Uganda's Roving Ambassador, as well as Delegate to the United Nations and, later in the 1970s, as Uganda's Foreign Minister. Other Ugandan high-profile earlier diplomats were the country's German Ambassador Bernadette Olowo, Canada-based High Commissioner Anna Amailuk and then, later in the 1980s, the country's France-based Ambassador Freda Blick. Throughout eastern Africa, women distinguished themselves in a variety of ways. In Kenya, Margaret Kenyatta and Grace Ogot, the novelist, played roles in diplomacy. Among Zambia's high-profile women were Mrs. Mutumba Bull, who was a low-ranking cabinet minister, as well as a well-known scholar, and Alice Lenshina, the famous prophetess and leader of the Lumpa Church.<sup>25</sup>

In northern Africa, where Islam has sometimes been blamed for making the women apathetic to politics, it is still a fact that several women have led very visible lives, including Dr. el-Cede and former First Lady, Jehan Anwar Sadat of Egypt. As the Mazruis reported in their published study, among "conservative Muslim men in the Middle East, Mrs. Sadat's public posture and visibility were often a liability rather than an asset. But to many women in the Arab world, Mrs. Sadat became, at least for a while, a role model."<sup>26</sup> It is a fact, however, that in Muslim or northern Africa, Tunisia is considered a nation which has improved the lot of its women, including encouraging them to be in the professions, although women in most places of Africa are known to be hard-working entrepreneurs.

In fact, the late Mr. Diallo Telli, an accomplished male diplomat from Sekou Toure's Guinea, became the first Secretary-General of the OAU. Even though he was succeeded by only male African diplomats from Cameroon, Togo and, now, Tanzania, there was still the debate about "whether a woman Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) would come before or after the first woman president [or prime minister] of an African country".<sup>27</sup> The Mazruis offered the following lively report in their monumental work:

In July 1993, Africa took a step towards those goals. Two Francophone African countries chose women for Prime Ministers—the first female heads of government in post-colonial African history. Mrs. Sylvie Kinigi in Burundi and Ms. Agathe Uwilingiyimana in Rwanda, each country polarized ethically for so long between Hutu and Tutsi, took a momentous step toward narrowing the gap between genders.<sup>28</sup>

## CONCLUSION

To narrow the gap between genders—as advocated by many Africans, including the Mazruis—one has to take seriously Richard Sandbrook's admonition about true empowerment, as eloquently discussed by Professor Julius O. Ihonvbere. In his view, such an empowerment, for durable security and progress, should involve the transformation of the economic, social, psychological, political and legal circumstances of those who remain powerless, including women.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, Professor Ihonvbere expatiated further that empowerment includes access to educational institutions as well as the requisite minimum resources that one needs to sustain one's household.<sup>30</sup>

If so, then African women have been left outside the center stage of everything that it takes to bring about a meaningful empowerment that would include them. Towards that end, it is not an exaggeration to note that many women in several countries on the continent have been encouraged to be excellent marital partners but not to be scrupulously trained as professionals. Hence one can make the clarion call that the time has come for them to be visibly and actively included in the attainment of higher education, high-level, as well as skilled professions. Also, national and international banking institutions should open their doors to African women, who need financial support to start businesses and, where necessary, to finance their educational pursuits. In the past, the practice had been for husbands of such women to stand as sureties or guarantors for such loans.<sup>31</sup>

Diplomatically, many countries of Africa have been able to encourage the employment and promotion of their women. That is fine, although it is also necessary that in national governance, many more women should be "encouraged" to become forces to be reckoned with. In doing all of the foregoing, the continent's women would be able to make viable contributions to all aspects of its development and growth.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This study was presented at the 17th Annual Meeting of the Association of Third World Studies (ATWS) at Universidad de Costa Rica (University of Costa Rica), San Jose, Costa Rica, November 18-21, 1999.

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<sup>3</sup> *African Woman Magazine* 1995:5.

<sup>4</sup> Kiremire, 1995:6-7.

<sup>5</sup> Kiremire, 1993: 7.

<sup>6</sup> Ian Christie, 1988:p.xi.

<sup>7</sup> Arhin, 1993: 117.

<sup>8</sup> Arhin, 1993: 116.

<sup>9</sup> Arhin, 1993:101.

<sup>10</sup> Arhin 1993: 124.

<sup>11</sup> Part of editorial in *African Woman Magazine*, March-September 1995:5

<sup>12</sup> *African Woman Magazine*, op. cit., March-September 1995:5

<sup>13</sup> *Africa Watch*, 1883:8; also quoted in Nyakabwa, 1995.

<sup>14</sup> *News from Africa Watch*, 1993:4; also reported in *African Woman Magazine*, 1995.

<sup>15</sup> Ngugi, 1981:14; and also in Assensoh, 1990:66.

<sup>16</sup> Edda Ivan-Smith, 1985:23; also in Assensoh, 1987:95.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>18</sup> Adjei, 1993: 125.

<sup>19</sup> Adjei, 1993: 110.

<sup>20</sup> Adjei, 1993: 125.

<sup>21</sup> Mazrui & Aliman Mazrui, 1998: 87.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Mazrui & Alamin Mazuri, 1998:87.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

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<sup>30</sup> Agbango, 1997:312.

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# THE NEW WORLD ORDER: THE CONCEPT IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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## INTRODUCTION

“**W**orld order”, in its most general sense, is an analytic, descriptive concept, referring to the aggregate of norms, procedures and institutions which give shape and structure to international society at any given time. The New World Order (NWO) is a new term that was coined after the annexation of Kuwait by Iraq. Former President of the United States, George Bush first used this term. The term has gained momentum, and continues to be used more and more, in discourses on the post-cold war world.

The accelerated pace of international change in recent years represents a watershed of historic proportions. This is obvious in the break up of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, as well as the reunification of Germany. Other examples of dramatic change are apparent in Europe's move towards full political, economic and financial integration, the emergence of Japan as an economic giant and East Asia's development as an engine of global growth. Finally, the widespread embrace of liberal, political and economic ideals that transcend boundaries of geography and culture (otherwise known as 'globalization') represents the most dramatic change facilitated by the growth of information and communications technology (ICT). Amidst all these changes, the concept of a New World Order had emerged and gained momentum.

The most basic questions—does the NWO exist; how substantial is it?—cannot be answered without an historical perspective. Such a perspective is essential for understanding the nature of the contemporary international system and the NWO. This perspective will also reveal how the NWO developed and how it differs from the previous ‘order’.

## DEFINITION OF “NEW WORLD ORDER”

The phrase “New World Order” is commonly used without explicit definition, and ideas on it vary. Most definitions point towards the involvement in peace making missions of various kinds in different troubled spots of the world. These missions are intended to preserve or restore law and order; to deter and halt aggression and oppression; to relieve civilian suffering and promote civil and human rights.

One therefore could define the NWO as an international system in which the United States and like minded allies, act together, preferably under the aegis of the United Nations, to preserve or establish peace by upholding international law and order against aggressors, law-breakers and oppressors. If the NWO is to survive and work, the international community in some cases will have to proceed beyond persuasion, mediation and conciliation, onto deterrence and the use of force. The use of force will have to be resorted to, to force some nations to stop certain actions and perform others.

Many scholars are of the opinion that the term was first used during the Gulf War, when the UN sanctioned a collective opposition against Iraqi aggression. Military action was taken by the United States and others towards Iraq (during the Gulf War), and towards Somalia and Bosnia, in other conflicts. Subsequently, coercive action that was taken against other aggressors was done in the name of the NWO. Humanitarian arguments used to support such measures assume that there is an NWO that mandates such peacekeeping actions by the international community. There are however, some pertinent questions which need to be answered.

For instance, who is to decide what is right among the parties in conflict, and by what principle? What gives UN resolutions the sanctity and force of law? Why should some resolutions be rigorously enforced and others not, some international crimes punished and others ignored? For example, there are few Americans who do not support the notion of an NWO on principle. There are others who oppose all US participation in international peace keeping efforts, especially if it is through the use of force to uphold the NWO. They argue that the UN is the best organisation to deal effectively against any threat. It can impose sanctions against the aggressor (as was the case of Iraq). This organisation can be used effectively to deal with any incident in the present world order.

It is clear that a genuinely new and influential NWO has emerged, especially within the last decade. This could be seen in the transformation of pre-WWII Germany and Japan into stable, democratic and industrial giants. What is also obvious is the economic and political integration Western Europe. A third indication of a NWO is the disintegration of Eastern Europe into several new nation-states. Fourthly, the new role of the UN as military peace-keeper has been increasing since the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s. Fifth, and most important, there seems to be a gradual development of restraints on the arms race and the cooling off of ideological rivalry.

The above developments in the world order may bring about a *perfect* NWO, only if force is used appropriately by the international community, if and when required. The roots of the current NWO can be traced to about twenty years (and some say, even further) ago. It is obvious that the international order has failed, in some areas, to enforce international law against violators, which in turn has led to greater violence, wars and destruction, persecution of civilians and widespread human rights violations. When there is such a threat to peace and security, the UN must enforce the law against these violators. They are bound by duty to protect the NWO. At all costs, there must be a prevention of the global domination (either militarily or politically) by one country, as can be seen during the recent Gulf War.

The nonaligned group, comprising countries such as India and Malaysia, can play a positive role in the NWO. An important aspect of this role would be to sort out economic issues concerning the disparity between the rich and the developing nations.

## SOME OBJECTIONS

There are some likely objections to this view that deserve brief discussion to avoid misunderstandings and correct wrong impressions. One is that this view of the international order is too 'soft and sentimental', that it ignores the harsh realities of global politics and *realpolitik*. It has also been said that this view of the NWO relies on reason and moral persuasion for peace and stability. However, the view that it projects is one of an impersonal, objective system and process in international politics which should take priority over all other goals. Of primary importance is the promotion of justice, civil and human rights, international law, the relief of innocent suffering, and prevention of wars. This is certainly not a 'soft and sentimental' goal; on the contrary it is the most noble of ideals. Neither is it 'soft' to call for the total eradication of aggressor states from the international community, nor is it 'weak' or 'sentimental' to bring the wrongdoers to justice.

The other objection is that this proposal reflects a concept that is too academic. It is said that the proposal does not know how the world actually functions, and that it expects history to teach peoples and states their errors and induce them to change. The arguments further goes that in fact people, generally, learn what they want from history, and not the other way around. However, we believe that people actually learn the wrong things from history, if nothing at all. Many leaders are totally indifferent to the 'lessons of history' and the costs of their failures, so long as they can keep their state machinery and essential followers under control, as well as make the masses support them financially. Any misgivings that society may have on their leaders are laid to rest by simply blaming the outside world for their sufferings.

This definition of the NWO does not propose to let history teach the Slobodan Milosevic's of the world that aggression does not pay. True, history left to itself, can and does 'teach' almost any lesson it wants to, including the lesson that aggression might even be worthwhile. This is instead an argument that the NWO enables the current generation, unlike past generations, to control the "lessons" of history to some extent. It might even cause governments and societies to recognize that certain courses taken in the past have failed, yet others have proven profitable, while still others are unavoidable. Certainly peoples often resist learning from history, clinging stubbornly to a familiar version of the past that validates their collective image, justifying their actions. The historian Lewis B. Namier's comment that Freud's definition of neurosis, which is "to be dominated by unconscious memory, fixated upon the past, and unable to overcome it", is the "regular condition of some historical communities. This points exactly to a big part of the current problem, especially in the Balkans". The strategy of exclusion and denial is a good way of helping states and peoples get over their history, to break out of it. Repeated, long-term experience of failure is a powerful teacher, especially in teaching that one must break with one's past to have a tolerable future.

The most important criticism of the NWO, however, is the charge of ineffectiveness that the incentives and sanctions of association-benefits and exclusion-denial are too weak to produce a stable world order. They will be ineffective with dictators or against dedicated or desperate peoples, groups, and organizations of all kinds, and will fail to stop civil wars, settle serious territorial disputes, or curb terrorism. They also act too slowly, and therefore, cannot prevent developments such as the invasion of any State, the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by rogue governments or terrorist organizations, the spread of aggression, conflict, and ethnic cleansing from one region to another, or genocide and mass starvation. In other words, even if the so-called NWO and its methods may work with reasonable mature, developed, peaceful states, they cannot handle the real problems of a world which is still violent, hostile and chaotic. These problems call for either the old instruments of individual state action and power politics, or newer ones in the form of effective forcible sanctions imposed by the international community through the UN, or a combination of the two.

This essay has emphasized that there are tasks the NWO cannot be, and should not be expected, or asked to do. One can go further; forcible sanctions are still needed in cases where a particular evil or danger so clearly and directly threatens the general peace and the continued existence and operation of the whole international system that it must be averted promptly, at almost any cost. This does not annul the cases for the NWO as presented here, or even weaken it. To believe in the reality and efficacy of the NWO does not mean to suppose that everything in international politics is new, that coercive force, including military force, need not ever be used. Any "new order" in history (even where this much abused term is legitimate) is never wholly new; the term means only that a corner has been turned, a trend set, a new way of doing things become dominant, and an old one recessive. So, here, the claim made about the NWO means only that the principal hopes and chances for durable, general, relative peace in the world rest now, on a world order operating primarily by association-exclusion rather than deterrence-force. This certainly implies that the rewards and sanctions of association-benefits and exclusion-denial must be in general more effective for more of the required purposes of general world order and peace than deterrence-force.

There is further objection to this view of how the NWO works. The way the NWO is conceived of, and operationalized, does not fit the US understanding of what the geopolitical arena and world political system should be. It requires patience, steady attention to a long viewpoint projected into the future, a willingness to wait for results, the ability to adjust to changed realities and to accept blurred, complex, uncertain outcomes and live with them if they are the best attainable. Most of these characteristics do not exist within the US political system. Instead, it is focused on domestic concerns, immediate issues, simple solutions, and clear-cut moral dichotomies.

Americans, both leaders and the public, have, over the last 50 years or so, shown a striking ability to learn, adjust, stay the course, and adapt to change in the international arena. Yet it may be that calling on Americans to accept this version of the NWO and lead it means calling for a United States that is different from the existing one. This would mean a US that is less prone to violence at home and abroad, less shortsighted about its own interests and those of other states and less provincial and ignorant about the rest of the world. It also means a US that is less insistent on dealing with any crisis in which it calls the shots and that, if it decides to get in, other states, must help it get the job done quickly, and then get out. Clearly, the NWO cannot work under this kind of leadership or these conditions. Even more important, this attitude on the part of many Americans, is incompatible with the ongoing transformation of international politics through a collective mentality and political culture involving whole nations and peoples, enabling them to adjust to each other successfully in a new order.

The place of the US in the NWO can be clarified in the following manner. The United States cannot follow certain policies in international affairs, even though they may be necessary and legitimate, because the American people will not support it and the American political system makes it impossible to sell it to them. What the US really means by this is that they want to run the NWO and enjoy its benefits, but not belong to it, or change and grow with it. Such an attitude should not be acceptable. A nation that uses this excuse for very long must sooner or later excuse itself into disaster.

## CONCLUSION

A NWO has not come upon us and if it has, it may take decades to evolve into an entity that is more tangible and real. From a long-term historical perspective, the world appears to be heading toward a NWO and may be a supra national order. Following the historical watershed of recent years, the coming period will be a time of transition. There may be a bigger role for the US in the coming years. Its influence, patience, power and relative wealth will be critical factors in the progress toward an order or the descent into disorder. In Europe, Asia and the Middle East, the US leadership must take on new forms. But in recognising the importance of the three points of the triangle, the US leadership must understand that there are risks of disorder of a genuinely historic nature within the triangle. The United States, along with UN must take the lead in focusing international efforts to address this very seriously.

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BOOKS IN  
**REVIEW**

**BEYOND THE CRISIS:  
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES  
IN ASIA**

*Mely Caballero-Anthony*

**Sen, Amartya.** *Beyond the Crisis: Development Strategies in Asia. Asia and Pacific Lecture Series, no. 2, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), 1999, ISBN 981-230-086-4, 47 pp.*

**T**hree years after the Asian financial crisis, Amartya Sen's monograph remains highly relevant in the study of development. In particular, it addresses the salient issues highlighted in the various analyses done by economists and other academics in their diagnoses of how and why the financial debacle happened in the region. To be sure, the story of the Asian Crisis continues to be told. The trail of economic and social destruction that came with it at such rapid speed and witnessed by many had traumatised millions of people. Three years hence, the region's experience with the crisis of humanity leaves an indelible mark in its recent history.

A brilliant and erudite scholar, Amartya Sen has made his mark in the field of economics through his important contribution and work on poverty eradication, sustainable development and democracy. Prof. Sen is not only a dedicated academic and distinguished professor, but also a prolific writer. His personal interest in understanding poverty and development have generated numerous researches and publications, that are often referred to by both scholars and policy makers who find his reflections on the subjects profound and provocative. He is also a much sought-after speaker. In fact, this monograph which is being reviewed here is a product of the lecture he delivered at the Second Asia and Pacific Lecture in Singapore in July 1999, organised by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS).

One need not be an economist to understand and appreciate the main thoughts of Prof. Sen on sustainable development and human security. The thesis of this monograph is that mere adaptation of sound economic policies are not enough for a state to sustain economic development nor guarantee human security for its people. He argues that democracy and its complex demands must also be instituted. The theme of this monograph was largely drawn from the author's article on, "Democracy as a Universal Value", published in the *Journal of Democracy* in July 1999.

To the author, development and democracy goes hand in hand. Sen views development as a multi-dimensional process and as such, democracy—with its essential elements of political freedom and observance of civil rights—becomes both the means and the ends to this process. The ultimate objective of development is to attain human security.

But what is human security? Is it a concept distinct from human development? Human security as a concept has been a subject of renewed and intense discourse over the recent years. Perhaps as an aftermath of the Asian crisis, the subject has again been the focus of much discussion in the policy and academic circles, and even among the non-governmental organisations. While there appears to be no consensus on what this concept really means, the general idea mooted by the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan during his speech at the UN Millenium Meeting in April 2000, has been that human security entails freedom from want, freedom from fear, and the freedom of future generations to sustain their lives on this planet.

Sen's monograph however does not use the concept of human security. Instead he uses the phrase—human development. Nevertheless, the word security appears several times in the whole monograph and presumably refers to the same elements mentioned above that make up the definition of what human security is all about. It is undoubtedly also the ultimate objective of development which Sen discusses with so much passion in this monograph.

To Amartya Sen, human development goes beyond the narrow definition of improving the lives of people. Human development demands several strategies. Firstly, there must be the enhancement of basic human capabilities. This would entail the provision of social opportunities which are two-fold: expansion of education and health care. This first strategy is, in fact, not new in Asia. Citing the historical experiences of Japan, China and India, Sen argues that the "Eastern strategy" which places great emphasis and value on basic provision of education and health, had enabled these countries to dramatically improve the quality of life of their people. Among the three countries, Japan's experience was most instructive, particularly with the intensive efforts it has made in raising the literacy of its people.

Secondly, there must be wider dissemination of basic economic entitlements. This feature is closely linked with the first strategy of enhancing human capabilities. Other than providing education and training, the second strategy involves introducing land reform and providing access to credit. Consequently, these would broaden the access to opportunities offered by the market economy. To illustrate the importance of the wider spread and distribution of economic opportunities, Sen draws on the contrasting experiences of India and China. While the two populous states have indeed made great strides in developing human capabilities, China has been more successful than India for the very reason that the opportunities of education and others have not reached deeper into India's vast and diverse population. Sen laments that India's achievements in human development had sadly not penetrated the "depth of rural poverty in India".

Thirdly, human development requires a deliberate strategy of combining state action and the use of the market economy. Underscoring this combination is the need to guarantee freedom of choice and action. This is why democracy and participatory politics, as argued by Sen, have important roles to play in the over-all strategies to attain meaningful human development. He further argues that these two elements are crucial in ensuring security and avoiding disaster — regardless of whether these are caused by natural calamities or policy blunder.

To further buttress his arguments, Sen briefly yet comprehensively embarked on his own analysis of why crisis occurs and its impacts on human security. He specifically applied himself to the recent crises experienced in East and Southeast Asia. According to him, one of the fallacies in the thinking of many governments is the idea that economic progress is "monotonic". The fact of the matter is that it is not, and no matter how robust things may appear, they can—and sometimes will—go wrong. Most countries are therefore vulnerable to the vicissitudes of life. Given this reality, one must therefore work towards protection against downside risk at a given moment of time. This is where the positive role of political and civil rights helps in the prevention of economic and social disasters in general.

Democracy, according to Sen, enriches the lives of peoples in three different ways. Firstly, political freedom is a part of human freedom in general, and the exercise of civil and political rights becomes crucial. Political and social participation has *intrinsic value* for human life and well-being. Thus, as Sen argues, "to be prevented from participation in the political life of the community is a *major deprivation*." In addition, there is a fundamental connection between democracy and security. The instrumental role of democracy which include elections, multi-party politics, a free media, etc., ensures that governments respond to its people's needs and the predicament can be of great practical significance.

Secondly, democracy has an important *instrumental value* in enhancing the hearing that people get in expressing and supporting their claims to political attention and economic need. This aspect is very crucial especially for the poor and the marginalised since it is only democracy that allows them to have a voice. Sen states that the crisis in East and Southeast Asia points to the "penalty of limitations on democratic freedom". It resulted in the neglect of "protective security" and "transparency guarantee". And, as far as the poor were concerned, the fact that they were economically dispossessed and yet had no political voice, only led to tragic conflicts and societal chaos. These could be seen in the political and social crisis that happened, for example, in Indonesia.

Thirdly, democracy has *constructive importance* in that its practice gives citizens the opportunities to learn from one another and helps society form its values and priorities. For example, in the task of understanding and deciding what are economic needs and priorities, public discussion and exchange of information, views and analyses are but essential to the whole process. It provides "safety nets" closely linked to protective security and provides transparency.

Amartya Sen's powerful discourse, though not necessarily new, certainly poses several questions and challenges to certain governments in the region who prescribe a different path to development. More importantly, the points raised in this monograph revisit the non-ending debate on the question of the sequential ordering of rights, i.e. whether economic rights/development should precede political rights/development or vice-versa.

It can be recalled that just a decade ago, during the period when preparations were made to convene the World Conference on Human Rights, there were these distinct debates on the "situational uniqueness approach" to the implementation of human rights in different parts of the world. This approach was made more clear at the Bangkok Preparatory Meeting held in 1993 when Asian governments came up with the Bangkok Declaration on Human Rights. Essentially, they argued that while there can only be one set of fundamental human rights, the full implementation of these rights was contingent upon and predicated on the situational uniqueness of each state.

Up until the Asian crisis, it appeared that the arguments for sequential ordering of rights and the focus on economic development first, were to a certain extent quite persuasive. The economic track record of most Asian economies with impressive economic growths and the relatively stable political situation that prevailed in the region silenced many critics who had espoused Sen's ideas on the complementarity of both political and economic rights. But with the advent of the crisis and its damaging effects on human security, similar questions and issues have emerged once again.

Nevertheless, as in the past there will always be two camps in this constantly evolving discourse on human development and/or human security and democracy. As the exercise of soul-searching continues among many political systems and leaders in this region on what happened three years ago and how to avoid it, Sen gently reminds us that Asia has many good practices and philosophy in the past that had served the region well. Applying these old lessons at the same time creating "new strategies" that are integrative and complementary may be the way to go.

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## THE KEYNESIAN DEMAND MODEL IN ASIA

*Marie-Aimée Tourres*

**Corden, Max.** *The Asian Crisis: Is There A Way Out?* Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1999, ISBN 981-230-043-0, 82 pp.

The Asian crisis has been widely covered in the literature since its onset in July 1997. Some books have been written almost immediately after the onset of the crisis, emphasising the chronological facts. Others, published later, were of deeper analyses. Three years later, analysis tends increasingly to focus on more specific aspects of the crisis, such as its political or social dimension. The bulk of the literature searches for some common features amongst the crisis-hit countries, which could explain the sudden turmoil that befell them. It has lead to a proliferation of books which are country case studies.

Max Corden's book is different, however. He approaches the subject of the Asian crisis in quite a distinct way. It is not a book *per se*, but the text of a public lecture delivered on 6 August 1998, in Singapore. Max Corden is the Chung Ju Yung Distinguished Professor of International Economics at the Paul H. Nitze School of John Hopkins University. Indeed, *The Asian Crisis, Is There A Way Out?* is a monograph. The main value of this book lies in understanding the financial crisis of 1997 and possible remedies to

the economic, political and social chaos that developed subsequently. Corden's work is also a more academic approach compared to what has been done so far. While previous authors have approached this subject by giving an overview of the experiences of the Asian countries hit by the financial crisis, since 1997, Max Corden is approaching the crisis issue in a more unusual way. Although his analysis is general and not related to one single country, he captures the events through a theoretical perspective. The crisis and the proposed solutions to the recession are approached here within a Keynesian demand-model framework.

According to Corden, the Asian financial crisis found its principal source in an over-investment boom financed by both domestic savings and foreign capital flows. The burst of it led to a sudden loss of confidence followed by a financial panic. Hence, Corden's main objective was to answer the following question: "How were the effects [of the financial crisis] transmitted to the real economy?" Max Corden also tries to convincingly demonstrate that a temporary expansionary fiscal policy, a major component of Keynes' economic policy, is the best remedy for the current Asian recession. Three transmission mechanisms are presented in this book, which is divided into eleven parts, including a postscript on Indonesia.

The first three parts outline the basic Keynesian mechanism of demand, where the decline in aggregate demand, in relation with investment, is coupled with a multiplier effect. This is the first transmission mechanism to the real economy. In order to restore investor and market confidence, a fiscal expansion through a fiscal deficit is suggested. Corden agrees that the International Monetary Fund's first prescription to the crisis was "initially off the rails." Its 'short-term fiscal policy' conditionality did not apply because the concerned countries had "excellent fiscal policy records over long periods". Max Corden, advocating a fiscal expansion policy, exposes a list of difficulties in its implementation as well as the potential negative side effects, which can occur. Indeed, if contra-cyclic policy may lead to some short-term economic conflicts and dissensions, "smooth adjustment would be impossible".

The next two passages deal with the question of exchange rate depreciation. This is the second mechanism of crisis transmission to the real economy. If depreciation becomes necessary, it can lead to adverse effects. However, an alternative interest rate policy, as suggested by the IMF, does not appear to be the best suitable solution in Corden's view. In a period of crisis, the confidence of locals is just as important as the confidence of foreigners, if not even more so. Thus, problems related to domestic demand should be tackled first. In other words, a good domestic fiscal policy is better than a monetary policy—usually more internationally oriented—in order to sustain or restore the domestic demand.

The next four pages are devoted to the third and last transmission mechanisms that lead to the domestic financial breakdown. Corden exposes three causes of this collapse, namely, "excessive or unwise investments and loans which emerged from the euphoria stage of the investment and borrowing boom"; "the effects of the recession"; and finally, "the effects of the massive depreciation in currency values, the liabilities of banks and other financial intermediaries, as well as some of their customers". Once again, a Keynesian fiscal policy is mentioned as the best remedy to the problem. According to the author, if it had been implemented on time, it would have minimised the financial effects of the recession.

The next section of the book is a longer segment outlining the role of the IMF. Whereas most of the critiques on the IMF's approach to the crisis are valid, they tend to forget to look at the other side of the coin, according to Corden. The inappropriateness of IMF policies in the face of the recession, especially at its beginning, are underlined here. This chapter, more structured than the others, outlines in seven points, the main reasons why the IMF policies could not apply to crisis-stricken Asia. The author agreed, only to a certain extent, with the majority of the other IMF critiques. Within reason, he advocates the pursuit of policies proposed by the Bretton Woods institution. Indeed, in the last of the seven points, Corden gives considerable attention to defending the widely spread comment on the IMF prescription being no less than the pursuit of American interests. If Jagdish Bhagwati calls it the "IMF-Wall Street-United-States Treasury complex", Corden defends the Institution here by saying that one shall consider that a political and policy trade-off will always occur.

The IMF is the focus of the author's attention in two other parts of the book. The case of the Mexican crisis is outlined here, for the lessons it teaches. The success of IMF prescriptions in Mexico is underscored here. In the closing chapter, Corden very clearly reiterates the utility of the IMF in times of crisis: "It is obvious to me that the IMF is needed, desperately needed, in situations like the Asian crisis. There is no need to establish a new organisation, and it would be foolish to abolish it". However, it should also be noted that the IMF has never experienced this kind of crisis before.

Intertwined in the chapters mentioned above, the author raises, in three pages, the question of the definition of short-term period. Max Corden is amongst those who advocates and assesses the continuing significance of applying some of the Keynes' *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* to economic policy. There have, however, been great changes in the world's advanced economies since 1936, so it is rather unlikely that the economic and financial remedies suggested by Keynes, could still be the most appropriate of solutions. Indeed, Corden in his presentation takes into account that among what has changed, is the institutional constraints;

as these constraints have changed, policy recommendations have necessarily changed with them. Korea and Thailand are two countries used by Corden as empirical examples, "to bring grist to his mill". His theory is clearly a valuable point of departure for an explanation of the Asian crisis. However, Corden added the Indonesian case, in a postscript, to show one example where his theory may not work. According to Corden, one of the main reasons is that the Indonesian crisis is due to other factors such as political decay, and not only to economics.

In reading through the book, one gets an education in the application of Keynesian mechanisms to the Asian crisis. However, because the text is actually a lecture, it means the content of the subject has been abbreviated, due to time constraints. The reader has a tendency to feel frustrated with the book, due to the overall superficiality of the subject matter. For instance, explanation on the Mexican crisis was too brief, and really, could have been left out. The comparison with the Thai experience or any of the other crisis-hit Asian economies requires a deeper presentation; the superficial treatment given by Corden will not do.

No less compelling would have been some highlights on another theoretical perspective in parallel to the one defended here. Because he judged that interest rates would be very difficult to reduce to the full extent required, Keynes turned to fiscal expansion via activist policies and an increase in government expenditures, as a more practical second best means of expanding effective demand. In fact, for some economists, when policies geared to raise effective demand is needed, whether this is most effectively influenced by fiscal or by monetary expansion has become controversial. Indeed, there is a widespread belief today that the inflation price of fiscal expansion is not worth paying. Therefore, the text would have benefited from more references on alternative remedies, which do not belong to the Keynesian worldview. Despite the high quality of the explanation on Keynes' mechanisms, it would have been beneficial to discuss why, for instance, the monetarist or new classical economics approach and policies are not suitable in the Asian Financial Crisis context.

To conclude, Max Corden, as a believer in Keynesian demand management policies being still relevant or useful for the short run but not for the medium or long run, stresses that errors in short term policy can lead to harmful long-term results. All this said, perhaps it would have been better to consider rewriting the lecture to make it a full-length book (rather than a monograph) which would also allow the author to introduce the Indonesian case within the text, as opposed to it being a postscript. Max Corden provides a valuable overall picture of the theoretical argument elaborated with empirical information, and policy remedies. While some books can attract a wider readership, this monograph can be considered an exclusively academic work



that a student or researchers with an economics background can find useful. It is worthy of serious scholarly attention mainly due to the theoretical content. Finally, the subject of the monograph is timely and could be relevant for the next few years.

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## DEMOCRATIC TALES FROM THAILAND

*Anthony Langlois*

**Callahan, William A. *Imagining Democracy: Reading "The Events of May" in Thailand*. Singapore: ISEAS, 1998. ISBN 981-3055-64-2, 198 pp.**

This is a book of stories, narratives and tales—in more senses than one. It is a book about stories, as well as purporting to be a story itself—a narrative hoping to persuade us that it is large and broad enough to make sense of a range of other stories: stories which are sub-plots and which, by themselves, are only partial, incomplete, even untruthful and oppressive, but which, if told as sub plots in this broader story, can move towards a telling of truths.

These truths are first of all about those happenings which have become "The Events of May 1992". These events are told and retold in a myriad of different forms—conversations, newspapers, videos, government publications, gossip, academic analyses and so on. In the book, Callahan takes off from these various tales and wields his own narrative about The Events of May. By doing so, he is also telling another story—one about the discourses used by other (principally academic) observers in their attempts to ascertain knowledge of the May Events. Callahan situates himself among those who are highly sceptical about the methods and efficacy of traditional social science models for the explanation and understanding of happenings such as the Events of May. He wants to tell stories which produce truths about Thai politics, Asian politics and the study of politics in general. The methods

of academe, by contrast, want to ascertain the (singular) Truth through the application of a positivistic theoretical framework, which is based on a foundation of "hard empirical evidence." For a process like democratisation, this evidence comprises a checklist of items, such as a free press, regular elections, mass parties, and so forth.

While I don't read the Callahan critique of social science analyses of democracy as saying that such items can be dispensed with, there does seem to be merit to his argument that the narrative of democratisation becomes obsessed with a checklist mentality towards such items, and becomes separated from the real stories - the democratic tales—of how a nation moves towards democracy.

These tales are what the book is about and they are very different reading from that produced by the sterile approach of the positivist democratic audit literature. These tales are occupied by the perceived realities of a nation fighting for democracy—i.e. realities which seem as out of place in the social science literature as they do in the day to day stuff of Western politics. They are nonetheless the realities which guide happenings such as The Events of May, along with all the other events which will be part of the formation of Thai democracy—a formation which will not necessarily constrain itself to Western narratives of democratisation. Callahan argues that the narratives which animate the movement towards democracy in Thailand, and which suffuse The Events of May, are the following: astrology, national security, third world feminism, non-violent action, nationalism and poetics. This strange mixture of discourses has been the culture in which Thailand's political actions have been acted out and so, an analysis which purports to understand those actions must look at this political culture. This, however, is difficult for traditional social science methodologies, because such methodologies do not have room for the assumptions which are active in this alternative set of narratives; they are not sufficiently complex, nor are they able to make room for alternative or expanded forms of rationality and activity, such as is required by the social formations on the ground in places such as Thailand.

The main body of the book is divided into four chapters. The first, the Introduction, takes up the last point, which is the question of whether the often touted theoretical models of politics, and of Thai politics in particular, are as efficacious as they claim in their attempts to explain Thai politics. Starting with the "bureaucratic polity" model of Thai politics<sup>1</sup> used since 1966, moving through the political culture approach of the 1980s and on to models which point to the importance of extra-bureaucratic classes (notably the business class), Callahan argues that all these approaches "utilise the dualist framework of standard social science methodology to analyse

institutions and events in terms of relations between tradition and modernity, East and West, civilians and the military, elite bureaucrats and the masses, and so on." (P. 6) The main claim which animates the book is that when you look at Thai politics, when you do a close reading of events such as the Events of May 1992, too much important detail slips through these dualist grids. "What are you to do", Callahan argues by way of example, "when the anti-military campaign is led by someone who is addressed as 'Major-General'?" (P. 6).

Callahan's answer—given his pessimism about the capacity of the more routinely used approaches for procuring real understanding of Thai politics—lies in his understanding of Thailand's "symbolic politics." Symbolic politics goes beyond the physical factors of the military's power and the business class's capital to focus on the very important symbolic forces at work, forces which are more than mere consequences or outgrowths of the material realities. The role that this book claims to play in its contribution to the literature on Thailand is to highlight the role that symbolism plays in Thai politics.

Having thus set up his task, Callahan gets down to the business of explicating symbolic politics by taking us through a range of stories. Tales as to how a range of symbols within Thai culture have been efficacious at various levels and among various players in shaping the Events of May 1992. Callahan's own narrative structure at this point can be observed as a device for jolting the reader, who perhaps may be assumed to be steeped in the "normal rationalities" of political science literature, into a new way of thinking, by challenging assumptions about the place of superstition (among other things) in society. The section entitled "Star Wars, Thai Style" (pages 9-17) documents the way in which phenomena such as dreams, interpretations of dreams, jinxes, astrological charts and other astrological and magical discourses feed into the political discourse in Thailand. Callahan says that "Astrology and magic...are not just for fun and games. They involve the use of symbols that is very powerful in Thai politics." (p.10) He goes on to instance various ways in which these "forces"—real at least in their symbolic influence—have political, economic and social consequences.

In a transition to symbolic forms more immediately responsive to traditional analysis, Callahan concludes the introductory chapter by examining the way in which images and information are managed through the Electronic media. Here we are taken through a deconstruction of some of the video and facsimile mediated stories of the Events of May 1992. Once again, the intention is to show that these were stories of symbolic nature which fed into the political process in significant ways, promoting various differing accounts of the May Events.

The remaining chapters of the book consist of extended tellings and retellings of stories, stories and counter stories which exemplify the way in which democratic truths about Thai politics may be ascertained. Here we have fascinating tales of the transformation of the identity of protesters: from being a mob, to being a mohp; from being a "horse-faced mohp" to being a "sedan mohp"—that is, a mob hired to applaud a public figure, to being a middle class, upwardly *mobile*, *mobile phone* (not to mention *mobile toilet*) using, *mob* (p.45). The Army's narrative of the mob is of a violent and chaotic protest—the term thus being the legitimization of Army action to control, to bring order out of chaos. Once such a story becomes discredited by democratic tales which construct the people otherwise than as the army's chaotic, violent, mob, the door is opened to consider discourses of the people, such as those of nonviolent opposition and grass roots organisation. Callahan argues that "the two most interesting aspects of the May events—non-violent tactics and non-governmental organisations—represent an alternative form of organisation and action which can dismantle the master's house for genuine change" (p.87).

The final chapter in the book is a poignant look at the May events through the lenses of art and memory. The chapter is focussed around what is missing. On the one hand we have the discourse of those who are missing following the May events; on the other we have the missing discourse about those same missing and how they are remembered. What is at issue on both counts (as throughout the book) is who is telling the stories, who is constructing the memories of people no longer present and accounted for. Callahan says, "In a classic murder mystery story you have the dead body and need to find the murderer. Yet with the tragic events of May this story is inverted. We already know who killed the people. But where are the bodies?" (p.157)

In a phrase which perhaps encapsulates his opposition to both authoritarian oppression by the military and traditional western social science narratives of democratisation, Callahan says "Democracy means that you take part in writing your own story" (p.160). One senses in reading this book that it reflects the stories of many who would narrate us their own democratic tales if they but had the chance.

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# IT AND THE MEDIA: STRANGE BEDFELLOWS?

*Mustafa K. Anuar*

**Linda Low.** *Economics of Information Technology and the Media.* Singapore: World Scientific Publishing and Singapore University Press, 2000. ISBN 981-02-3844-4, 335 pp.

**T**he pace of development of information and communication technology (ICT) can be very swift and bewildering so much so that an attempt to understand it is both urgent and necessary. Linda Low, in her book *Economics of Information Technology and the Media*, helps us to understand primarily the economic factors that come into play in this rapid technological development.

But the book, as Low correctly cautions us, is not just about the economics of ICT and the media because obviously ICT has various implications on society. Thus, the economic framework in this book also incorporates or takes into consideration social, political, legal and cultural factors that are no less important to technological development.

It is imperative to remind ourselves at this juncture, though, that the rapid development that is often associated with ICT should not delude us into believing that ICT has taken a life of its own, and therefore it is uncontrollable and inevitable. Like many others that discuss ICT, this book lends credence to the skepticism and criticism of some scholars of communication studies pertaining to the so-called encroachment of technology into our lives. Celebrated cultural critic and communication expert Raymond Williams, for instance, brought to our attention the danger of technological determinism, which relates to the misplaced notion that new technology, after a series of technical study and experimentation, "emerges" into society. The technology in this case is already part and parcel of the given society because, as Williams contented, practically all technical study and experiment are conducted within the existing unequal social relations and cultural forms. This also implies the likely consequence of a certain technology being selected and pushed over others for further research and development. In other words, the political, military, and economic interests that are dominant in society by and large influence the shape and direction that a technology takes.

This reminder is important because the economic perspective that Low employs in this book only enhances the contention of communication critics, particularly those of the political-economic persuasion, that in most cases, economic and commercial interests become the primary and driving force behind the developments in and popularization of ICT. The following chapters illustrate not only the writer's conscious economic bias, but also an intellectual concentration and emphasis on the nature, role and vested interests of big players in the ICT and media industries (as opposed to, say, small-scale or alternative media players): "Basic Economic Principles and Concepts" (Chapter 2); "Market Structure and Competition" (Chapter 3); "Information Technology and Media Markets" (Chapter 4); "Technology and the Market" (Chapter 7); and "Information Management" (Chapter 8). Low's concern is indeed on the "efficient allocation of the factors of production and optimum welfare..." (p.ix).

But equally important, such an emphasis on the economic points to the harsh reality of the commodification of technology, information and culture. It also indicates that profit motive is very much at work. This explains why, for example, computer technology was first invented for military purposes, but subsequently was further developed after its commercial potential was adequately envisaged and appreciated. The name given to one of the world's biggest computer companies, i.e. International Business Machine (IBM), may not be purely coincidental, but reflective of its underlying commercial philosophy.

The commodification of technology, information and culture has implications that can be felt at the local, national and international levels. For one thing, Low does acknowledge the resulting digital divide between the "haves and have-nots" (p.223), between nations (as well as within nations). This implies the inability of certain countries, particularly those from the developing world, to acquire hardware and software, apart from a possible lack of professional expertise to use and maintain the technology concerned. Such a serious gap certainly questions the writer's curious contention that "New communications technology spawns a global village in the way information is communicated. (p.239)" for the entire globe is yet to be adequately and fairly wired, if at all possible.

Low's concern about cultural imperialism (p.240), that is, the apparently heavy penetration of western cultural products, especially Hollywood entertainment exports, into many of the developing countries should be seen in the context of cultural commodification and profit maximization regime. In some cases, national broadcast stations consciously import and transmit more western programmes because it's cheaper to do so than making

local production. In addition, these cultural products carry with them values and lifestyles that are consonant with those of the national ruling elite. In other words, frequent transmission of western imports may be due to commercial (apart from cultural) interests that national and western elites share. Besides, many of these imported programmes are not only pure entertainment but also politically sanitized and safe particularly for governments that are not known to allow, let alone encourage, dissent and criticisms.

This also bring us to the writer's observation about film, TV, radio, music, education, theme parks, publishing and computerization being "(t)he site of social control and power in culture industries..." (p.238) She raises her concern about who makes an informed selection of the cultural products and processes. The suggestion given is that school, being a primary institution of socialization, should play a vital role in educating citizens of how and what to choose. This denotes a certain degree of naiveté on the part of the writer for surely commodification, profit logic and certain values associated with capitalism, which she has generally taken as a given, will still play a vital role in influencing adults who make important decisions in the culture industries.

Given her concern about certain excesses or weaknesses of the market, Low generally argues that government should play an important role of an arbiter or referee to see to it that the interests, needs and aspirations of people of various backgrounds are addressed adequately by the providers of information in the media industry. In Chapter 5 ("Government Intervention and Regulation"), Low outlines a number of scenarios where government can help improve the media situation in the society. For instance, the government can play an interventionist role by owning a media organization with the purported desire to provide better and fair service to the community. The underlying assumption here is that a government has only the people's interests at heart. That there are cases of governments in this region having ownership and control of certain media organizations solely for the purposes of transmitting its political propaganda, promoting its political position, and curbing freedom of expression shows that the above faith in government is misplaced. If anything, governments can be an obstacle to freer flow of information in spite of the entire media infrastructure that has been put in place in the society concerned.

Readers who are eager to get a quick glimpse of the historical development of information, media and media-related industries will find Chapter 4 useful. This chapter touches on, for instance, the telecommunications industry, computer industry, newspaper, and cable and satellite television.

Chapter 6, "Information Technology, Labour and Employment", witnesses the relentless march of international capitalism and globalization via the advent and rapid development of ICT. Here we are alerted to the impact of ICT and globalization upon employment, productivity, unionization, gender and older people, etc. These are issues and problems that have to be dealt with by the people concerned as well as society.

What also make an interesting read is Chapter 10 where the writer, under the rubric "Information Technology and the Media in the Global Economy", discusses, among others, global trade in telecommunications where the factor of power relations come to the fore.

Finally, chapter 12 ("Trends and Applications in the Asia-Pacific") is instructive because the initial section traces the trends and developments in the electronics industry in the region and elsewhere. The latter section of the chapter, particularly on the information infrastructure of Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong, could have been dealt with in greater detail and a critical eye. For one thing, each of these countries should have been provided with its political, cultural and legal backgrounds so as to help the reader understand adequately the way ICTs have been used in a particular socio-political environment. For instance, the advent of the Internet provides a platform and democratic space for people who had been marginalised before this. Here certain groups in the society concerned have been able to publish online newspapers. These are initiatives that, although presumably of low economic value, are clearly spawned by technological advancement and also driven by the desire to provide a platform for the hitherto "voiceless" and underprivileged so as to widen the parameters of democracy. The contention of Raymond Williams that progressive and liberating potential of a technology should be explored, and not necessarily to be automatically frowned upon could have been appropriately incorporated in both the section on democracy as well as in the section on policy implications in Chapter 12.

All said, this book is a new arrival that should be welcomed and read critically by students of economics, communications, ICT and politics.

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