Asia Leadership Fellow Program

1999 Program Report

Global Challenge, Local Response:
Asian Experiences and Concerns

International House of Japan
Japan Foundation Asia Center

Contents

Foreword

This publication marks the fourth year of the Asia Leadership Fellow Program (ALFP) jointly created in 1996 by the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center. Since its inauguration, the program has sought to promote mutual understanding and close cooperation among intellectuals in Asia. Over the last several years, they have built positive personal networks among themselves.

In the previous three years, the program invited a good number of academics, journalists, activists, lawyers, artists and other professionals from many countries in the region. For the 1999 program, we welcomed not only the participation of fellows from Indonesia (Ayu Utami), Japan (Ohashi Masaaki), the Philippines (Marites Danguilan Vitug), Singapore (Teo Soh Lung) and Thailand (Sanitsuda Ekachai), but we also had the pleasure of having the first participant from Korea (Cho Hong-Sup). Similar to previous programs, the 1999 batch of fellows were given a broad theme, "Development and Culture Globalizing Processes, Localizing Strategies", to work on for two months. To 'inspire' the fellows' intellectual aspirations and enhance their individual perspectives, the program also provided them with first-hand experience with Japanese society through various field trips to different regions of Japan. To further help sharpen the focus of the issues discussed in the workshops and seminars, a public symposium entitled "Global Challenge, Local Response: Asian Experiences and Concerns" was also held at the end of the program.

It is worth mentioning that the most exciting development coming out of the 1999 program was how new thinking on global issues has since developed, the way new paradigms on 'globalization' could be explored, and how friendships and mutual respect for fellow intellectuals have been nurtured and maintained.

We would like to acknowledge the active participation of the fellows, the resource persons, the various Japanese NGOs and the many others who have contributed so much to the success of the program. Without a doubt, their continued commitment helps ensure that the program will continue to achieve its objectives. Those who have worked behind the scenes deserve our special thanks, especially Ms. Fumi Kitagawa for serving as rapporteur and assistant and Ms. Chola Chek for editing this report.

The International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center hope that this report will enable us and future fellows to continue building on what has been accomplished.
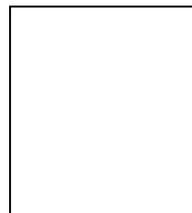
Profiles of the 1999 Fellows

Ayu Utami (Indonesia)

Novelist/Journalist; Editor, *Kalam*
Proposed ALFP Research Topic:
Expression in Capitalistic Mass Culture

Ms. Ayu Utami is a productive writer of essays on popular culture, language and literature. In addition to being one of the editors of *Kalam*, an Indonesian quarterly devoted to literature and the arts, Ms. Ayu Utami is a novelist and a political activist. While working as a reporter for the newsweekly *Forum Keadilan* (Forum for Justice), she joined other journalists to establish the underground Alliance for Independent Journalists (AIJ) in 1994. She soon after began working with the Institute for the Study of the Free Flow of Information (ISAI), an organization devoted to preserving and promoting press freedom. She wrote a booklet on the Soeharto family's wealth and drew political cartoons, which were distributed widely and illegally in the months before the President resigned in May 1998. Her first novel, *Saman*, was published to critical acclaim in 1998 and received an award for Best Novel from the Jakarta Arts Council. Ms. Ayu Utami received her academic credentials from the Faculty of Letters, Universitas Indonesia, 1987-93.
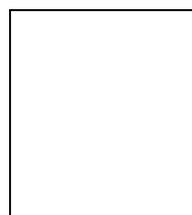
Ohashi Masaaki (Japan)

Associate Professor of Development Studies,
Keisen University
Proposed ALFP Research Topic:
The Role of NGOs and CBOs for Development of Japan

Professor Ohashi has been very active with NGOs and CBOs (community-based organizations). Between 1980 and 1987, he worked with Shapla Neer: Citizens' Committee in Japan for Overseas Support, which was founded by a group of young Japanese who went to Bangladesh immediately after its independence to help the country recover from the ravages of war. He spent two and a half years in Dhaka as the Director of Shapla Neer's operations in Bangladesh, and acted as the Secretary General from 1982 to 1987. He became the Deputy Head of Delegation and Development Delegate in Bangladesh for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in 1990-93. In 1993 he became a university professor but in September 1998, he took a one-year sabbatical leave to stay in New Delhi

studying NGO issues in India and South Asia. During the leave, he also participated in the Kosovo refugee relief operation in Albania for two months as a delegate of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Professor Ohashi received his B.A. in Economics from Waseda University (1978) and his Master of Professional Studies (Agriculture), International Agriculture and Rural Development Program, from Cornell University (1990).

Cho Hong-Sup (Korea)
Editor of the City Desk, *Hankyoreh Shinmun*
Proposed ALFP Research Topic:
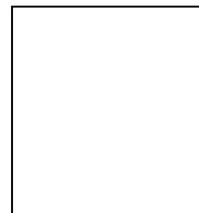***Local Initiatives for Sustainable Development***

Mr. Cho was one of the student leaders who organized the first students' research group on pollution and environmental problems. He later pioneered the practice of investigative journalism covering the environmental problems caused by rapid industrialization in Korea. Since the early 1980s, he has dealt with such issues as the safety of nuclear power plants, preservation of wetlands, and industrial pollution. In 1997, he was awarded an official commendation from the Korean government while working for a critical, opposition newspaper. His publications include the books *Human Beings and Environment, Save Our Children--Voices from Onsan Village* (1985) and *Frankenstein or Brave New World* (1999). Mr. Cho received his B.A. in Chemical Engineering from Seoul National University (1980).

Marites Danguilan Vitug (Philippines)
Freelance Journalist
Proposed ALFP Research Topic:
Rebuilding Muslim Mindanao: The Role of Japan

Ms. Vitug is a prolific writer of essays and books. She works for the Philippines Center for Investigative Journalism, and writes for the *Manila Times*, *Newsweek*, and *World Paper*. Her first book*, Power from the Forest: The Politics of Logging*, won the National Book Award in 1994. Her essays and investigative stories have been published in a number of books and journals, the most recent of which are *Under the Crescent Moon: Rebellion in Mindanao* (2000), *Jalan-Jalan: A Journey through Eaga* (1998), "Highway Robbery," in *Pork and Other Perks: Corruption and Governance in the Philippines* (1998), and "Environmental Advocacy," in *Media Bites: An NGO-Media Dialogue* (1997). She and a colleague are currently writing a book on the Muslim rebellion in

the Philippines. Ms. Vitug received her B.A. in Broadcast Communication (1975) and her M.A. in Communication (1977), from the University of the Philippines, Diliman.

Teo Soh Lung (Singapore)
Lawyer/NGO Activist
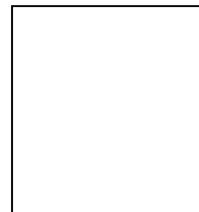Proposed ALFP Research Topic:
Globalization and Peace

As one of the most active, outspoken and uncompromising n
Singapore Law Society, Ms. Teo was one of the founders of the Society's Criminal Legal Aid Scheme, a program designed to give assistance to people who cannot afford legal representation. Her extraprofessional activities include her engagement in community/NGO activities focusing on welfare and human rights, and she was actively involved in the establishment of organizations which have helped foreign workers and ex-criminal offenders in Singapore. Even after two and a half years of political detention in the late 1980s, she has maintained her humane spirit and continued to articulate aspirations for greater care and human rights for the economically and politically underprivileged. Ms. Teo received her B.A. in Law (Honours) from the University of Singapore (1973).

Sanitsuda Ekachai (Thailand)
Assistant Editor, *The Bangkok Post*
Proposed ALFP Research Topic:
Religions vs. Globalization and Consumerism:
How Asia Copes with New Gods

Ms. Sanitsuda's articles in *The Bangkok Post* on rural development, women's issues and Buddhism have inspired a whole generation of journalists to become more sensitive to cultural dilemmas, social inequalities and the plight of the poor. She was awarded the A.H. Boerma Award from the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization in 1991 in recognition of her outstanding contributions in the field of journalism and her dedicated work with many local and international NGOs. Her publications include *Behind the Smile: Voices of Thailand* and *Seeds of Hope: Local Initiatives in Thailand*, among many others. Ms. Sanitsuda received her B.A. (first class honors) from Chulalongkorn University (1977) and her M.A. in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (1981).

Schedule of Activities

Sept. 2	Introduction session
Sept. 3 - 6	Field Trip to Rokkasho-mura & Shimokita Peninsula Workshop I : Preparatory session for the field trip to Okinawa
Sept. 8	Workshop II: Presentation by the Fellows (1) "Ethnic Conflicts and Accommodation: In Search of Lasting Solutions" by Marites Danguilan Vitug "Environmental Movements and Democratization in Korea" by Cho Hong-Sup Workshop III: Discussion with the Japanese NGOs regarding the field trip to Ishigaki
Sept. 9	Workshop IV: Preliminary session for the field trip to Ishigaki Workshop V: Presentation by the Fellows (2) "Religions vs Globalisation and Consumerism: How to Cope with New Gods" by Sanitsuda Ekachai "The Desire for Conspiracy: The Irrationality in Modern Thinking" by Ayu Utami
Sept. 13	Workshop VI: Presentation by the Fellows (3) "Globalization and the Culture of Silence" by Teo Soh Lung "Roles of NGOs and CBOs for Development" by Ohashi Masaaki
Sept. 14	Workshop VII: Interim Evaluation (1)
Sept. 16	Workshop VIII: Interim Evaluation (2)
Sept. 20	Workshop IX: Informal discussion with

	Mikio Kato, Executive Director, International House of Japan (1)
Sept. 21 - 26	Field Trip to Okinawa/Ishigaki Islands Seminar I: Introduction of Okinawa by Prof. Katsunori Yamazato and Prof. Masaaki Gabe, University of the Ryukyus
Sept. 28	Seminar II: "Globalization and Cultural Nationalism" by Prof. Kosaku Yoshino, University of Tokyo
Sept. 30	Workshop X: Informal discussion with Mikio Kato (2)
Oct. 1	Seminar III: "Globalization and its Discontents" by Prof. Kiichi Fujiwara, University of Tokyo
Oct. 5	Visit to the Association to Preserve the Earth
Oct. 8	Seminar IV: "Consumption and Popular Culture" by Prof. John Clammer, Sophia University
Oct. 12	Seminar V: "New Religion in Japan and Asia" by Prof. Nobutaka Inoue, Kokugakuin University
Oct. 13	Seminar VI: Discussion with Japanese Journalists: Susumu Nomura, Freelance Journalist, and Takahiko Tennichi, *Yomiuri Shimbun*
Oct. 15	Seminar VII: Discussion on gender issues with Prof. Chizuko Ueno, University of Tokyo
	Seminar VIII: "Japan and Southeast Asia in Historical Contexts: Focusing on Okinawa" by

Prof. Hisashi Nakamura, Ryukoku University

Oct. 16 - 18	Weekend Retreat in Odawara
Oct. 20	Seminar IX: "Civil Society, Global Marketization and Asia" by Prof. Yoshikazu Sakamoto, Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo
Oct. 22	Visit to the Asia Women's Resource Center
Oct. 25	Seminar X: "History and the Current Situation of the Ainu People" by Kayo Sunazawa, Livelihood Advisor, Ainu Association of Hokkaido Tomakomai Branch; and by Mr. Hideaki Uemura, Chief Executive, Citizen's Diplomatic Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
Oct. 26	Workshop XI: Preparation session for the Symposium
Oct. 27	Public Symposium: "Global Challenge, Local Response: Asian Experiences and Concerns"
Oct. 29	Evaluation Session

Introduction

Asia Leadership Fellow Program (ALFP)

Since its inauguration, the ALFP has successfully developed 'mechanisms of cooperation' among the participants, and there is no doubt that it has succeeded in developing personal networks among outstanding intellectual leaders. Throughout the previous four years, the number of the fellows who participated in the program totalled 22. They came from eight different countries in Asia. Many were academics (political sciences, anthropology, sociology, medical sciences, development studies, philosophy) and some were active in the fields of journalism and the performing arts; the others were involved in NGO and legal activities. Since 1996 the main theme for the Program has been "Development and Culture" with more concrete subtitles, which reflect the emphasis and interest of each year's program. [1]

The economic and financial crisis that began in Thailand in the summer of 1997 presented the region with a series of domestic and external challenges. The present power structure, which is essentially 'premised' by Cold War thinking' has to be modified by 'the addition of cooperative, open structures that would encourage wider discussion and greater transparency among all parties in the region'.[2]

It is apparent that governmental politics alone cannot solve the regional crisis. The process under way now is characterized by the emergence of new forces: transnational corporations, resurgent religions like Islam, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and the intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) consisting of nation-states. The rapid growth in the number of 'voluntary', 'non-governmental', or ' non-profit' organizations has been described as a 'global associational revolution'. [3] The Internet, global telecommunication networks and other advanced technologies link these new forces. Articulation beyond government-to-government relations is imperative for the fundamental reformulation of the present structure. 'Political leaders' have been the key players on the public scene--in fact, to the extent that they are seen too often in international conferences and meetings. There have been few opportunities so far, though, for 'intellectual leaders' in the region to be engaged in direct cross-border dialogue and in the process of intellectual exchange. However, the Asia Leadership Fellow Program is one of the new channels designed to help overcome this shortcoming and to provide a public forum for dialogues and mutual understanding.

The ALFP 1999

During the two months of the 'collaborative interaction period', the six fellows benefited much from working together and exchanging their views and ideas, establishing and nurturing friendships and promoting mutual understanding. Together they also visited several places in Japan and during a weekend retreat at the scenic Odawara Asia Center, they exchanged ideas with other participants, including Japanese and non-Japanese academics and journalists. Finally, at the end of the Program, a public symposium was organized at the International House of Japan, where the fellows reported on the findings of their individual research projects undertaken in the last two months.

The theme for the 1999 program was "Development and Culture—Globalizing Processes, Localizing Strategies," under which each fellow chose his or her own specific research topic and exchanged his or her ideas with the others. A broad theme like this not only allows room for diverse interests and perspectives among the fellows, but also promotes their common interests in the ongoing local processes of globalization. The specific topics covered in the seminars and discussions were on democratization and environmental movements, ethnic conflicts and identity, modernity and conspiracy thinking, new faith groups and religious freedom, freedom of speech and expression, and nongovernmental organizations and civil society.

Workshops

In early September, each of the six fellows presented his or her own individual research agenda. Their presentations and the discussions are summarized in the following paragraphs:

1) Cho Hong-Sup: "Korean Democratization and the Environmental Movement"
Key concepts: Globalization of civil movements and changing ideologies, information technology, globalized environmental problems, alternative views of development

In his presentation, **Cho** explained how Korean society has changed in relation to the rise and decline of civil movements. The authoritarian regime was the basis of Korean industrialization, which resulted in an increased income gap, corruption and restriction of the freedom of speech and information. Throughout the 1980s the democratization movement gained strength. NGO activities prevailed in the 1990s, as civil and political rights received legal guarantees. Unfortunately, many NGOs were facing financial restrictions and encountering a lack of citizen participation. **Cho**

explained the example of the CCEJ (Citizen's Coalition for Economic Justice), one of the largest nongovernmental organizations in Korea. CCEJ successfully influenced the government's policy promoting democracy on the basis of trust and support given by the people and media. But too much emphasis on short-term 'issue-oriented' activities aroused criticism of its political position and of being 'a civil movement without citizen participation'.

Cho believed that the Korean experience of civil society movements could offer some lessons to other fellows from Southeast Asia. He raised some questions and made comments on the future direction of civil society movements. For example,

1. Civil movements are becoming less radical, but this may lead to fundamental structural problems. How can people's attention be drawn?
2. Information technology can be an efficient tool for civil movements. How and where can it be utilized?
3. Globalization of civil movements is still taking place, while ideologies are changing.

Cho then remarked that globalized environmental problems have been looked at only as technological issues, and the human aspects of such problems are often neglected.

2) Marites Danguilan Vitug: "Ethnic Conflict and Accommodation: In Search of Lasting Solutions"
Key concepts: Nation building, ethnicity and secession movements, a search for federal structure, racial tolerance, the problem of underdevelopment, globalization processes, and the sense of identity

Vitug focused on issues such as nation building, ethnicity and secession movements in the Philippines today. She said that as a journalist she would like to find a long-term solution to the Islam secessionist movement in the Philippines by stirring debate on the issue. She explained the historical, geographical and political background of the Islamic population in the Philippines. The province of Mindanao has been described as the 'food basket of the Philippines', hosting three ethnic groups--Muslims, indigenous people, and Christians. In Mindanao as a whole there are more Christians than Muslims, and a number of them want a federal system rather than secession. She indicated that behind the apparent cultural and religious character of the problem, there exist structural problems: inequality, poverty, and political neglect. The secession movement should be considered not only as a religious conflict but also as a problem inherent in underdevelopment. **Vitug** pointed out that the Islamic resurgence in the 1980s might be related to economic factors and globalization. If more

people are connected through globalization forces, the question is whether we are turning more to a politics of ethnic identity? If this is the case, what would be the long-term solution to the problem? How can we have a political structure that can accommodate different identities?

She offered two 'political solution' models that could help solve the problem of separatist movements: decentralization, autonomy and federalism. She confirmed that recently there is serious rethinking about a possible federal structure in the Philippines.

3) Ayu Utami: "The Desire for Conspiracy "
Key concepts: 'Truth' making, modernity, prejudice, power

There is a tendency toward a certain way of thinking that can be called 'conspiracy theory.' **Ayu Utami** started her presentation with a provocative statement that there is a situation where people are made to believe in a plot imposed by the world's superpower accusing a group of people of 'plotting against us'. She explained that in Indonesia, for example, the women's movement in the communist party was depicted as sensual and dangerous; it is a common belief. The plot of 'the communists destroying Asian countries' prevailed in Southeast Asia. Suharto's motive was to maintain power and he did so by accusing other groups that did not support him. People then began to show prejudices and there is a tendency to blame 'the invisible hand plotting against us'.

She also pointed out the problems of modern thinking. Modernism emphasizes rational thinking rooted in Western philosophy. In modernism, there is a desire for clearness where no obscurity is allowed. In Indonesia, after accusing the communists, the West was blamed. The Cold War came with activities of secret agencies. **Ayu Utami** cautioned against the way we make our judgments and maintained that identity-based problems might be better understood in the context of conspiracy-theory thinking. She thus argued that we need to make 'truth' through negotiation in a pragmatic way, even though having plural 'truths' might not be comforting.

4) Sanitsuda Ekachai: "Religions vs Globalization and Consumerism"
Key concepts: New faith groups, religious freedom, transnational religious activities

Every conventional religion convinces us to eradicate our greed. This teaching remains useful in shaping our attitudes and behavior in the face of a globalized consumer culture. The boom of new religions, however, signifies a general decline of conventional religions because of their inability to adapt to life characterized by many stresses and strains.

Ekachai maintained that, given a more crowded and pluralistic religious environment, the challenge is for us to know how to keep religious freedom while coming up with some criteria for the public to make informed choices. Religious tolerance is becoming increasingly significant at a time when many people turn to religion as a way to cope with the insecurity that comes with globalization. The growth of new faith groups in Japan is a good example. People need smaller religious organizations that can solve their everyday problems in an easy, relevant and moral fashion. Thailand is facing the same phenomenon. The religious establishment, however, is monopolistic in its structure, and it is subject to state control and capitalism. It does not want to reform with the aim of meeting people's needs. As a consequence, this traditional form of legitimacy is in decline.

Meanwhile, the media and society still view new faith groups with suspicion, labeling them as brainwashing cults. **Ekachai** argued that the challenge for Thailand is how to revive Buddhism, reform the establishment, promote religious freedom by allowing new Buddhist sects to emerge, and to promote a better understanding of new religions through media and public channels.

5) Teo Soh Lung: "Globalization and the Culture of Silence"
Key concepts: Freedom of speech and expression, development of information technology, controlled democracy

Teo began her presentation by explaining the situation in Singapore. It is a small, wealthy and economically progressive country, where freedom of speech and expression is not a pressing issue for the majority. Is it possible to have the ability to both criticize and enjoy material progress simultaneously, as they do in other developed countries?

Why do Singaporeans prefer to keep silent? Simply put, there is much to lose if they speak up. They consider it is not worth the trouble. Young people are more interested in earning a living. Many work hard everyday with the hope that they would make enough money for emigration to another country, while they are still young. With this there is the problem of brain drain, and foreign workers sometimes use Singapore as a steppingstone for resettlement in other countries.

The fellows exchanged ideas on transmigration issues in Asian countries including Singapore, Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, and Japan. **Teo** said that after the economic recessions suffered by the four Asian tigers in recent years, nobody mentions 'Asian Values' as the reason for economic progress anymore. The group argued that 'Asian value' discourses could be a rhetoric advocated by pro-global capitalists for promoting the 'Asian mode of capitalism and democracy'.

6) Ohashi Masaaki: "Roles of NGOs and CBOs for Development"
Key concepts: Aid as poison, patronage and control, roles of NGOs, sustainability

What is 'development' and for whom? **Ohashi** raised this fundamental question, which remains unanswered. Today every country is categorized either as 'developed' or 'developing', according to its GNP per capita. Development has now become a universal objective. The role of the government/state is shrinking in the globalizing economy. NGOs are concerned about how to evenly distribute wealth on a global basis. **Ohashi** clarified the definitions and concepts of NGOs, NPOs (non-profit organizations) and CBOs (community-based organizations), and then explained the roles of NGOs in South Asia (India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka), where he has worked as an NGO activist. He pointed out the problems inherent in foreign aid are seen as 'poison'; reviewed the activities of Japanese NGOs; and explained their financial situation. He added that the 'domestication' of NGOs by governments and big donor agencies is his big concern at the moment. He emphasized that the structural relations of 'patronage and control' plays a significant role in development processes, and that the question of 'who pays and how?' needs to be considered.

Common Agenda

After the initial brainstorming workshops, several questions emerged. The fellows were interested in issues at two levels: 1) 'globalization' and 'development'; 2) local issues in Japan. Some of the issues raised by the fellows can be summarized as follows:
-What is globalization all about? What counteracting forces can be observed?
-What local strategies for 'sustainability' and 'self-reliance' in developing countries can be advanced?
-How does globalization affect Japanese society culturally and politically?
-What is the situation of women's movements in Japan?
-How do NGOs and mass organizations react to globalization?
-How do we understand 'civil society'?
-Is there a way to promote a 'multiethnic' Japan?

The observations of Japanese society during the fellows' field trips, their visits to local institutions and their explorations were supplemented by theoretical personal insights from the resource persons in the various seminars.

Summary of the Sessions with Resource Persons
1) The Political Economy of Globalization

Professor Fujiwara Kiichi of the University of Tokyo gave a presentation on the political economy of globalization. He explained how the notion of 'globalization' could be understood under the title "Globalization and its Discontents." The first meaning of globalization is 'an integrated world' by communication and transportation. But what is being talked about is the globalizing market. The world market structure has become very closely integrated. The liberalization in financial markets, investment, and trade that took place in this decade was followed by the simultaneous economic crises in the world in 1997. For example, it took only ten minutes for billions of dollars to leave the Bangkok market and two days for the whole currency crisis to gulp up Southeast Asia. In the case of the debt crisis in 1982, which started in Mexico, it took a full half year for the crisis to reach the Philippines. The 1997 crisis in Asia, on the other hand, developed all over the globe in less than a week. This is how communication and institutional change led to a more integrated world market. Thus, when we talk about globalization, we are talking about a new version of interdependence.

      Prof. Fujiwara further mentioned that the second interpretation is about policy. Globalization is something brought about by the vanguards of globalization, in other words, by those who initiate policies forcing globalization. Globalization is not an objective situation, but the consequence of certain policies. Prof. Fujiwara also discussed several policies that took place within the IMF, the World Bank, the American government, and the Japanese government. He mentioned that, when we talk about policies and not simply about systems and structures, we need to consider individual conditions that allow certain policies to be adopted and implemented. It is not only power but also agenda settings that is important, even though it is not sufficient by itself. In analyzing policies, we have to go into the details. If we want to make globalization a workable concept, we have to investigate what can and cannot be easily changed.

2) Japan, Cultural Nationalism and Globalization

What does globalization mean to Japan? Does it challenge the Japanese people's self-perception? **Professor Yoshino Kosaku** of the University of Tokyo talked about "Nationalism and Globalization in Contemporary Japan" focusing on cultural nationalism in present-day Japan.

"Nihonjin-ron," or discourses on Japanese uniqueness, began in the 1970s and prevailed in the 1980s. In these discourses, certain points were often emphasized in contrast to those found in the West. Japanese methods of communication, for example, are ambiguous and emotional; Japanese society is characterized by its groupism and vertical stratification; and Japanese society is homogeneous.

"Nihonjin-ron" discourse has been reproduced in various forms. The existence of 'cultural intermediaries' (Featherstone, M) standing between the intellectuals and the masses has a critical role in the dissemination of cultural nationalism. For instance, so-called 'cross-cultural handbooks' and 'instruction manuals for international communication' are published by big manufacturing companies and are sold in many bookshops. Through these publications, the theories of Nihonjin-ron are elaborated and reproduced. As a matter of fact, business people are important consumers of Nihonjin-ron.

Another example of cultural nationalism can be found in the popularity of the 'cross-cultural communication industry'. **Professor Yoshino** mentioned the popularity of the 'English-learning' industry in Southeast Asia from his recent research. In these publications, Americans are represented as the significant 'Other'. Commercial as well as educational interests in intercultural communication could lead to cultural nationalism since the uniqueness of a particular culture is emphasized. Concern about internationalization, paradoxically, has made the actual process of internationalization more difficult. Professor Yoshino also commented on the necessity and difficulty of teaching intercultural knowledge.

3) Popular Culture and Consumption in Contemporary Japan

Taking on the issue of consumption, **Professor John Clammer**, a British social anthropologist teaching at Sophia University, argued that Japan has a highly commodified form of culture. He maintained that the process of commodification has gone too far in Japan, and it could be named as a society of 'hyper consumption'. The anxiety for consumption is created through circulation of images that is accelerated by the unprecedented speed and amount of media, such as magazines and advertisements. Multiple complexes of commercial interests are underpinned by the social and media structures in the society. While there have been many 'models' which classical studies of Japanese society have provided, in order to understand contemporary Japanese culture, looking at it as a form of capitalism would be inevitable.

Globalization is often talked about in Japan nowadays. What is globalization all about? Some critical scholars argue that Japan is globalizing

the world, not that Japan is becoming globalized. In thinking about globalization, the circulation of images is very powerful and should not be underestimated. With regard to popular culture, he mentioned the examples of the selective spread of Japanese culture overseas, such as the popularity of Japanese *manga* and *karaoke* in Southeast Asia and the different versions of *Doraemon* that exist in many countries.

4) Environmental and Consumer Activities

It is said that organic movements promote the rural way of life and organic farms attract people from Tokyo for weekend recreation, which certainly has ideological aspects as well. A one-day visit to the association called *Daichi wo Mamoru-kai* (*Association to Preserve the Earth*) in Chiba Prefecture provided a precious opportunity to get informed about the activities of grass-roots environmental and consumer movements in Japan.

The president of the association, **Mr. Fujita Kazuyoshi**, explained the various aims of the activities of his organization: to make Japanese agriculture self-reliant; to raise the self-sufficiency rate for foods in Japan; to have safe, chemical-free agricultural products; to work against environmental deterioration and to cooperate with other Asian countries for the improvement of agriculture and the environment in each country. The association was established in 1975 with the aim of 'bridging producers and consumers' by buying organic agricultural products from the farmers and selling them to urban consumers. The organization commits itself to economic activities as well as civil movements, such as the anti-nuclear movement and the movement against GMOs, and to recycling activities. It is a business corporation as well as an NPO, where the stockholders consist of farmers, consumers, and staff members. The strength of the organization lies in self-reliance, and as such it does not depend on the government or big corporations to keep its activities going.

A few days before the visit, a nuclear accident in Tokaimura, Ibaraki prefecture, the worst nuclear accident to ever happen in Japan, occurred. The fellows and the president discussed issues related to the potential environmental effects of the accident.

5) Social Changes and Religious Thinking

Professor Inoue Nobutaka, a sociologist of religion at Kokugakuin University, is interested in the comparative study of religion in Asia. He explained the general background of religions in Japan and talked about the recent trends in religion and new religious activities in the country. The new religions are modernized versions of the old ones, and there is much

continuity between them. The new religions are those established after the Meiji Restoration that began in 1868. People needed new religions to cope with changes in society. New types of organizations, new styles of rituals, and new forms of teachings were formed, but the ideas remained unchanged. More recently, some newer religions have come out. They are 'hyper-traditional' religions: they are a mixture of elements found in old and new religions worldwide.

The characteristics of 'new religions' are as follows: easiness of expression, recruitment of new members, flexibility of the organization, and emphasis on healing functions. Japanese sociologists of new religions do not use such terms as 'sects' and 'cults', but call them 'new religious groups'. He commented that more than half of the 'new religious groups' are of Buddhist origin. He showed many slides and explained scenes of religious activities.

The presentation was followed by a discussion with the fellows on the changing role and characteristics of the various religions in Asian societies.

6) Dialogue among Journalists

One of the main features of ALFP 1999 was that out of the six fellows, four were experienced journalists.

During a session coordinated by **Professor Takeda Isami** of Dokkyo University, the fellows exchanged their ideas with some Japanese journalists. **Mr. Nomura Susumu**, a freelance journalist, and **Mr. Tennichi Takahiko** from the *Yomiuri Newspaper* shared their experiences as journalists and exchanged with the fellows their views about contemporary Japanese society. The topics under disscusion included foreign residents in Japan, Press Clubs, the role of journalism in Japan, the situation of female journalists, the difficulties that free-lance journalists face, the Freedom of Information Act, and technical aspects of news coverage.

7) Gender Issues

The gender balance of the ALFP 1999 fellows may be worth mentioning: four women and two men, and one of the men could be described as the 'most feminist' among them. **Cho Hong-Sup** said that Japanese women are active in consumer movements, many of which are made up of small groups. Grassroots movements have potential, but there is a discrepancy between their activities and influence at the policymaking level.   **Cho** asked **Professor Ueno Chizuko** of the University of Tokyo how she would explain this gap. She agreed with Cho's observation: women are active in grassroots movements, but there is little access to public life. In the public sector, there

are few women. However, at the local assembly level, women activists are becoming influential and have built nationwide networks. The problem is that their activities remain unseen in the public sphere.

The fellows and **Professor Ueno** exchanged ideas on various issues in contemporary Japan and other societies: the role of women in an aging society, declining birth rates, women's education and career prospects, international marriages, and the representation of women in public media.

8) Japan in the Context of Asia

Professor Nakamura Hisashi of Ryukoku University, who spent time with the fellows on Ishigaki Island, again gave a talk on Japan's relations within Asia. He acknowledged that Japan has destroyed the environment of other countries. For instance, Japanese companies completely destroyed the forests of Mindanao Island. In 1961, the *Keidanren* (Japan Federation of Economic Organizations) targeted Kalimantan, then moved on to Sava Sawarak. Large amounts of environmental damage resulted from soil erosion and other forms of environmental degradation.

The idea of construction has been at the center of Japan's national development scheme from the 16th century. Even in the Meiji period, Japanese knowledge and technology in civil engineering was far more advanced than that of the West. In Japan, *Civil Society* might actually be referred to as *Civil Engineering Society*.

Professor Nakamura also explained the history of Okinawa and Hokkaido, which were colonized and annexed to mainland Japan. They share common experiences with Taiwan, Korea and China, which were Japan's overseas colonies. During the period of Japanese colonization, the people of Okinawa had to be more "Japanese" than ordinary Japanese people were. He called it 'double twisted history'.

9) Women Issues in the Asian Context

Ms. Matsui Yayori, the Director of the Asia Women's Resource Center, who used to be a journalist at the *Asahi Newspaper*, welcomed the fellows' visit to the Center in Shibuya, Tokyo. The Asia Women's Association was established in 1997. Before that, the Association had campaigned against 'sex tours' in Asian countries, and has also been active in dealing with domestic issues. Ms. Matsui explained the situation of female foreign workers. In the late 1970s, an increasing number of Philippino women came to Japan, followed by Thai women in the 1980s. In 1984, a memorial march was organized, and a list of foreign women who had committed suicide or were killed while in Japan was distributed. Now there are more

legal foreign female workers who come under 'entertainment visas'. She mentioned some problems they are now tackling, such as the problem of abandoned Japanese-Filippino children, and cases of domestic violence in international marriages. Also there are many HIV-positive cases among Thai females in Nagano Prefecture, where a system of spiritual care by Thai monks should be developed. The association commits itself to the development of education projects, since all issues related to international labor migration are rooted in the structural problems of development.

10) Civil Society

Professor Sakamoto Yoshikazu, Professor Emeritus, University of Tokyo, gave a presentation on the concept of 'civil society' within the Asian region.

We now live in a world where the myth of 'one nation, one state' is no longer tenable and every state is bound to be multiethnic and multi-cultural. The failure to recognize this reality leads to the horror of ethnic cleansing. States that do not recognize the importance of transnational civil society, but cling on to the institutional and conceptual frameworks of exclusionist national sovereignty will not be viable in the 21st century. It is likely that the major actors in 21st -century world politics will be what he calls 'regional states, or regional federations'. We can envisage East Asia as a transnational civil society.

Asia's regional identity has been defined only in negative terms--that is, Asia was not Europe, not North America, not Latin America, not Africa. The term "Asia" served mainly as a symbol of anti-Western colonialism. In fact, Asia is a culturally diverse region. Further, the colonial experience and legacies and the wounds it left on the state and society of Asia are numerous. The structure of developmental disparities is also diverse.

This heterogeneity can give rise to two opposite scenarios. On the one hand, as the recent turmoil in East Timor indicates, Asia in the 21st century may be in a state of Balkanization. On the other hand, if the Asian peoples succeed in promoting coexistence and cooperation, Asia may serve as a model for dialogue among different civilizations of the world. In order to counteract the dangers of global marketization and political fragmentation, it is essential to create an association of 'civic states' (a 'civil society-based state'), as the basis for transnational civic society.

11) Minority issues in Japan

The issue of Ainu as the indigenous population in Japan is relevant to Asian countries, because in the history of nation building the Ainu were deprived of their land and language, and were assimilated by the Japanese government. The process was very similar to Japan's colonization policies overseas. **Mr. Uemura Hideaki,** Chief Executive of the Citizen's Diplomatic Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, gave a historical overview of the Ainu people in Japan. In 1869, Hokkaido was annexed to mainland Japan, and the Hokkaido Development Agency began to operate. Use of the Ainu language was prohibited, and the Ainu's fishing and hunting rights were taken away.

In 1872, land tenure regulations came into effect, where the Ainu were regarded as not capable of managing their land. In 1899, the Hokkaido Aborigine Protection Act was established with the purpose of assimilating the Ainu population into Japan, through the education of children and the prohibition of the Ainu language. In 1997, the Ainu Cultural Promotion Act was legislated, and a government-sponsored foundation was established. However, there is no article stipulating the rights of the Ainu. In essence, the act is to promote the 'culture' of the Ainu but not their 'rights'. A partnership between the Ainu people and the Japanese has yet to be built. At the present time, the Japanese people do not know very much about Ainu culture and their situation.

Ms. Sunazawa Kayo, from Tomakomai City's social welfare department, illustrated her experiences working as a livelihood advisor with the Ainu population in the area, and described some cases that she had dealt with in the previous years. In 1997, the Cultural Promotion Act of the Ainu was legislated. Since then the media coverage of the Ainu has increased, but at the same time the number of social-welfare cases they have to deal with has also increased.

The Organization for the Promotion of Culture and Research of the Ainu receives subsidies of 3 million yen, which has changed the mentality of the Ainu people. They are trying their best to recover their lost language and culture.

These sessions provided rich information about contemporary Japanese society. In some sessions, a theoretical background to worldwide globalization was given.

Field Trips

1) Field trip to Rokkasho Village in Aomori Prefecture

The field trip to Rokkasho Village had two objectives: to provide an opportunity for socialization among the fellows at the beginning of the 'collaborative interaction period'; and to help them become familiar with Rokkasho Village, whose economy is highly dependent on nuclear waste and recycling facilities. It was hoped that by visiting the place, the fellows would gain a better understanding of the local people's development and environmental concerns.

During the visit, the participants had a lively discussion and raised a number of concerns. But there is not a single definite answer to the problems. There are two sides to every question.

The fellows visited a tulip-bulb farm run by **Ms. Kikukawa Keiko**. She and her colleagues engaged in a movements calling for the use of non-nuclear facilities and energy. The community was divided between supporters and opponents of nuclear facilities. Ms. Kikukawa admitted that they felt powerless and discouraged. However, they have developed a nationwide network of women protesting against nuclear facilities. With these women, they have protested against the shipment of enriched uranium and spent fuel to be recycled and processed in Rokkasho Village. They have started a new movement aimed at building a town that would not depend on nuclear energy, would maintain the rich natural environment of the community, utilize the originality and creativity of the people, and create local industries that do not rely on material wealth or the power of money.

The fellows then visited the Public Relations Center of **Japan Nuclear Fuel Limited (JNFL)** in Rokkasho Village, whose goal was to store petroleum. However, after the oil shock in the 1970s, the plan was changed and it was made into a nuclear fuel plant. JNFL aims to help complete the nuclear fuel cycle to secure a long-term stable energy supply.

The fellows also visited **Mr. Hashimoto Hisashi**, the mayor of Rokkasho Village. The mayor explained the history and economy of the area and mentioned that enterprises such as the Japan Nuclear Fuel Limited were encouraged to invest in the village. Although there are no direct subsidies from the national government, the village benefits from the construction of new facilities. The employment rate has risen, and so has the enrollment rate for higher education. The average per capita income in the village is higher than that of the average in the prefecture and the life of the villagers has improved in many ways, thanks to the nuclear-power processing facilities. The fellows and the mayor discussed issues related to the nuclear-processing facilities, their impact on the environment, and problems of local economic development.

2) Field trip to Okinawa

The first session in Naha was held with two distinguished professors from the University of the Ryukyus: **Professor Gabe Masaaki** and **Professor Yamazato Katsunori**.

Professor Gabe Masaaki presented a paper entitled "The Base Issue in Okinawa--An Okinawan Perspective." He made three main points. First, the people of Okinawa continue to hold strong memories about the historical relationship between Okinawa and the Japanese main islands. The different historical experiences of the Okinawan and the Japanese main islands produced a structure of prejudice against Okinawans. Even with the present generation, there are a considerable number of Okinawans who continue to feel that they have endured discrimination from mainland Japanese.

Secondly, the American military bases in Okinawa exist as a consequence of the U.S.-Japanese security structure. When the San Francisco Peace Treaty was put into effect in 1952, the occupation of the main islands of Japan was concluded; however, Okinawa was severed from Japan and remained under American administration until 1972.

The third point concerns the fragile structure of the Okinawa economy. Before reversion to Japan, the economic structure was characterized by issues related to the American military bases; since reversion, investment in the economy is dependent upon financial transfers from the Japanese government. The poor industrial production, a tertiary industry that emphasizes the sale of imported goods, and a construction industry dependent on public works indicate an extremely irregular structure.

The actions taken by the Okinawan people in the last year or so have stripped away the possibility of considering this to be simply a problem of 'Okinawan bases'. Rather, it must be presented as a problem that should be solved by all Japanese.

Professor Yamazato Katsunori gave a presentation on "*The Cocktail Party* and Okinawan Identity." He explained the uniqueness of Okinawan identity vis-a-vis that of mainland Japan. Unlike the people in other prefectures, Okinawans feel a definite sense of difference from Japan (or the mainland), which has been shaped historically and still obstinately remains at the bottom of Okinawan consciousness.

Under the American administration, which lasted 27 years beginning in 1945, Okinawan writers wrote about their identity and meditated on what it meant to be an Okinawan. Culturally and politically separated from the mainland and deprived of human rights during this

period, the Okinawans seized the opportunity to shape and sharpen their sense of identity.

To understand Okinawa's relationship with Japan, it is interesting to see how Okinawans have treated their language and standard Japanese. Okinawan writers became obsessed with their own language—the Okinawan dialect or Ryukyuan. Early modern Okinawan fiction shows that Okinawan writers tried to use Okinawan or Ryukyuan and provide translations in standard Japanese in parentheses immediately after the passage. Thus, it may be possible to say that Okinawan fiction was born out of the conflict between the two languages. This pattern, that is, writing certain passages in Okinawan dialect or Ryukyuan and providing translations for them in standard Japanese, has continued until the present time, and it is certain that Okinawan writers will continue to do so in the 21st century.

The fellows had a lively discussion with the professors on the uniqueness of Okinawan culture in relation to other Asian societies. There is a new sense of identity among the Okinawan people, who have become more aware of their long relations with other parts of Asia.

A one-day forum, under the title "NGO Forum in Ishigaki," and organized by the Executive Committee of the NGO Forum in Ishigaki, was held on Ishigaki Island. Forum participants included a study group on "Marginalization and NGOs" of the Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development (FASID), ALFP fellows and local civil movement activists.

Dr. Suzuki Naoki of FASID, chair of the study group, explained the background of the forum. The study group on "Marginalization and NGOs" had been looking at issues surrounding international development in Asia, Africa and other regions, and the members had come to realize that the situation inside Japan should be closely studied as well. One of the members, **Professor Nakamura Hisashi** of Ryukoku University, who has had close relations with Ishigaki Island, suggested that what is going on in the world and in Japan could be better understood in light of the experiences of the people of Ishigaki.

According to **Professor Nakamura**, who has been working on Ishigaki Island for decades, NGO activities involve a broad range of private initiatives, from processing used tins in daily life to volunteering for emergency relief activities, which the government cannot cover on its own. Ishigaki has a geographical advantage as it lies between the mainland of Japan and other Asian nations, and it could contribute to the building of a peaceful world. Ishigaki City can work beyond the walls of nation-states.

There were three speakers from the Yaeyama district, which is a general name for the island district including Ishigaki. **Mr. Tomoyose**

Hidemasa of the Ryukyu Broadcasting Corporation gave a talk on "Grassroots Activities in Yaeyama." The Yaeyama district has developed a unique set of cultures from Taiwan and Southeast Asia. Maintaining the cultural identity of the islands would lead to new development in a global world, and it is important to have appropriate forms of development which suit each island.

Ms. Shiratama Keiko of the Council of Women in Agriculture and Fisheries explained the situation of women in rural societies. She mentioned that it is necessary to build a society in which both men and women as individuals could benefit from the society's achievements.

Mr. Miyara Misao, a member of the Ishigaki City Assembly, talked about problems encountered by the environmental conservation movement on Ishigaki. The political structure of Ishigaki Island is changing, and it seems that NGOs are going to play a greater role in the future.

There were three speakers from the FASID study group on "Marginalization and NGOs." **Mr. Hata Tatsuya**, of the Shanti Volunteer Association, talked about "The Roles of Japanese NGOs in Asia." He described his experiences with NGOs, including his 12-year work in Thailand. He stressed the importance of maintaining dignity in the development process and of education based on each culture.

Mr. Taniyama Hiroshi of the Japan International Volunteer Center argued that it is important to link local initiatives on development in Japan and overseas so that both residents and local administrative bodies could be reinvigorated. It is also important to support the right of the local people to make their own decisions.

Mr. Isezaki Kenji of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation pointed out that a role can be played by NGOs, but in some fields, such as PKF, the role of the state remains critical. He mentioned some possible mechanisms of 'preventive diplomacy', to prevent conflict in advance.

The fellows further deepened their thoughts on the issues the people on the island are facing by taking a one-day tour guided by **Mr. Tomoyose** and **Ms. Yamazato Setsuko**. They visited a new airport construction site and discussed problems arising from environmental degradation. Tourism is a big industry, but there is a dilemma: Is it worth destroying the coral reefs for the sake of tourists who can easily visit the island using the present airport?

Weekend Retreat in Odawara

The fellows took part in a weekend retreat in Odawara. The two-day meeting did not produce any substantial results, but the discussions were useful.

After the presentations by **Cho Hong-Sup**, **Ohashi Masaaki** and **Marites Danguilan Vitug,** a discussion began with examining such concepts as 'civil society' and 'public interests'. Cho said that public interests had been defined and prioritized only by government. However, with increasing voices from NGOs and the rise of civil society, the definition of 'public interests' is changing. For Rokkasho Village, the 'public interest' might mean going out of nuclear power dependency. According to **Ohashi**, questioning the content of 'public interest' would be necessary. **Vitug** contended that, in the Muslim issue in the Philippines, there was no 'one public interest' as such and that it would be necessary to find common ground among the competing interests.

The following issues were raised and discussed:

1) Local Initiatives and the Overcoming of Dichotomous Thinking

Mr. Ishizuka Masahiko from the *Nihon Keizai Shinbun* said that there is a sharp conflict between local people's interests and governmental interests. 'Not In My Back Yard' is a common attitude of local people. **Cho** noted a similar attitude in Korea, but said that a new direction could now be observed.

Mr. Isezaki Kenji mentioned the difficulty for 'outsiders' to intervene in a locality that they don't belong to. **Professor Suehiro Akira** of the University of Tokyo pointed out that only taxpayers could be precisely defined as 'insiders' of the local community. **Ekachai** responded by saying that there is a danger in defining insiders and outsiders since such a dichotomy restricts opportunities for negotiation and trust building between them. The dilemma will be solved by interactions in the field. **Professor Kajiwara Kageaki** of Hokkaido University called attention to the importance of the notion of 'interconnectedness', or 'inter-relatedness' when one considers ongoing processes in Asia. He said that dichotomous frameworks such as 'Christianity versus Islam' are very dangerous. The path towards 'civil society' is taking place so rapidly in Asia that it could be described as the 'digital path to civil society'.

2) Globalization and Civil Society in Asia

Professor Sorpong Peou, of Sophia University, said that what is new about globalization is speed. The state structure in many Asian countries is so weak that it cannot cope effectively with the process of globalization. In the West, the process of state building took five centuries; hence, state institutions are very strong. Professor Peou maintained that 'civil society' is a Western notion which makes a distinction between the internal sovereign rights of the state and the community of people. In the Asian context, civil society has emerged but remains weak because the power structure remains concentrated in the state. He raised the point that civil society and the state should coexist and challenge each other, but at the same time should seek to promote cooperation. They should not become bitter enemies, nor should they be 'partners' in the sense that civil society actors have to conform to the state's interests. The post-Washington consensus has enabled external actors to put greater emphasis on respect for human rights, democratization, transparency, and the accountability of the state.

3) The Power of Information

Ms. Hokugo Miyuki from the *Asahi Newspaper* said that the most important factor to be considered is access to information. If 'outsiders' had information which would help empower local communities, they would be welcomed. Civil society consists of individuals who can work independently with enough information. In Japan, only the government tends to possess information. How NGOs and CBOs can collect information to empower themselves is a critical question.

      Mr. Alan Feinstein, from the Japan Foundation Asia Center, said that the state had a unique and very strong role in Japan. If the structure of society changed into one with more power entrusted to local governments, NGOs might be more influential in empowering local communities by providing them with information.

      Professor Nakatani Ayami from Okayama University pointed out that besides access to information, critical thinking is indispensable to decision making. **Ayu** said that a free flow of information is not sufficient. She agreed with Professor Nakatani on the importance of critical thinking and pointed out the resistance against globalization by movements in small communities. **Mr. Kato** said that the gap between information 'haves' and 'have-nots' is widening.

      Sanitsuda Ekachai focused on the transformation of 'shared belief' in Thailand in the midst globalization. **Teo Soh Lung** shared her experiences in Singapore with the others and stimulated the participants' thoughts on democracy and the possibility of individual strategies against global forces. **Ayu Utami** elaborated on the idea of modernity and discussed

'conspiracy thinking'. The three presentations highlighted two opposite directions in the world: a move away from mythical and religious thinking and to rational, scientific and modern thinking; and an increasing number of religious cults and acute ethnic conflicts.

4) What is Globalization?

Professor Takeda Isami of Dokkyo University suggested that the multiple dimensions of globalization should be looked at. The perceived meaning of globalization varies from country to country. Singapore is very much globalized in economic terms, but less globalized in the political arena. In Burma, globalization is seen as dangerous.

Globalization is broader than Americanization. **Professor Kajiwara** said that globalization involves two dimensions: homogenization and fragmentation. **Professor Suehiro** argued that in Japan globalization means Americanization. Speaking English is one salient feature of globalization. Many political scientists in Japan are educated in the US. Many governments are sending personnel to the U.S. to be educated at Harvard University, for instance, and they share the same economic theories. **Ayu** said that globalization involves a more complex flow of information. **Cho** pointed out that a globalized capital consists not only of American capital but also of Japanese, Korean and other capital as well.

5) Effects of Globalization

The process of globalization is almost complete in terms of flows of money and information accelerated by the use of the Internet. **Professor Suehiro** said that the World Bank is changing the accountability system on the basis of the American system, for example, where management is based on ISO. However, he noted that the use of ISO manuals written in English would give problems to poor Thai workers who cannot read English. **Ohashi** also explained the effects of globalization in India where it has brought changes to local lifestyles. Some people return to fundamental Hinduism, fearing the spread of Western influence exemplified by the global presence of McDonald's restaurants.

Is there an emergence of a 'global civil society' or 'transnational civil society'? Does global expansion of markets and consumer activities lead to a shared consciousness among citizens in the world?

Mr. Isezaki commented that 'globalization within a civil society' could be observed and further clarified the different attitudes within NGO communities toward globalization.

In globalization we find an accumulation of power, conspiracy, political issues, and flow of images through which we internalize those of others. **Professor Kajiwara** suggested that we look at a particular place/topos and individual experiences to picture the processes of globalization, and then we might understand how to construct 'individuality' and 'locality'.

The following section summarizes the remaining sessions at the Odawara retreat.

- A Tendency towards Bigness? What Benefits Who?

Vitug said that there is a tendency in globalization towards bigness and that competition is becoming fierce as big companies emerge in the region. Therefore, is all this beneficial to the people? Since globalization is like joining the Olympic games, what games are we good at? Where can we find a niche? **Mr. Ishizuka** responded by mentioning the recent large-scale merger of three big banks in Japan. The new rhetoric is that the banking sector should be reorganized so that they can compete with American or European banks and that restructuring by reducing the number of banks makes the sector more efficient. All this remains to be seen.

- Market Forces, Postmodern States

Mr. **Feinstein** said that governments protect the images of transnational businesses to attract consumers. What is the role of the state if transnational corporations can monopolize capital? **Professor Peou** said that global civil society faces a problem because no power can counterbalance the power of the market. Privatization and liberalization allow monopolization by powerful firms or MNCs. Fragmentation within communities will go on. Small businesses will be pushed out. Postmodern states can no longer control market forces effectively. Therefore a better system of check-and-balances, whereby the state can 'tame the market economy', is needed.

- In Search of a New Framework

Mr. Isezaki proposed the idea of 'global minimum' thinking, i.e. minimum basic needs that could be found in common among people at the bottom of the social stratum. **Ohashi** said that the resentment against globalization is shared. There are different levels of responses: from governmental agencies, civil movements, NGOs, and human rights groups. Nationalism and ethno-nationalism are also reactive forces against globalization. **Ekachai** said that

consciousness about the environment and human rights is rising. **Professor Peou** wonders how people can learn to live minimally.

The Public Symposium

Global Challenge, Local Responses: Asian Experiences and Concerns

The ALFP 1999 ended with a one-day public symposium. **Mr. Kato** of the I-House, who served as moderator, stated that the aim of this program was 'not to bring about solutions to any of the problems the fellows would discuss, but to share concerns about globalization and to share hopes about the future'.

Globalization was the keyword for discussion. There is no question that globalization takes place and affects people's lives, but there were different notions of globalization, not to mention of the effects globalization has had on each part of Asia. One of the conspicuous features of globalization is speed accelerated by information and communication technologies. **Ayu Utami**, focusing on the experiences of Indonesia, argued that we can no longer think in terms of a solid and constant identity. **Marites Danguilan Vitug** shared her thoughts on Muslim separatist in the Philippines. She highlighted the relationship between globalization and the need to assert one's identity. **Ohashi Masaaki** reported on the field trip experiences during the program, and analyzed local development in Japan. **Teo Soh Lung** spoke about Singapore's vision to 'build a world-class home'. She cited a book, *The Singapore21*: "We must not be seized by the five Cs (cash, car, condo (condominium), credit card and career), lest we lose sight of more enduring values like character, courage, commitment, compassion, and creativity." **Sanitsuda Ekachai** argued that globalization has made consumerism the world's new religion that has exacted a heavy toll on the environment on a global scale. Thailand is no exception: the country suffers from worsening rural poverty, serious environmental degradation, and the breakdown of families and communities. **Cho Hong-Sup** pointed out that civil movements are at a crossroads in Korea. He referred to the recent Korean people's reactions to a nuclear accident in Korea, which occurred five days after the Tokai-mura accident in Japan.

The participants raised two questions:

a) What are the responses of the local people on the street against globalization? Are they returning to traditional values?

b)   How can the negative effects of globalization be minimized?

Vitug responded by referring to the situation in the rural Philippines, where fishermen and farmers are losing out in global competition. There are two responses: 1) trying to connect with other parts of the world and exchange information, 2) going back to traditional methods. The second response has not been seen much in the Philippines, but there are interesting cases in Thailand. For instance, there is an experiment of community currency in Thailand.

Ekachai explained the situation in her country where there is no single response, since there are many interest groups. The middle class and the business sector in Thailand don't question globalization. Poor people, whose lives have been destroyed by inequitable economic development, have formed grassroots environmental movements. In Thailand, NGOs and villagers are working as partners. Villagers are increasingly playing a leadership role and are forming political alliances nationwide, known as the Assembly of the Poor. They are demanding decentralization so that natural resources can be exploited to benefit local people. They advocate 'direct participatory democracy'.

Globalization is widening the gap of income between rich and poor countries. The political structure of globalization should also be questioned. Uneven distribution of wealth between rural and urban people is a major root-cause. Affluence in Japan also depends on the cheaper goods imported from overseas. This structure is possible because of the unfair terms of trade and the different values of labor. The question to be asked is: How can we lessen the wage gap? How can a more equitable value of labor be achieved?

Cho said that in order to minimize the negative effects of globalization, democratic principles like accountability are necessary. Japanese and Korean NGOs cooperated to prevent the building of a polluting factory. **Ayu Utami** mentioned Indonesia, where the speed of information flow doesn't reach rural areas, although it was the speed of capital inflows that caused the economic crisis. **Teo** commented on the question of responsibility. There is a structure of exploitation and governments must be held partially responsible for it.

For **Cho,** globalization does not simply mean Westernization. Globalization began with the interests of capital and markets. At the same time, civil society has been growing since the 1980s. The question is: How should we deal with the market forces within the framework of civil society? **Ohashi** said that world capital wants to have a global market. Globalization is neither exactly the same as Americanization nor Westernization, as we can see that other Western countries or the U.S. have their own policies to protect their market. However, free competition is

always preferable for the strong side. Consequently, globalization is often mistakenly taken to mean Americanization or Westernization.

Epilogue

Culture, Development, and the Public Sphere:
Globalization Processes and Localizing Strategies

If nation-states are 'imagined communities',[1] we live in an 'imagined world'.[2] The process of globalization has been helping to undermine the integrity and unity of nation-states with increasing flows of capital, information, and images. We are connected to people living in different corners of the world through multiple media. Events may be witnessed anywhere no matter where they take place.   Information can be sent and collected simultaneously from anywhere in the world. Thus, as Featherstone argues:

> "[I]t therefore may be possible to point to trans-societal cultural processes which take a variety of forms, some of which have preceded the inter-state relations into which nation-states can be regarded as being embedded, and processes which sustain the exchange and flows of goods, people, information, knowledge and image which give rise to communication processes which gain some autonomy on a global level."[3]

The spread of globalization does not have the same impact on all regions.   The pace of transformation is not the same in every field: technologies may change rapidly, but changes in cultural values are much slower.   These differences in the pace of transformation may result in transitional phases of various duration and difficulty, which might generate further tension and conflict.

Adams argues:

> "Paradoxically, perhaps, globalization has had curiously isolating effects on individuals. Globalization has shifted the location of economic power away from individuals, local communities and (increasingly) from national governments. The relentless pursuit of efficiency, calculability, predictability and control (nicely captured by the term "McDonaldization") has drastically reduced the extent to which people can control the economic conditions of their lives, even

at the scale at which commerce and industry is organized has expanded." [4]

In an increasingly globalized economy, we have witnessed the emergence of an international ideology--sometimes referred to as the Washington consensus--that seeks to 'free the market from all substantive forms of regulation by the state'.

The most alarming impact of globalization has been 'the accentuation of social polarization between rich and poor countries as well as within countries'. [5] Globalization has widened the gap between the rich and the poor. The power of global capital has endangered the growth and consumption patterns such as to result in drastic ecological degradation. Thus environmental issues are one of the new priorities that have recently come to the fore in the global agenda. Globalization has also led to the rupturing of the 'bases of social cohesion and consensus in many societies, further disempowering the disadvantaged and marginalized sectors'. [6]

As Wallerstein points out, the global and the local distinction is becoming very complex and problematic-- to such an extent that we should now speak in such terms as the 'global institutionalization of the life-world and the localization of globality'.[7] Now that we live in a global world, a dichotomous framework of analysis is of no relevance to the reality. Indeed, it is the dichotomous framework of global and local relationships, and the distinction between modern and traditional societies, that we need to challenge.

Today the main cultural trends operating on a world scale have transnational or multinational origins, or reflect situations that can be encountered anywhere in the world. Thus the evolution of the great religions; the rapid growth of sects and cults; the worldwide adoption of certain cultural models; the expansion of some languages and the contraction of others; large-scale movements of population such as economic migration, refugees, and mass tourism; and the revival of nationalism and ethnicism—all these have a far-reaching influence on the problems of 'culture and development'.[8]

It was indeed a precious opportunity to have the six fellows in Japan to discuss and exchange ideas. The most exciting development resulting from this program is to see how new thinking has spread and to see a growing awareness about friends and neighbors from different countries.

How should we deal with the influences of globalizing market forces while we reconstruct a framework of 'civil society'? As one of the fellows aptly put it, now we are facing this huge question at the dawn of the new century. Along with the 'crisis' and the processes of globalization that

reconstitute the elements of 'civil society', the door has been opened for new possibilities for democratization and social movements in the Asia-Pacific region. What responses can we make and what alternatives can we advance to realize more human aspects of globalization? New regional alliances, which are not necessarily based on the relations of countries but on those of provinces in informal setups,[9] and the cooperation of citizens in novel forms through new communication technologies have been emerging. At least some potential for new paradigms has been acknowledged.

Notes

(1) Anderson, B. (1983) *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso.

(2) Appadurai, A. (1990) 'Disjuncture and Differences in the Global Cultural Economy' in Mike Featherstone, ed., *Global Culture*. London: SAGE.

(3) Featherstone, M. (1990) 'Global Culture' in Mike Featherstone, ed., *Global Culture*. London: SAGE.

(4) Adams, W. (1996) *Future Nature*. London: Earthcan. p. 56.

(5) Rivera, T. (1999) 'Globalization and the Challenge of the Next Millennium', Paper read at the 19th International Symposium on *Globalization: Light and Darkness,* co-sponsored by the Institute for the Study of Social Justice, Sophia University, and the Social Science Research Institute of International Christian University, Tokyo, 11 December 1999.

(6) Ibid.

(7) Wallerstein, I. (1990) 'Culture as the Ideological Battleground of the Modern World System' in Mike Featherstone, ed., *Global Culture*. London: SAGE.

(8) See UNESCO (1995) *The cultural dimension of development*. UNESCO Publishing.

(9) See Vitug, M. and Yabes, C. (1998) *Jalan-Jalan A Journey through EAGA*. Anvil Publishing.

Program Reports of the Fellows

This Chapter contains the formal reports submitted by the fellows evaluating and reflecting on their research and residence in Japan.

n Language and Literature
Encounters with Asian Fellows[1]

Ayu Utami

The Question on Locality
1

It was a small circle. They spoke or were able to understand my language, here, in a room somewhere in Tokyo. Mikihiro Moriyama arranged this meeting among a group of people who shared an interest in Indonesian literature. I was supposed to talk about my work but the only novel I had written had not been published in Japanese. Fortunately, most of the people in this gathering understood Indonesian and some of them had read the book, finished or not. A woman came up and asked me to sign the first page of the "book" she had in her arms – a photocopied version with cover made of color-printed reproduction. Who cares about copyright? I was happy and surprised.

Moriyama, the organizer of this meeting, was a good-looking man in his early forties, associate professor at Nagoya University of Commerce and Business Administration, and neatly dressed as Japanese usually is. His acquaintance with Indonesia dated back years ago. Maybe he was in his early twenties when he arrived in his Indonesian hometown, Bandung, capital of West Java province, to study Indonesian language under grants from both governments. In addition to capturing our national language, he also amazingly picked up the local tongue, Sundanese. Now he is still working on his dissertation at Leiden University on Indonesian literature. I called him *Kang* Miki, a Sundanese way for addressing a brother or a senior comrade.

There is always a bound between a scholar and a subject of research, a relation we cannot easily describe. Maybe a sort of homesick for a discovered geography and the people that grew up there. Moriyama always tried to organize a meeting every time he knew there was an Indonesian writer visiting Tokyo, and made use of the opportunity provided by other organizations. In this case, I was invited by the International House of Japan, or I-house, as one of the fellows under the Asian Leadership Fellow Program (ALFP). Moriyama would take the

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[1] This paper contains three parts. The first two, deal with the questions on locality and feminism, are essays based on my experiences during my stay in Japan. The third, on globality, is a report on the ALFP.

shinkansen from Nagoya, two and a half-hour each way, sometimes for a one-day appointment only, otherwise spent one night or two at the International House of Japan.

His enthusiasm for Sundanese writings seems to me like an affection I would always be astonished of. And for me it was, or it reminded me of, the question on "locality" versus "nationality"– a problem a heterogeneous country such as Indonesia will always has.

I remember we were sitting in the coffee shop of I-House surrounded by the unusual green autumn and heavy sunlight, he was in casual suit of somewhat green, talking about the way the discussion would be arranged. It was November but it felt like it was summer. I was amazed that he spoke Sundanese and understood its literature quite well. I spent my childhood in Bogor, a town where people also spoke Sundanese beside Indonesian. Yet, I don't speak the local language as well as he does, partly because my parents, who came from Yogyakarta, spoke Javanese to each other and use Indonesian to their children. Also, partly because I didn't really want to use Sundanese since we had our national language shared by everybody in the archipelago.

Sundanese is the vernacular of West Java. However, Sundanese culture has always been considered as a minority in Java, an island as prominent as Honshu for Japan. The larger groups who occupy the eastern and central parts of the island call themselves *orang Jawa*, Javanese, even though they realize the differences among their subgroups. The Sundanese are excluded from this major group and never regard themselves as Javanese though they call the island they belong to as Java. The demarcation, here, is self-identified by both ethnic groups despite the internal and external complexity. But on what base is the distinction?

Ethnic identity is in a big portion defined by language. The Sundanese and the Javanese share the same physical characteristics. There are some comical stereotypes shared among the groups, but no outsider would be able to mention to. To be frank no insider as well. We have the same darker than olive complexion, black hair, etc. The difference is cultural, and also political. But, probably, academicians also drew the line. While enjoying our coffee and cake, Moriyama told me about his article on a Sundanese literati from the 19th century, Moehamad Moesa, published in a scholarly journal *Indonesia and the Malay World.* Moesa was a local leader and a writer who was close to the Dutch administration. He established a Sundanese modern writing but his name was not well known. Moriyama's concern (in which I was interested mostly) was that in the colonial time Dutch academicians had refused Sundanese literature as an established system like what they considered as the feature of classic Javanese writings.

In this case, scholars had added to the marginalization of one particular ethnic group.

Moriyama's sympathetic observation reminded me of the reciprocal prejudice shared between the Javanese and the Sundanese. My parents are Javanese. They came from the surrounding villages of Yogyakarta, the quintessential town of Javanese culture. When my father got a job in Bogor in the sixties, they moved to West Java where I was born and raised. I spoke Indonesian with Sundanese accent. However, I remembered that in my childhood one or two children from the neighborhood shouted at me as I was walking in front of their houses, "Javanese!" Though not quite understood what they meant, I knew that they did not like Javanese living in their area and I was nervous to pass by their place, feeling that I was a minority in the vicinity. I was also embarrassed when my aunts talked in Javanese in a public transport and I believed that other passengers – we sat tightly closed because the *bemo* was so small – would laugh at us. For me Javanese language sounded somewhat illiterate, a language of housemaids and servants. It was a contradictory story from the marginalization of the Sundanese as Moriyama had told me.

Yet it was not really a contradiction. The fact that I consumed the image of Javanese as the language of the uneducated class was the very evident of Javanese dominance, because I internalized it from TV. We had one TV channel at that time, the state television TVRI. Many of the national dramas and comedies were with Javanese traditional background. Even though there was an obvious effort by the government to introduce folk songs from many provinces, as well as heroes and heroines from each province, I had never remembered seeing any dramas from Sumatra or Kalimantan or regions outside Java being broadcasted by the central station. If they were at all, it was a local station that did it. There was one comedy of which stories derived from Sundanese folklore, *Kabayan*. Others were dramas with script using formal-written Indonesian or with Javanese background. Javanese drama always had this cliché representation of a servant: the playful character, illiterate, simple-minded though somewhat wise. It strongly descended from the character of *punakawan*, the four of servants of the *pandawas,* the heroes in Mahabarata epic. The *punakawan* is not found in the Indian Mahabarata. In fact, those additional characters distinguish the Javanese version of Mahabarata from the original Indian version. The *punakawan* always get a big portion on every show. Even in a full *wayang kulit* performance, audience would wait for the intermezzo called *goro-goro*, in which the *punakawan* and other servants will show up. This intermezzo is a popular part in the middle of the solemnity of the whole *wayang*. The servant characters always entertain audience with their

foolishness. These personalities stick in the mind of the audiences better than other characters, even better than the noble heroes of the story do.

Certainly any stranger will look ridiculous, with or without prejudice, in the eyes of the majority. I remember when in the fifth grade we had a new boy who came from Surabaya, East Java. He cried when he realized he could not catch up with the others on Sundanese language class. All of the students laughed at his accent just because he was different; he was not "us". He was "the other". This attitude worked the other way around. When I moved to Jakarta, a cosmopolitan center of power, I again became a stranger, though not for a long time. My Sundanese accent prevented my school friends from understanding me easily.

Many Javanese maintained their prejudices against Sundanese as well as against other ethnic groups. I hear that Sundanese are jovial people, incapable on serious matters. Their art is popular and contain no sophisticated wisdom. The male's voice in their language is too light. Better for a Javanese girl not to marry a Sundanese man, because their "ash", means their ascendant, was subordinate to the Javanese. (This contains a double bias supposition; what's wrong with a dominant wife?). Sunda sounds feminine to the masculine Javanese. As far as I know, the Javanese seldom takes Sundanese wood puppet, *wayang golek*, as high art as their own shadow puppet, *wayang kulit*. *Wayang golek* is too colorful, too playful, too entertaining. This brings me back to Moriyama's commentary that many scholars on Indonesian studies underestimated Sundanese literature. I agree, compared to Javanese and Sumatran Malay, literature from Sunda needs more study and attention.

The marginalization of Sundanese culture as Moriyama recounted is true – but superficially. To be sure, the prejudices shared between both ethnic groups have been there for a long time, but the prevailing Javanese symbols in general discourse has always been another story -- namely Indonesian politics. Three of the four presidents of this republic are Javanese. BJ Habibie, the only non-Javanese president, led a transitional administration for just a few months. Deliberately or not, those leaders have placed a handful of Javanese within their administration, and also used Javanese idioms in their political language.

2

One of the audiences to the meeting was a woman in her early twenties, Miichi Suzuki. She used to be one of Moriyama's students, but had taken a different path from her mentor: she had chosen Yogyakarta for her language course. I was really impressed by her Indonesian and her understanding of different dialects from Java Island. I got a chance to chat with her a bit later.

I was also invited by another Indonesianists club to give a talk on the anniversary of the association. The event was held in Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, a week after the previous meeting organized by Moriyama. It was Miichi Suzuki who met me at the lobby and took me to the place by subway and JR.

The talk was rather tiring. They organized a translation after every written paragraph of my speech that I could not be too spontaneous. Too much improvisation might interfere with the translator's concentration, but otherwise I noticed some yawns. There was a standing dinner afterward. I could not join them because I had a farewell party for my Japanese fellow, Maasaki Ohashi. Again, Suzuki-san accompanied me to the meeting point at Shinjuku station where my colleagues had been waiting for me; otherwise I would have got lost.

On the way we chatted. Suzuki-san drove me back to the subject I had earlier discussed with Moriyama, which was on the question on locality. Being a foreigner who had stayed in Yogyakarta, Jakarta, and traveled some other towns I believed she had sensed the air of a heterogeneous Indonesia; she had experienced different languages people spoke in different regions. Yet she noticed that all prominent writers wrote in Bahasa Indonesia, Indonesian language. None of them wrote in their local language. Even writers with thick local background wrote in Indonesian. Suzuki had read Umar Kayam, Romo Mangun, and Goenawan Mohamad, to mention some names with solid Javanese root. "But why don't they want to use their own language?" she sound protested. Or maybe she was just raising her neutral curiosity.

I was somewhat disturbed. I supposed she was thinking about the polemic between "regional literature" and "central literature" when she aired that question. It was a recent debate among literary critics in Indonesia and a number of seminars dealt with this question. But again that is not necessarily what happens in reality outside academic discourses. Cultural studies theories tend to be suspicious to anything they considered "center" while choosing to stand on the side of anything they considered "peripheral". They suspect "high art" and celebrate "pop art". In the case of Indonesian language and literature, it might goes even more contradictory to presume that local languages are neglected and literature using local language is marginalized by the "center".

Why don't Indonesian writers use their "mother tongue"? I find the question posed by a number of foreign scholars. But what disturbs me most is its assumption that Indonesian was not our language that had been deeply rooted in our soil. Probably it is easier from the outside to see that a national language is a threat to local languages. This presumption finds support in recent political incidents in Aceh and East Timor. Both used to

be Indonesian special provinces controlled by the Suharto regime using harsh military government. The first was for economic reason because Aceh supplies an abundant percentage of income from oil and gas to the central government. East Timor was more a victim of the great cold war: the Australian government and US had supported the annexation of the region into Indonesia when the communists were about to win in this Portuguese colony. Struggle for independence in Aceh and East Timor were the fiercest in Indonesia. Recently, one of the issues was whether to abandon the Indonesian language or not – on the theory that Bahasa Indonesia represents the oppressor.

However, Bahasa Indonesia is the language I'm living with. And I love her. I myself write in Indonesian and could not think of writing a novel in another language. Since I was born and grew up with it, it is my natural setting. Only later I realized that it is a nurtured process when it is put vis-à-vis other languages, be it "local" or "foreign" language. It is easy to define our identity when we encounter otherness.

Since a teenager I spent my life in Jakarta, where the Indonesian language is predominant. But those who grew up outside Jakarta might live in a quasi-bilingual atmosphere where Indonesian and "local" languages coexist. Maybe my colleagues from a more homogenous society as Japan will not realize this easily. It is more complex than just a situation where one language is a threat to the other by means of coercion. Yet I believe that hegemony through modernization did happen. But what is necessarily wrong with hegemony?

The prototype of Indonesian language, that is a form of Malay, had been a lingua franca for a hundred years before our founding fathers named it *Bahasa Indonesia*. It enabled people with different languages in the archipelago to communicate in trading. In his paper *From Heteroglossia to Polyglossia* H.M.J. Maier, a Dutch Indonesianist friend of both Moriyama and I, rather called this previous situation heteroglossia: a situation in which various languages coexisted without one being predominant and without distinct border. By that he was describing the 19th century archipelago. In the same article he wrote: 'Heteroglossia constantly has difficulty in maintaining itself; it is always running the risk of being curbed by some hegemonic center which is able to forge societal and linguistic forces in such a manner that centripetal forces gain the upper hand over the centrifugal ones.'

When colonization -- with its modernizing drive, brought about education and efficiency within its bureaucracy, it needed to "invent" a common language for Dutch civil servants, investment administrators, as well as for native inhabitants; it had to be a standard language that would enable them to write with about various problems. The Dutch considered

two languages: Javanese and Malay. Apparently Javanese was not used as vast as Malay and it was also based on a complicated layer of hierarchy. The study of "Malay" was finally urged. In consequences, standardization of the language was inevitable. This form of formalized "Malay" that was later baptized as Indonesian Language prevailed until now. Here is what Maier called as polyglossia. "Cultural plurality and linguistic flexibility were subverted, and differences and distinctions in customs and tradition were increasingly defined in terms of language." (I may not agree to all of this.)

But what is necessarily wrong with hegemony? I was a product of an education system that has adopted standardized Bahasa Indonesia, Roman alphabet, and modernized (e.g. westernized) school. The question is: is there life outside hegemony? I would rather say that it is irrelevant to seek for an origin long buried under the hegemonic power of modernity because there is not any. As Ben Andersen has coined that Indonesia is an "imagined community": the idea of Indonesia as a nation state is but a trace of colonization, bounding the colonized subjects within a myth of destined unity. But history doesn't deny the fact that we have decided to unite. We embarked from a consensus, series of diplomatic lobby and struggle, political exercises that transformed myth into reality. History solidified what was previously liquid and Indonesia may be a mere project, as Ben Anderson puts it, but it works.

Indonesian nationalism has two directions: towards "internationalism" and towards the "internal nations". For me it is the uniting spirit of our nationalism that is crucial. It is not the chauvinism against outsiders. Grown up as a child that experienced inter-ethnic problems and prejudices, no matter how slightly it may have appeared, I knew that the Indonesian language is an alternative identity where we could project ourselves, freed us from our differences, and liberated us from the hierarchy system in our "local" thinking.

There must be a way of seeing the position of the Indonesian language among local languages of the archipelago. It is not precisely like what Maier thinks of polyglossia, in which a standardized national language is predominant against flexible local tongues. Locality is not in subordinate to something national. They keep on subverting the formalized Indonesian language. Yet they also exist in their own way that every Indonesian will get the sense of each locality without really understanding the language. Language is not a dead body, and the living Bahasa Indonesia is a language with languages within.

3

Her name was Chizuko Ueno, Professor of Sociology at the University of Tokyo. She was one of a few woman speakers invited to our discussion, despite the fact that four of the six fellows of this year's program were women.

I was one of those who urged to have in our class a woman with prominent feminist ideas. Traces of feminism were not obvious in Japanese mass culture. Or maybe it was just that I was a foreigner that spoke no Japanese (except one or two words repeated in the subway). At any rate, I won't be able to understand their discourse. But mass culture elsewhere has never freed women from the demand to be visually aesthetic. Prof. John R. Clammer, another speaker to our class, wrote an article in a book *Women, Media and Consumption in Japan*, showing how the female body was represented in contemporary Japanese print media. He described in some of his paragraphs that the female body in male media represents an object to be consumed by the male eyes. At the same time, woman magazine also uses female body in similar poses to be consumed by woman using the hegemonic male eye. The same criticism works towards the all-women-performance Takarazuka. We got a chance to see the show and noticed how the representation of the male characters was another idealization of masculinity, while the female character was represented with an obvious Cinderella complex.

Now in this class I got an impression that Prof. Ueno was a person with a strong character. She was thin but firm and had sent a pack of several papers of hers and her colleague for us to read before we met. I found the articles very stimulating. Her article *A Trap of Reverse Orientalism* drove me back to the problems of locality in my homeland. What are the relation between gender problems and the issue of locality? The answer is that insecurity of the colonized world makes it more difficult for its women to carry on feminist movement. It is very easy to condemn feminist ideas as foreign and not belong to the traditional local values. Prof. Ueno's article was more elaborate, but to make it simple I'll put it this way. While "western" knowledge is considered as rational and masculine, remarkably in the period of European imperialism, the "orient" is understood as irrational and feminine. I always think that James Bond bore the trace of this belief: the protagonist is the white man Bond and the accessories are often pretty women of color.

From the perspective of orientalism even the male domination of the Eastern society is feminine. But within the femininized civilization of the "east", there is domination toward its women through another kind of

"orientalism" and "feminization" of women. It is a domination within domination and women in a double dominating world toward them would have to fight harder to win feminist discourse.

There is of course no single "west" or "east". However, there are dominant tastes in the European or American markets about Asia. Those tendencies occur not only in the commercial pop culture, but also within intellectual circle. Roland Barthes' *Empty Center*, a book based on his two weeks visit in Japan, a small book that you could find in I-House's library, is an obvious example. The "east" has to be exotic and mysterious. Otherwise what is its difference from a modern and rational "west"? The western market – how obscure it might be – imposes a set of identity toward Asia. But both the "west" and the "east" itself imagine a set of identities on which Asian women are described. They should be "women" and they should be "Asian".

Many times I came across a typical question that links to my opinion about the identity of an Asian woman writer. What do you think about so and so as an Indonesian or an Asian woman writer? But the most troublesome question is the one that is curious of whether, being an Asian woman writer, I use my work of literature to promote feminist ideas. And I faced those kinds of question when I talked to a Tokyo audience.

The question contains a trap. It traps me into several formulas: sexual identity, regional identity, and politically-correctness. In fact, I could not be not Asian or genuinely male, but I do not use my fiction as a campaign tool for my political views. During the meeting organized by Moriyama, I told the audience about a feminist commentary on my novel by a feminist colleague living in Australia. The novel contains several plots, including a love story of an ex catholic priest, Saman. When he was still a young priest, Saman was involved with a mentally retarded girl whom he met in the poor transmigration village. The girl was sexually attracted to the young man. Saman was not a conservative clergyman and he supported the girl to play her fantasy with a wooden statue that he had made for her. Disappointingly, according to the critic, Saman did not sleep with the girl eventually. On the contrary, he slept with a beautiful woman who helped him fled from Indonesia when he was targeted by the military. Isn't sleeping with a beautiful woman another reproduction of a male discourse?

I couldn't say no to that question. Not an absolute yes either. If an intercourse between a man and a pretty woman is a male discourse, does it mean that every story of this kind is a product of male hegemony? Or, does it mean that all female or non-male discourses should have a reverse model? Those questions have no final answer, because we would find ourselves trapped in an unending labyrinth of values. It is a kind of simulacrum in

which each value is a reflection of other values, yet each value is a thing in itself.

I believe that aesthetic doesn't always correspond to ethic. Beauty doesn't always parallel to justice. As well as desire doesn't always agree with politics. As in sadomasochistic works of literature from Marquis de Sade to George Bataille, the sensuous beauty is the act of injustice. The most erotic part of my novel is the new version of Genesis' Garden of Eden retold by a woman. It tells explicitly how a man named a woman's body. This whole process of naming is an act of authority by a male-subject toward a female-object that no feminist will politically agree.

Art has the ability to transform injustice in a special way into the beauty of intensity. I remember a Japanese documentary played in Yamagata Festival of Documentaries. The film was called *Princes Plum P-udding*, directed by a woman director, Terasima Mari. It is about an obese woman, her loving mother, her collection of Mickey Mouse dolls and his girlfriend Minnie, her dream, and her loneliness in a society where the myth about a beautifully slim body prevails. The story line comes out as juxtaposition between feature documentary, interview, and staged scenes. The staged scenes are so powerful and grotesque. She is in white gown, with long black wig, heavy make up nearly like a clown. She dances with Mickey and a Pekinese dog in her hands. She sat in a dim. A woman in Victorian dress next to her endlessly feed her sweets and cake. She is happy, full and contented, yet she is sad. Maybe she once implies that she is lonely. I laughed, the audience laughed, but soon we became horrified with ourselves for laughing at an unfortunate girl. The power of this film is that it absorbs the audience and puts them in an irony. The spectators become the very power of repression they themselves would try to condemn.

How, then, a person believing in feminist ideas should respond to the discrepancy between the desire for justice and the passion for aesthetic while the repression against women is still obvious? Sometime we need a space not to be twenty-four hours politically correct; so let art offer its room, because there are so huge home works to be done. Yet there is no general answer. Here we will see what the word 'locality' means.

Back to our discussion with Prof. Chizuko Ueno. In a more informal chat she described the problem of Japanese women in being a carrier woman and a mother at the same time. In Indonesia we used to call this ideal "women's double role" and there was a special campaign by the government for this. This propaganda opened a broader space for women than just her domestic room. But it didn't free women from the myth of motherhood. There was already a reaction from the feminist side that this ideal was not realistic because only a superwoman or a Madonna could achieve it. In fact, in Indonesia it's not an unrealistic idea for an upper and

middle class woman. The surplus of labor in many developing countries, such as that in Asia and Latin America, has enabled urban families to have servants taking care of the household and the children. "This is not like the condition in Japan," said Ueno. Labor wage in developed countries is so high that middle-class parent could not afford to pay a baby-sitter.

That was just one example that shows how different social structures make up different kinds of justice or injustice. Justice and injustice is within a given precondition. Locality is one of the preconditions. This is of course a pragmatic point of view. But is there any ideal structure outside context?

During the rest of the two months of collaborative work among the fellows, we focused our attention to discourses of the local and the globalized world. But I believe that locality means pragmatism. It is not a local world versus a global world, because the global situation offers us alternatives for our ideal. "Local" is a necessary condition and locality is a pragmatic effort to make endless corrections of certain circumstance.

On Globality
4

Of course pragmatism is not ideal as well. Practicality was the reason that our program's means of communication was English. One important requirement to the ALFP candidacy was to be able to communicate in English. The invitation letters, the correspondence, as well as, the conversation when I met the organizers and the other fellows in Tokyo, were all in English. It seems that English has became one of the minimum standards of intellectual quality throughout the globe.

I arrived in Tokyo on August 31st. Later in the hotel coffee shop I saw Teo Soh Lung and Cho Hong-Sup for the first time. They were talking in English. She is a Singaporean and he is a Korean. The next day I was introduced to the rest of the fellows, as well as to the organizers and the sponsor representatives, in a formal lunch with white table linen and good cuisine. We, again, spoke to each other in English. Masaaki Ohashi broke my impression that Japanese were reserved people. He soon took Hong-Sup and I roaming Shinjuku's night for the other fellows were too tired. Ohashi spent years in Bangladesh with Shapla Neer, an organization to help Bangladesh recover from the ravages of war. Hong-Sup is a journalist in Hankyoreh, a daily that bore an important role within the struggle for democratic South Korea. He himself was a pro-democracy activist when he was a student and imprisoned. I am now a writer and an editor for a journal on literature. I used to be a news-journalist and an activist for press freedom. We shared similar experiences and interests and I instantly got

very close to my new friends and immediately felt at home. Isamu Maruyama and Naoko Shimamura who organized this program were really warm and helpful. Our rapporteur Fumi Kitagawa was also a very sweet person and her curiosity involved her with our discussions. Masayo Shiozawa from the Japan Foundation Asia Center helped me a lot with my interview and research on Japanese contemporary and traditional art.

Day after day I realized that all fellows got along with each other quite well, maybe too well. We were all of equally hedonistic: we loved to drink, eat, sing, and share jokes, and enjoy public bath. Soh Lung and Jah might not drink as much as the others, and I might not eat as much as the others. I might not like Hong-Sup's smoking as he might not like my jokes. But we shared such happy moments, and here I have to say that I love my colleagues. Soh Lung is an activist and a lawyer; Marites and Jah are journalists. Looking at the professional backgrounds which were different from the first year fellows, our way of reasoning was in the same level to each other: mostly using non-theoretical discourse and argument based on experience in dealing with various problems in each country. The lack of theoretical reflectiveness in our group was complemented by the precious presentation by various speakers with remarkable academic background.

In one of our early classes we traded our works. Isamu or Naoko had previously sent us one of Marites' books, *Jalan-Jalan*, a book on what was defined as East Asian Growth Area. Now she had another book published. Hong-Sup brought his book as well, but it was in Korean. I wasn't able even to pronounce the text of Hong-Sup's work. I learnt that Jah's work had been translated some two years ago, but the translation was into Japanese. I didn't bring any of my writings for I was definitely sure that no one of the fellows would understand Indonesian. It was only Marites' books and Ohashi's article on Non Government Organization that we could read because they were both in English. I was slightly sad to realize that we could only understand each other through a "double translation". I spoke to Jah in English and she would transfer my English into her English before translating it into her mother tongue Thai. That was the way I communicate with others. Marites and Soh Lung were more bilingual. They used their own dialect of English in everyday live. Like the Indian Hinglish, Singaporean has Singlish and Filipino has Taglish. I am more exposed to English literature than literature of my neighboring languages. There are some works of Mishima and Kawabata translated into Indonesian, but I could not find translation of other Asian literature into Indonesian.

I remember our weekend retreat in Odawara, a nice town outside Tokyo, some one hour by train. One of the participants, a gentleman from NHK, casually aired what many people thought of globalization. It was the

use of English, he said and about English ability in the job market. Naturally many won't be happy with this, especially when a newspaper wrote that English proficiency in Japan was lower than that in Korea. There was also a further worry that English may banish languages of powerless societies. Here we face a dilemma of choosing between practicality by using English and the impractical idea of preserving the "local" language.

Language is a way of uniting and a way of defining at the same time. Technology has made the situation more complicated where digital surpasses geography. I realize that I am more linked to American culture than to the geographically closer Asian nations through movies and television programs. However, the speed of digital technology has created a new dimension of the previous international relation. Kiichi Fujiwara reminded us that the recent economic crisis was distinct from the Mexican crisis in the 80s, in terms of its incredible speed in giving its impact on the world economy. Virtual trading within digital network system has enabled capital to fly to the other end of the globe within seconds. This is the crucial problem of current globalization. But to quote Giddens, "globalization does not only concern the creation of large-scale systems, but also the transformation of local, and even personal, contexts of social experience." It is, he writes, a mixture of processes that often produce contradiction; such as the revival of local identities.

We know that connection is done through language as well. Language, as de Saussure points out, is a convention, which is arbitrary and indeed doesn't consider fairness. The power of Hollywood movies, McDonald restaurants, CNN are products and producers at the same time of political and economic power of English language setting.

In the second half of the twentieth century Japan emerged as one of the world's big economic power. The Japanese do not give their language a power, but they give something else. Through dubbed Doraemon, and recently Pokemon, Japanese cute pop figures spread throughout Asia and the rest of world. Japan came forth as another center of powerful culture industry to challenge those that had existed previously.

Economic power also generates philanthropic attitude in some big institutions. There are many prominent organizations in Japan of which activity goes abroad the country. The Japan Foundation, The Toyota Foundation, and later The Nippon Foundation – to mention some names – are those among many of which concern is to promote regional cultural and intellectual cooperation. The ALFP was sponsored by The Japan Foundation Asia Center. Back to Indonesia, I work for an alternative art center of which some programs were also supported by The Japan Foundation Asia Center. Those were regional projects that were participated by artists and intellectuals from Asian countries.

Japan has become a new motor. Its ambition to promote Asian networking deserves praise. I-House regional programs would not result just as a formal conference at the closing of the two months-collaborative ALFP program. The end is a start of a larger network. Writing this article, I'm already in Jakarta, back to my routine job, still unable to complete my novel. However, the cultural center I'm working with – *Komunitas Utan Kayu*, promoted by 1998 ALFP fellow Goenawan Mohamad, a place where we strive for an open society through liberation of art, thinking, and information – carries on some programs. One of them was a seminar on leftist ideas and movement in Asia that was granted by The Japan Foundation Asia Center. This is a crucial issue in Indonesia since for 32 years General Suharto's government banned all leftist thinking, while now Indonesia needs an exercise for alternative inspiring ideology to compete with the bigotry of religion or narrow nationalism. But I'm glad that we got contact with the Thai speaker, Kasian Tejapira, through ALFP connection. This is just an example of a bigger possible collaboration. In our meeting room these days we are planning a network to promote tolerant religious discourses in Indonesia as well as in its neighboring countries. Some contact persons are previous ALFP fellows.

Now I remember the public seminar at the closing of our program, at the end of October. Ohashi called it a cosmetic side of ALFP, on which I agree. Unfocused it might be, unnatural was the supposedly simultaneous translation, it was not the core of this program. The substance lies in the future. A step is not a leap. But it is incredibly important.

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NGOs and CBOs in Some Development Cases in Japan

Ohashi Masaaki

1. Introduction

For the last 20 years, I have been involved in NGO activities, which support destitute people mainly in South Asia, and recently in Albania for Kosovar refugees. To me, an NGO is an organization that relates to development issues abroad, not in Japan.

It is, however, very unfair. "Development" is a universal indicator that ranks all the nations in the postwar world. As one of them, Japan was in the category of "developing" countries, or low-income countries, in the 1950s. We then experienced a rapid economic growth, or development, utilizing external assistance in the 1960s. Through the 1970s, many development projects were implemented based on the New National Comprehensive Development Plan (*Shin Zenkoku Sogo Kaihatu Keikaku*). We still have many development projects and plans, while extracting a large surplus from the international trade. It is, therefore, quite relevant to review our own development process in the past and at present, from the viewpoint of a development NGO.

The Asia Leadership Fellowship Program (ALFP) provided me with a golden opportunity to review some development projects/cases in Rokkasho village in the Shimokita peninsula and Ishigaki Island in Okinawa Prefecture. In those places, I found some interesting difference in terms of roles of NGOs, external groups which support local movements, and CBOs (Community-Based Organizations) that are local groups consisting of the local community members and local people in respective local movements against each development project/plan.

The view presented here is my own, but the interaction with other ALFP fellows has largely contributed to it during the Program.

2. Functions and Roles of NGOs and CBOs in Rokkasho Village

When a large scale "Industrial Area Development Plan" in the Mutsu-Ogawara area in the most northern part of the Honshu Island of Japan, including the Rokkasho Village, was proposed in the late 1960s jointly by the prefectural government and some large industrial houses, the village

mayor and most villagers were against the plan. However, many villagers were bound to sell their land due to their acute poverty and large debts. They sold land to private real estate agencies, which got the maximum profit in the process by re-selling the land with much higher prices to a newly established semi-governmental organization for the Plan.

Many villagers who sold land repaid their loans for their livelihood and livestock investment. A certain number of them have re-settled in other parts of the village. A few villagers in the planned area have been faithful to their original determination and had not sold their land. Gradually, villagers lost their unity and finally became fragmented.

An area of 5,000 hectares was finally prepared for the Plan, but no private factory came to the area, except one official oil storage facility that occupied only a few dozen hectares, due to the Oil Shocks and subsequent economic recession. When the Plan became totally abortive, the government proposed the other huge scale construction plan for the same site. This is the construction plan of "Nuclear Waste Storage and Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing and Uranium Enrichment" complex and related institutions. This kind of complex is indispensable for a country where nuclear energy was going to be one of main energy sources, but everyone wants to avoid having it near their own homes.

A few local CBOs, such as Fishermen's Cooperatives in one hamlet of the village and some individuals in the village, have been active against the construction and also against the transportation of nuclear wastes to the village. It should be also mentioned that almost no NGOs have actively and continuously involved in the local movement.

As a result, some part of the complex and related institutions have been constructed and begun to operate. The construction will continue for the coming years and more and more nuclear wastes will be brought into the village. High-level radiation wastes, which have a very high temperature, will be stored under the earth for more than several hundred years to cool down.

The present local government is fully supporting the nuclear waste facilities. The mayor was very proud of "development" of the village, in terms of higher incomes of villagers than other part of the prefecture; availability of job opportunities at the complex and institutions for villagers including young people within the village and drastic improvement of the high school enrollment rate.

Why much powerful movements against the construction of the nuclear facility could not be organized? Why involvement of NGOs in this area is limited? It is apparent that the people's movements and the NGOs' involvement in the village are much weaker than other similar cases in Japan.

According to Kamata, an author of books that carefully record peoples' reactions against the two plans in Rokkasho Village for decades, many villagers were not happy with those plans, but they were/are economically powerless in front of attractive offers of high land prices and job opportunities. The village is located at one of the poorest area and also as geographically isolated.

He also mentions that there was some apathy to the involvement of external organizations. In the late 1960s, negative impressions of such involvement were often expressed on mass-media in the late 1960s when student movements became very violent, and the anti-airport construction movement in the Sanrizuka, to which student organizations were involved in, inevitably became violent in front of the government's offence. Kamata adds that a miscreant, who was probably sent either by the semi-government agency or by a real estate company, amplified this apathy among the villagers of Rokkasho when they were trying to organize themselves against the Industrial Area Development Plan in the late 1960s.

3. Functions and Roles of NGOs and CBOs in Ishigaki Island

The Ishigaki Island is one of the most attractive tourist resorts locating four hundred-kilometer southwest of the Okinawa Island, 2,100-kilometer southwest of Tokyo, or 250 kilometer west of Taiwan. Hundreds of thousand tourists a year visit this small island of 45,000 habitants and other smaller islands nearby. They come here to enjoy beaches, well-developed colorful corals, tropical green scenery, and so on.

Transportation of tourists to this island is naturally very important for the economy of the island. Most of them arrive by air, as sea travel takes too much time. There is an airport in the island and several flights fly to the airport everyday. Still there is a plan to construct one new airport with a longer runaway, so bigger jet airplanes can bring more tourists.

The Okinawa Prefecture government decided this construction plan in 1979 and named the Shiraho area of the Ishigaki Island as the site. People living in the area organized a mass meeting in December of that year, and unanimously adopted a resolution against the plan. The resolution argues that the construction may irretrievably destroy the beautiful natural environment, especially certain rare species of corals that are very sensitive to environmental changes.

In the early 1980s, there is a series of offence to begin the construction on the proposed site. The Minister of Transportation officially approved the construction and riot police were later brought in to the site to protect surveyors who prepared survey maps. The "Yaeyama Fishermen's

Cooperative", which was the one of the main opposition groups, had agreed to receive a compensation against the loss created by the construction.

In 1983, some islanders with some outsiders formed a local NGO of "Shiraho-no-umi-wo Mamoru-kai(Association for Protecting Sea of Shiraho). This Association is to support the local people in Shiraho who almost gave up their opposing position under the heavy pressure.

This Association initially organized some nation-wide mass campaigns, so that people all over Japan would come to realize the problem. They contacted some parliament members and national and international organizations for natural environment. Hundreds of small pieces of land on the proposed site were sold to many individuals in Japan, so that the official requisition would be troublesome. They even organized an academic survey conducted by some renowned Economists and other academicians, on the economic viability of the proposed airport construction to refute the official reason for the construction.

In the late 1980s, the international general meeting of IUCN adopted a resolution concerning possible effects to the environment by the construction. WWF also became very active against the construction plan. The Environment Agency officially requested to the Okinawa Prefecture government to review the plan.

As a result, the Prefecture government altered their original idea to construct the new airport on Shiraho, to suggest five different sites on the Island for the construction, and proposed the local government to choose one. It must be noted that the government did not give up the idea of the airport construction itself, but tactically passed the most difficult part, the site selection, to the island. This selection issue may bring about a deeper division among island people who have different view and economic relations.

In terms of protecting people and the environment of Shiraho, NGO activities in the Ishigaki Island have effectively promoted the whole movement. The formation of a local NGO has created immense impacts locally, nationally and internationally, and made many individuals and institutions involved.

Those who are leaders of the movement are still active in various social activities (for instance, to realize sustainable local development and alternative development), and trying to involve other CBOs, local governments and local industrialists in their respective activities.

4. Conclusion

As explained above, people in the Rokkasho Village have been isolated and thus powerless facing the dangerous nuclear waste facility construction

project. They had to accept whatever proposed upon them. In contrast, villagers of the Shiraho area have been persistent for years with their position to protect people and the environment against the new airport construction, and finally succeeded with their demand.

Why are there differences in the people's power between case of the Rokkasho Village and that of the Shiraho?

One of the most obvious answers is involvement of NGOs and their roles in the movements. In the Rokkasho Village, almost no NGO could play any vital role in the mood of anti-external intervention. As a result, the movement was isolated, and could not sustain their rightful demand in a effective manner.

In the Ishigaki Island, a local NGO has been formed to support the local people in Shiraho. This NGO have played immense roles to support villagers and make the movement nationally and internationally. As a result, a wide range of individuals and institutions came to participate in the movement in different ways. Probably without the formation and supports of the local NGO, "Shiraho-no-umi-wo Mamoru-kai (Association for Protecting Sea of Shiraho), local people could not be successful.

As an external agency, the NGO is indispensable to promote people's movement, as shown in two contrasting cases. It is, however, similarly important that an NGO does not act as a representative of local people and/or a CBO. Personally, I am very much concern with this possible tendency, because more and more official development and aid agencies are emphasizing the need of NGO involvement. An NGO must retain their own position as an outsider and a supporter of local people, CBOs and their movement.

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Observations of Changing Japan

Cho Hong-Sup

1. Introduction

Since I was appointed as an editor of city desk in March of 1999, I have felt as if my brain was getting empty. Everyday I had to participate in four meetings, edit nearly a hundred articles, page 25 reporters in turn and order them to write specific articles. It has been almost impossible to squeeze out spare time from my schedule to read, think, and meet friends.

The Asia Leadership Fellow Program (ALFP) rescued me. At first I could not adjust to the sudden freedom given by the Program. Soon I found myself enjoying a new life being full of intellectual challenges, endless conversation with other fellows, so envied library commuting, and research visits without a mission to write.

The theme of this year's ALFP, "Development and Culture-Globalizing Processes, Localizing Strategies", was rather broad for journalists like me, who have been trained to think concretely of short-term changes. However, it was not long before that I found most of the programs fitted my research interests. Especially, the trip to Rokkasho-mura, visits to and meetings with NGOs and their staff members, field visits to Tamagawa and Kisogawa and related institutes were most helpful for my research.

The Program consisted of two parts: collaborative interaction period from September to October 1999 and personal research period during November. During the first part, I participated with other fellows in field trips to Rokkasho-mura and Okinawa, retreat conference in Odawara, public symposium, and resource person seminars. In November, I concentrated on Energy issues and 'nature-plentiful river construction' projects in Japan. I shortened my participation in the ALFP by 5 days in order to participate in the International Workshop for Sustainable and Peaceful Energy in Asia held in Phuket, Thailand.

2. Trips to Rokkasho-mura and Okinawa

When we visited remote areas we expected something of an exotic landscape, food, people, and some secret stories. Although the ALFP fellows were not ordinary tourists, field trips to Rokkasho-mura and Okinawa were exciting experiences for both intellectual exploration as well as tourist's taste. I was deeply impressed by how the program was organized to show fellows one the most serious problems of Japanese

society, from the beginning. I could feel relieved from the burden of thinking that a host country of the program might impose a predetermined solution of social problems. At the same time I could find similar characteristics of local development issues between Japan and Korea, and possibility of future solidarity of NGOs in two countries.

Nuclear Discriminations

The fellows visited Rokkasho-mura during September 3-6th. Although one of the main purposes of the trip was 'ice-breaking', we immediately melted the ice and by the second day 'evaporated' as one of the fellow **Ohashi** mentioned. Evaluation meetings held every day during the stay were helpful both for understanding local issues and for deepening interactions between fellows.

I had visited Rokkasho-mura for two times before this trip. But this visit gave me much more information and intellectual impacts. It was partly because the duration of stay was longer than the previous ones. More importantly, it was because of the organizer's scrupulous arrangements to meet people ranging from local anti-nuclear activists to PR Center of nuclear industry and the mayor of Rokkasho-mura.

Nuclear industry brings about discrimination. It discriminates against nature, people, and local development. Nuclear facilities require scrutinized safety, especially when there are facilities dealing with such sensitive materials as plutonium and condensed uranium. All the important instruments in nuclear facilities have 'fail-safe' design, that is, as they have multiple safety measures that even if one of them fail to operate the others would work. The only exemption in nuclear facilities that has no fail-safe design is human. We should be continuously monitored and educated just because we are not like machine.

Nuclear industry deteriorates nature. Nuclear facilities select their cites in remote areas with good water supply, cheap lands, and less population. In many cases these areas coincide with those of beautiful scenery, fertile crop fields and fisheries grounds, and rich ecosystems. Furthermore, nuclear industry could contaminate the environment semi-permanently through nuclear wastes and accidents. For instance, radioactivity of plutonium that is contained in burned nuclear fuel and reprocessed nuclear waste needs 2,4000 years to become half the original amount.

Nuclear industry distorts local development as a consequence. Various grants and subsidies from the central government and nuclear industry may present prosperity to the local economy only for the time being. But heavy dependence on outside support is insecure as global trend

shows a dwindling importance of nuclear industry mainly from the fact that nuclear industry is no longer safe, environmentally sustainable, and economically viable.

These observations on nuclear industry apply also to Rokkasho-mura. Mr. Hashimoto, mayor of Rokkasho-mura, proudly told the fellows that the rate of students entering into university grew up to 35% from only three students, five years ago. He continued to show us statistics that the average income of his town was 10% more than the prefecture average and almost near to the national average. However, it seemed that there are dark shades behind this superficial prosperity. Firstly, the local economy is decidedly dependent on nuclear industry. Nearly 40% of its income comes from national support, as a compensation for allowing sites for nuclear facilities. This means that the fate of the town will be on the hands of nuclear industry.

Uncertain future of the town is evident from the fact that the town has secondary role in nuclear cycle industry, in worst as a burial ground for highly toxic and persistent radioactive wastes. For example, among 156 local people who work for the nuclear-related companies in Rokkasho-mura, 41 are guards and most of the remaining persons are also in charge of simple and unimportant works.

Secondly, the nuclear cycle industry seems to inhibit local development. The ambitious 'Mutsu Ogasawara Development Plan' has been staggering leaving more than half of the industrial site of 2880ha as barrens. One of the major reasons of the belated development seems to be the location of nuclear industry. No Company would construct plants neighboring dangerous nuclear facilities. I heard from local people that the priority job of the best students in town was to become workers of nuclear cycle companies which guaranteed 'Tokyo-level' salary. Creative ideas and energy of young people that the local economy badly needs is absorbed by the nuclear industry.

Thirdly, risk of possible radiation accidents or contamination has never been admitted nor assessed. In Rokkasho-mura, the most dangerous nuclear facilities such as reprocessing plant, high-level nuclear waste storage site, low-level nuclear disposal site, uranium enrichment plant are gathered together. But as Ms. Kikukawa, a tulip grower who has implemented anti-nuclear campaign for eight years in the town, said, "nuclear industry always reiterates absolute safety of the facilities". Of course, threats from the nuclear cycle facilities are not confined to Rokkasho-mura. Not to mention of radioactive accidents, intriguing threat comes from increasing stockpile of plutonium. When the construction of reprocessing plant is finalized on schedule in 2005, somewhat 4000

kilograms of plutonium will be produced annually. This is the amount to make 500 nuclear bombs of Nagasaki type.

Power of Identity

The next trip of the ALFP fellows to Okinawa and Ishigaki Islands was challenging and especially for me, who had no background knowledge of the islands, and the local peoples' strong sense of identity came up to me as fierce as the typhoon. Although the unprecedented mighty typhoon made short of our schedule by half, I could feel and think about the widespread issues of war and peace, ethnic and cultural identity, meaning of globalization, problems of American military bases, and discrimination.

For the first time I got to know that Japan is not a homogeneous society both in terms of ethnicity and culture. I have to confess that from the visit to Okinawa I came to realize that Korea had also 'Okinawa' in Cheju Island. Shameful enough, I have never thought about the island in this way in my life. Cheju Island, which is the largest island in Korea located at the southern end of the Korean peninsula, has its peculiar history comparable with Okinawa. To take for a few, it has a dialect which usually cannot be understood by other Koreans, exotic culture in many aspects, and a sad history of insurgency and subsequent cruel suppression by government troops which had caused at least 30,000 civilian victims.

As Professor Yamazato pointed out in an informal seminar, the Okinawan sense of identity that has become a new tendency of self-confidence could be an invaluable example of localizing strategy against globalization.

3. Meeting with NGOs

There is a noticeable growth of NGOs in Asian nations in recent years reflecting a significant advancement of the democratization and pluralization process among nations in the region. Lester M. Salamon put the new trend in "association revolution" on his article in <Foreign Affairs>. He maintained that "it may prove to be as significant to the latter twentieth century as the rise of the nation-state was to the latter nineteenth." Japan is not an exemption. According to Yamamoto Tadashi of the Japan Center for International Exchange, "the debate on the role of civil society and governance has been particularly intense in Japan in the past several years, as the country has witnessed a breakdown in the system of governance that serve Japan well during its modernization process". As Korea is witnessing burgeoning of NGO activities recently, the ALFP has provided valuable

opportunities to research about NGO activities in Japan, their relationship with government, and comparison of characteristics of NGO activities shown in both Korea and Japan.

Success Story of "The Earth"

I visited several Japanese NGOs and discussed about their activities. They are the Association to Preserve the Earth, Japanese Environment Conference, Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center, National Network of Water Resource Development Problems (SUIGENREN), and Citizens' Nuclear Information Center.

Among them, the Association to Preserve the Earth ('the Earth') was most impressive from the point of view that its activities are firmly based on widespread supports from people, and are public activity-oriented rather than policy-oriented, in that sense it may represents typical characteristics of Japanese NGOs.

'The Earth' is an organic farming organization with members consists of 46,000 consumers, 2,500 producers, and five corporate. Its main activities are to provide organic agricultural and fisheries food to consumers and to implement civil advocacy movements mainly through educational activities. It took seven years for 'the Earth' to accomplish break-even point of business since its establishment in 1975. Korea has also this kind of NGO that seem to be not so successful in business and civil activities. I believe other NGOs in Asia could utilize the Earth's know-how of controlling excessive agricultural products and consumer education programs.

It is also noteworthy that 'the Earth' has implemented Asian Solidarity Programs, which include exchange of trainees and information with Korea and Thailand, and to buy Philipino bananas and Thai handicraft products. Considering that Japan imports more than 60% of food from abroad, the idea of 'the Earth' to buy Asian food instead of American or European food, which necessarily deteriorate the environment during the long transport process, gives insights to overcome problematic WTO's agricultural product trade policy.

Taking into account of the successful works of 'the Earth', I cannot but ask some fundamental questions on the role of the organization. Is it possible to change society through 'business plus civil activity' movements? In other words, do consumers who can afford to buy 20% expensive organic foods really want a new 'organic society' based on equity and ecology? Does the movement have any strategies to reform government policy on environment, agriculture, and food? In order to seek answers to these questions, it should be interesting to see Korean NGOs' problems and possibilities that present a striking contrast to Japanese NGOs.

Learning From Each Other

Korea has experienced a growing role of NGOs during the 1990s as a result of democratization in late 1980s. Some of the Korean NGOs such as Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice, Korean Federation of Environmental Movement, and People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy are so influential as to successfully affect and in sometimes deeply involve in government policy making processes.

This could be partly explained by the history of democratization movements where people's movement had taken a determining role. As a consequence, ordinary people as well as the mass media give a full support and trust to NGOs whereas government administration and political parties receive less credit. Major NGOs, on the other hand, have adopted to implemented policy-oriented activities heavily dependent on professional activists and progressive scholars rather than ordinary people's participation. It should be noted that while Korean NGOs have become to enjoy a growing influence on government, it begins to show some unhealthy symptoms such as bureaucracy, unsound financial structure, lack of memberships and participatory programs, and institutionalization.

I believe that the contrasting characteristics between Korean and Japanes NGOs could be good topics for study by both sides in order to strengthen each other's weak points. I had valuable opportunities to discuss this point when I gave lectures to graduate or undergraduate students in Waseda University, Tokyo International University, and public lecture organized by Citizens' Nuclear Information Center.

4. Japan Is Changing From Streams

With kind and thoughtful arrangements of the International House of Japan and the Ministry of Construction, I could make field research on emerging new river control methods of Japan. These methods emphasize on environment rehabilitation and peoples' accessibility to rivers, not to mention traditional flood control and water resource development. Where I visited were Aqua Restoration Research Center and Kiso Sansen National Government Park in Gifu Prefecture, and Tamagawa and Tsurumigawa in Kanagawa Prefecture.

The Ministry of Construction, which had been regarded as one of the strongest and conservative organization, began to change its long-held position toward considering environment aspect since 1990. It came up with the General Principles for Environmental Policy in 1994. Furthermore, it declared fundamental change to river management policy by amending the River Act in 1997. The main change of the policy is to take into account

environment and local peoples' participation in river/stream management projects.

Visible consequence of the change is the new shape of streams. Efforts have been made to change streams suffocated by concrete riverbeds into more nature plentiful streams with plants growing riverbeds, shallow and deep parts in succession, natural rocks and escape backwater for fishes and water insects. Some of the local environmental groups and local governments initiated trials to make nature-plentiful streams during 1980s. The Ministry of Construction began to take part in these efforts in 1990. It is unprecedented that the Ministry accepted civil initiatives even before it had come up with construction guidelines. In 1999, the Ministry of Construction announced that based on pilot projects to construct nature-plentiful streams it would implement full-fledge nature-plentiful stream project nation-wide. This year the government is going to construct 5,700 of 'non-concrete' streams among the 7,300 of streams in need of remedy.

World Largest Artificial Streams

The Aqua Restoration Research Center (ARRC) was established in 1998 as an experimental facility of the Ministry of Construction. The major mission of ARRC is to provide basic research and technology, which is required to make rivers, and streams more ecologically sound. The most conspicuous facilities of ARRC are experimental streams. There are three artificial streams of 800m long each. According to ARRC they are the largest in the world of this kind. The first one is conventional concrete riverbed style with homogeneous habitat. The others are designed as natural with diversified habitat.

Researchers of the ARRC have devised various imaginative experiments using artificial streams. They are investigating different influence of natural and non-natural streams on fish population, prosperity of aquatic organisms, riverbank development. They are also trying to know how controlled flood and inundation affects fish habitat, vegetation of waterside and gravel bar, and erosion and sedimentation of stream basements. They even have plans to insert a transmitter to a carp, to figure out its behavior at the time of a flood using tele-metering method.

It would be too early to expect some significant research results as the Center began its activities in October 1998. Mr. Tanaka, director of the Center summarized one year of research as "too many things are unknown and unexpected. We should wait several years to get some basic understandings of stream ecology not to mention the practical knowledge to construct nature-plentiful streams." Mr. Tanaka's remark suggests that we

have to depend on experience of trial and error to make streams more natural for the time being.

In fact, the Center seems to be successful in disseminating ideas of natural stream making and environment education. The Center is crowded with visitors from relevant government agencies, research institutes, environment groups, and tourists. Since last April more than 3,000 people visited the Center, which is more than double the number of visits during same period the year before.

River Democracy

A new experiment is being carried out to test if democracy from below works in Tamagawa, the river that flows through densely populated suburbs of Tokyo into Tokyo Bay. The Tamagawa Project is also a model for the New River policy of the Ministry of Construction providing much nature and accessibility to the local people.

The Tamagawa Watershed Association is a focal point of the test. The Association represents civil groups, companies, scholars, local governments, and government officials in charge of river management. Through discussions the Association comes up with a river management plan that will be discussed by formal Tamagawa Watershed Committee represented by citizen, professionals and administration. The river managing officials will then devise a final plan after the public hearings. This kind of time-consuming scheme is rather new in Japanese administrative culture. In the background of this partnership between civil group and administration there are more than 148 civil groups which have been active for nearly 30 years in conservation campaign of the river and as watchdog against the administration.

Present features of Tamagawa have shown some hope of the future shapes of urban rivers. Water ways as long as 20km, which have been used as rice paddy water source, are now developed as water-friendly spaces for walking, resting, and kids' playground. Traditional skills to control riverside erosion are being rehabilitated. Wood cows, triangular wooden structure have been established alongside the river to prevent erosion as well as to provide spaces for fishes and plants. Every dam has adopted newly devised fish ladders, in some dams closed circuit cameras are installed to monitor how the fishes use the ladders.

Control measures to meet with floods are in many cases contradictory to environmental conservation. Tsurumigawa, an urban river neighboring Tamagawa, shows a good example overcoming this difficulty. The Ministry of Construction devised 'Tsurumi River in the Year 2001 Project' which includes to construct multipurpose retarding basin at the

downstream of Tsurumigawa. The retarding basin, which will be established near the river with the area of 100ha, will act mainly as floodwater reservoir. But in normal times the basin will be utilized as habitat of wildlife, biotopes, parks, and sports centers. It should be noted that 100 billion yen was spent to buy the private owned land for this project, which represents 70% of the total cost.

New Paradigm 'From Below'

Recent trend in river/stream naturalization seems to have significant meaning in civil society development in Japan. Environmental aspect has become one of the major factors to be considered in policy making and new process of policy making has a more significant meaning. Initiatives to make rivers/streams more naturally came from civil groups for the first time, which was received by the local governments and later by the central government. Although this 'bottom-up' process may seem to be less efficient than previous 'top-down' approach, it promises local peoples' active participation with their imaginations and traditional skills, and the appropriate way of developments that fit to the local natural conditions.

However, it should be noted that the central government shows less flexibility in big river developments. Several dam construction projects face with fierce and tenacious opposition movements by the local people. It is compared to successful co-operation between administration and civil groups in urban and small river/stream development projects. Probably this implies that democratization of administration has not reached to the point that allows full-fledged rethinking of regional development.

It is costly work to make rivers/streams more nature friendly. According to the book *Reportage-Streams of Japan* by Ishikawa, to make 1 m of nature-plentiful stream costs 54000 yen which is several times higher than the cost of ordinary stream remedy. Here, a question could be raised. Recent trend to reconstruct rivers as nature friendly forms has to do with construction companies' interests (or conspiracy)? My temporary answer after I went to the 'River Environment Exhibition 99' which was held on November 23-26th, is "no". One hundred and forty companies and organizations introduced recent technologies and experiences to the Exhibition. But I couldn't find any sign of a lucrative business in this field yet.

5. Miscellaneous Reflections

Discussions with people from Okinawa, Aomori, and Hokkaido (Ainu) reminded me of the tragedy of Koreans in Japan, the largest foreign ethnic

group. A free-lance journalist, Mr. Susumu Nomura, was invited to have a seminar with the fellows and from him I could understand more about Korean society in Japan and another face of Koreans as oppressors in Vietnam and United States. Participation in the International Symposium on "Reconciliation in Europe: The Road to Regional Co-operation and Security" also gave me a good opportunity to think about how to solve the antagonistic relationship between Japan and former colonial countries specially Korea and China.

Japanese mornings break with cawing of crows and from my experience, big cities have more crows. For the crows, there is more garbage to eat and fewer enemies like hawks in big cities. However, this could be an ominous symptom of simplicity of an urban ecosystem.

Japanese people like nature. They like to sing and write poem with the expressions from nature, and love pets. As some western scholars point out, however, what Japanese like is not pristine nature but cultivated nature. This applies from Japanese garden to sashimi. When I found gold carps in natural waterways and naturalized streams I felt uneasiness because for me, gold carps are not natural animals. Is artificial nature a fate of industrialized countries? Are Japanese people good at recovering nature but somewhat negligent in preserving pristine nature?

6. Suggestion to the Program

The main theme of the Program "Development and Culture" seems to be appropriate. I would like however, to suggest that the sub-theme be more concrete and changed every year. For instance, each year the sub-theme could be specified as environment, or NGOs, or women issue, and the fellows in the same field could be invited. This may help the fellows concentrate deeper in their own field and strengthen future interactions among themselves. Although the fellows' interest is the same, their profession should be diversified to cover scholars, journalists and NGO activists etc.

If the organizers accept the idea that the Program should be less scholar-oriented but more practical, I would suggest changing the venue of the Program from I-House to one of the Universities in Tokyo. A university setting may provide better opportunities for the fellows to come in contact with academic activities, NGO activities, library, and better computer facilities with less expensive living expenses. Of course, administrative aspects to carry out the program should be considered beforehand.

7. Gratitude

The three months that I stayed in Japan was one of the most exciting and enlightening period in my life. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center for allowing me an extraordinary opportunity to take part in the ALFP as the first Korean participant.

The company I have had the privilege of being part of during the Program has been exceptionally intelligent and thoughtful. I would like to thank the organizing committee for its excellent ability in identifying such a nice group. As for the other fellows, Ms. Teo Soh Lung inspired me with a dauntless spirit for democracy that has been diminished unconsciously in my mind. Mr. Masaaki Ohashi enlightened me on the emerging possibilities and limitations of NGO activities. From Ms. Ayu Utami I could get insights on Southeast Asian intellectuals' agony. As for Ms. Sanitsuda Ekachai, she has exemplified for me the restless pursuits of journalists and Ms. Marites Danguialn Vitug, springs of jokes, has always clarified the essence of the problems. I would like to thank all of the fellows for their kind advice and intellectual discussions with me.

Without the attentive and warm support which Ms. Naoko Shimamura and Mr. Isamu Maruyama gave us, the Program might not proceed smoothly and orderly. I must mention Mr. Mikio Kato for his impressive introduction of Japanese society and thoughtful guidance. I cannot forget the generous and mindful support from Mr. Yoo Fukazawa, Ms. Masayo Shiozawa, Mr. Alan Feinstein, and Ms. Ogawa Reiko of the Japan Foundation Asia Center. Especially I would like to thank Mr. Fukazawa for giving me a chance to experience the Japanese home with such hospitality. Not to forget Mr. Takefumi Terada and Fumi Kitagawa whose unseen efforts have made the program go in the right direction. There are a lot of people who are not mentioned here. I would like to convey my warmest thanks to all of them.

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Asia Leadership Fellow Program Report

Marites Danguilan Vitug

1. Teasing out Globalization

As tear gas dissipated in Seattle and as passions melted after the failed World Trade Organization summit in November 1999, I realized that the overused G word – globalization – is such a gut issue, transcending intellectual discussions. Indeed, it has received so much hype in this day and age. As *Newsweek* wrote, globalization "has launched a thousand articles, and scores of books." Add to that a slew of conferences, workshops, and seminars.

Yet, this near-mantra seemed to remain in the realm of arcane discussions among bureaucrats in double-breasted suits. But things changed in Seattle when the WTO meeting to open a new round of trade-liberalizing talks caused sleepless nights. The G word showed its risky side, that it could make people lose money and jobs. The high-brow talks turned into pragmatic, life-threatening issues as furious protesters clashed with riot police on the streets of the port city made famous by Microsoft, Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan. Not since the days of the anti-Vietnam war rallies did America see this kind of rage. It brought home the stunning power of civil society.

As these images burst on television and landed on magazine covers, my mind flashed back to the earlier months of September and October, when, in tranquil surroundings in Japan, six of us, participants of the Asian Leadership Fellows Program (ALFP), engaged in discussions to tease out globalization and its meaning. Surely, such a huge multi-dimensional concept has uncivil as well as civil effects on peoples. It is broad enough to encompass many joys as well as pains and sorrows, gains as well as setbacks. In short, it divides the world into winners and losers.

The focus was timely. The ALFP sharpened my awareness of this phenomenon, a valuable preparation for Seattle and its aftermath. Before the Program, I entertained notions of globalization at the back of my mind, giving them fleeting attention. Then, I thought, globalization was an issue more apt for the G-7s of this world. Not any longer since it has become very real to me, swept into it by two months of extensive discussions in Japan.

True, the talks and exchanges were broad, at times, but, like a hammer, they pounded on us the urgency and importance of globalization. The word and its general meaning and implications stuck; the specifics were left to us to unravel and to ponder on.

Prof. Kiichi Fujiwara, in his grand sweep of globalization, gave us a firm starting point. Prof. Yoshikazu Sakamoto enhanced this with his dazzling overview of a globalizing civil society. On another front, Prof. Kosaku Yoshino provoked us into thinking about this worldwide phenomenon in relation to "cultural nationalism" specifically in Japan.

The fellows also brought to the discussions their insights, rooted in their countries experiences and expanded to a broader, regional perspective:

♦ Hong-Sup, ever-instructive and well-informed, linked the vigorous environmental movement in Korea to democratization in Asia.

♦ Jah, in her thoughtful manner, made us take a deeper look at the spiritual yearnings of peoples as a result of globalization, the new gods proliferating in Thailand and the rest of the region.

♦ Ohashi aptly used a scalpel, rather than a butcher's knife, in dissecting the world of NGOs and how they are able to shape people's lives and influence policy, a prelude to the apogee in Seattle.

♦ Ayu dug out of our deep psyches the lurking threat of conspiratorial mindsets, so prevalent in Indonesia and parts of the region. By letting us enter this world, she opened a dimension into ways people think about globalization, usually taken for granted.

♦ Soh Lung made the case of Singapore stands out as a globalized city-state in the financial sense of the word but impervious to the intangibles, like freedoms, which accompany economic prosperity. She deftly showed us that globalization can be compartmentalized: leave out the dangerous freedom stuff but welcome the currencies.

> In a nice convergence, the resource persons and fellows enriched the ALFP, buoyed by highly educational study trips, from Aomori to Okinawa. The entire process was made easy by facilitators from the I-House and Japan Foundation. In the end, we put human dimensions to globalization, real and palpable.

2. Identity, Friends, Inc., and Japan

The other value of the ALFP was in exposing and connecting me to various Asians. While I've been to a number of conferences wherein I met up with Asians, those meetings were typically short and rushed. In contrast, the ALFP was intense and long. At first, I didn't quite see the merit of making us stay together for two months, at least, with an extra month thrown in as a bonus. Looking back, I now understand that the length had a

purpose: It made us still. It made us settle into a pattern of living, long enough for rich interaction, and quite enough to tickle one's interest in Japan.

As a result of this Fellowship, I stretched my identity, from being Southeast Asian to being Asian. I've actually come a long way to this identity search. First, I only thought of myself as Filipino, isolated from the rest of the region because of our obsession with America. It was the Philippines-U.S. relationship that was paramount. When the U.S. bases shut down in the Philippines in 1992 after decades of sitting on prime land and being the centerpiece of our ties to the U.S., a whole new world suddenly opened up to us. We rediscovered our Southeast Asian neighbors. We looked towards them, away from Mother America, and found our roots. Finally, I was a Southeast Asian.

With the first and second layers of identity firmly tucked in, I gained a third one, thanks to the ALFP. It made me conscious of being part of a whole larger Asia. I made an instant connection to the East Asians in the group. We're of the same color, share common episodes in history, and, not least of all, like the same food, from kimchi to sushi. That we belong to the same region hit home.

For the Japanese, it appears that they, too, are belatedly recognizing this. Their gaze was always towards the West. In a way, Japan is like the Philippines during the bases era. It is tightly locked in the U.S. security embrace. On another front, Japan played economic catch-up with the US and Europe. They felt, and probably continue to do so, certain superiority over the rest of Asia because of their giant strides in attaining prosperity. Out of the ashes of war, they rose to become the second largest economy in the world. In the process, they distanced themselves from the region, referring to themselves as "Japan and Asia."

The four-year old ALFP, to a certain extent, seems to me to be reflective of a gradual shift of gaze, from the West to Asia, from strange and faraway lands to home. It is also a rediscovery of neighbors and their cultures, unnoticed in the haste to become part of the rich, industrialized peers. Another interesting dimension of the ALFP is the participation of a Korean fellow, the first in the short history of the Program. Again, it reflected the big picture: a thawing of relations between Japan and Korea, so physically close to each other yet separated by a wide gulf of historical animosities.

All these intra- and inter-country dynamics played out in September and October of 1999. At the same time, I got to know, even if only slightly, the host country, its people, quirks, and wonders. I was never tire of saying that, as a first-timer to Japan and was fascinated by this country. It got me hooked with only a hello. I found its rich culture alluring. The people I met

and was exposed to, I know, are not representatives of the entire Japan. But they showed me a facet of the country that is worth understanding even more.

Most of all, I gained new friends. It's not often that we like people we meet, especially when we're thrust together in new surroundings, coming from different countries and with varied personal histories. By some magical twist of fate, the batch of 1999 gelled. Now, we have a close personal network across countries, kept alive through e-mail and visits. Truth is, cross-cultural understanding, exchange of ideas, and regional cooperation begins with empathy. We had plenty of that for each other, as persons and professionals. No matter how exciting one's ideas is, if there's no connection, no warm feeling for each other, the ideas don't sink in. They stay as words, wafting in the air, for which there are neither takers nor believers.

3. Points to Consider

For future ALFPs, please consider the following:

1) Globalization is a good, handy, timely, and provocative theme. However, it would be helpful to go into specifics during workshops and seminars. For example, instead of focusing on the "impact of globalization," the issues could be:
>   a) Homogenization of culture;
>   b) The impact of hot money (short-term international financial flows) on domestic economies;
>   c) Roquefort cheese and American beef: dismantling barriers in agriculture;
>   d) WTO: negotiating conflicts;
>   e) Free Trade vs. Safe Trade; and
>   f) Borderless civil society.

2) As I mentioned during the evaluation in October 29, 1999, I found the general topic "Development and Culture: Globalizing Processes, Localizing Strategies" very broad. It also seems vague. How about changing the

process? Instead of setting a catchall theme, just keep the focus on Globalization, and let the participants thresh this out in one of the first meetings. Globalization becomes the peg on which they will hang their ideas. They will decide which specific issues under this 'G' word they will pursue during their stay in Japan, and what kinds of speakers to invite.

Globalization is huge enough and it doesn't have to be connected to the age-old development-and- culture rubric. Besides, both development and culture have facets linked to globalization. I know that the word globalization is much used and thrown around but it is in settings like the ALFP – where there is enough time and talent – that it can be given a more thorough, thoughtful and deeper look.

As for the research papers, the fellows can be asked to submit a synopsis or an outline, also with Globalization and any of its facets as the core issue.

3) Apart from talks given by topnotch academics, journalists, NGO leaders, etc., it would be useful to show good documentaries, those that are powerful enough to provoke lively discussions.

4) I am a firm believer in field trips. Please add one more to the current program. There is no substitute for first-hand experiences and on-the-ground exposure. Fieldwork always enhances one's perspectives.

5) It was only after the Program that I understood what the public symposium was all about. In the beginning, this should be made clear to the Fellows, that it's a cultural thing, a ritual to end the Program. As such, they can think up a creative format, with presentations or discussions separate from the retreat.

6) As we excitedly agreed on the last day of our "collaborative interaction period," the Fellows will hold a reunion in the future. This gathering is meant to bring together all alumni of the ALFP in a setting that will stimulate sparkling discussions as well as renew and start friendships. I'm still very keen on the suggestion that the meeting should not only be Tokyo-based; it should entail some travel within Japan so that we can once more apply the now-tested and classic practice of "breaking the ice" the Rokkasho-mura way.

December 1999

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ALFP 1999 Report

Teo Soh Lung

My participation in the two-month ALFP has been an exceedingly important and enriching experience. It not only afforded me an invaluable break from my work but also gave me the opportunity to learn from fellow participants from Japan, Thailand, The Philippines, Indonesia and South Korea. The various field trips, lectures by eminent professors and meetings with activists and leaders of non-governmental organizations and individuals added to my learning experience.

The organizers of the program were also mindful of what we should know of Japan.   We could see for ourselves the wealth of Japan but as two-month 'tourists', we would never have known the less happy side of this vast and successful country if the organisers did not give us this opportunity.   Thus we were introduced not only to the nuclear waste reprocessing and storage plants at Rokkasho-mura where the Mayor himself gave us insights on the benefits that his prefecture had reaped from such plants, but also to the farm of an anti-nuclear activist.   We thus heard the pros and the cons of nuclear energy. The nuclear fall-out at Tokai Mura during our stay added to our discussions.

Similarly, while we were introduced to Okinawa and Ishigaki, the tropical islands of Japan, we met activists who were not too happy with the American base located at Futenma. We had an interesting tour of the islands, learning about the environmental damage the base had created and the sufferings of the islanders during the Second World War.

The program also allowed us ample time to move around busy Tokyo on our own and to observe and enjoy the local culture and cuisine. We were able to attend some public symposiums, the theatre and even enjoyed the Hakone Hotsprings, thus adding to our cultural experience of Japan. I was most impressed with the Kabuki Theatre.

1. The Participants

My initial fear that I would not be able to get along with my fellow participants was soon put to rest. They were a helpful group, humourous, down to earth and full of the zest for life. There is nothing like a first hand exchange of the lessons of history and development and the effect of globalisation.

Ayu's topic "The Desire for Conspiracy: The Irrationality in Modern Thinking" was fascinating and it made me think about the Cold War and the effect on Asian countries. I soon realized that Singapore was not the only country that called all opponents of the governments of colonizers "Communists" and credited to them all the country's violence and chaos.

Hong Sup's serious concern on environmental issues and his participation in the democratization process in his own country, South Korea was impressive. He was a walking encyclopaedia to us.

Jah's critical analysis of her country's economic progress and the springing up of new religions in Thailand certainly made me reflect even more about my own country's breakneck progress.

Marites' spontaneous singing was a delight. Her humour and her zest for life belies her serious mind and concern for the minority Moros of Mindanao.

Ohashi's involvement in NGO studies was an eye-opener. I never knew that there is so much to say about non-governmental organizations and that it could be a subject for postgraduate studies.

2. The Lectures

I find all the lectures exceedingly stimulating. The liberal attitude of I-House enabled us to meet a wide spectrum of academics and I enjoyed all their lectures. It is heartening to note that all of them speak their minds. For me who comes from a rather tight society, it was a new experience and it made me think why the academics in Singapore are so different from those in Japan.

3. Workshops

The various workshops where all participants had to present papers were about the hardest part of the program for me. But the time spent in preparing the papers was beneficial to me at the end of the day. The free and frank discussions that followed the presentation of papers, especially at the Odawara retreat were invaluable.

4. Reflections

This is my first trip to Japan and I find this country fascinating. Naoko and Isamu have planned the program very well. The field trips enabled us to appreciate the vastness and beauty of Japan and gave us an opportunity to meet with the locals. The lectures were very helpful and interesting and the number was not so large as to overwhelm us and disable us from exploring Tokyo on our own. When I first arrived in Tokyo, I felt that Singapore was a bit like Japan. But as the weeks went by, I realized that there is really no similarity. The sheer size of Japan puts her out of any comparison. And while Japan's orderly society reminds me a bit of home, I soon realised that she is again different.

Walking one Sunday with fellow participants in the heart of Tokyo, we were surprised to see an army of riot police with intimidating riot shields. We could not believe that the people in Tokyo would riot and out of curiosity, we trudged along to see what was happening.

It was not long before we realized that there was an anti-nuclear protest. The protesters were the most orderly group of people I have seen. They wore headbands, locked hands and carried banners. They were led across streets by the police and marched in an orderly manner. While I smiled at the mildness of the protests, I also realised that such protests would never take place in Singapore.

The incredible orderliness and discipline that prevails in Japanese society is also evident in the youths. Around Shibuya and Harajuku, young people were amazingly orderly even though they were dressed in fashions that would scare the conventionals. Everywhere, young people with the weirdest fashion walked, stood and sat around. They were not boisterous. They simply enjoyed their own spectacle and minded their own business. They were tolerant of tourists and even allowed themselves to be photographed. We were told that those young people often carried their fanciful gears to the train stations. There they changed and kept their ordinary clothes in lockers. At the end of the day, they would return home in their ordinary clothes.

The behaviour of young Japanese made me wonder why the youths in my country cannot have the same temperaments. One of the reasons perhaps is due to the space given to Japanese youths. Imagine several streets in Harajuku and Shibuya devoted solely to the young. In Singapore, harassed shoppers, tourists and young people share Orchard Road. We cannot afford to give young people the space.

I am also impressed with the courtesy, industry and humility of the Japanese workers. The staff at I-House deserves special mention. I noticed that they not only perform their set duties but also helped with other work.

Narisawa for instance could fix my computer, answer queries at the front desk and did not mind assisting guests with their heavy luggage. Isamu, Naoko, Masayo were exceedingly helpful and most efficient. Every single request was attended to promptly. Their efficiency and willingness to go out of their way to assist has made my stay most memorable.

Finally, I-House Director, Mr. Mikio Kato's friendly tutorials were very educational. His personal account of the war years and Japan's peace Constitution gave us the background information that was most useful. He also set us on the road to taking the public transport around Tokyo.

I have benefited much from the ALFP and I thank the International House of Japan and Japan Foundation Asia Center.

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1999 Asia Leadership Fellow Programme

Sanitsuda Ekachai

One of the biggest professional traps for journalists is to be totally swept away in the endless streams of events and crises so much so that we lose the big picture and an ability to see the inter-relatedness of the seemingly scattered news events. I am then thankful for the opportunity to have some time away from busy deadlines to be able to step back and get a perspective of the bigger forces which are shaping the world around us.

1. Research Topics: Religious Crisis in Thailand and New Religions

Buddhism has always been my personal and professional interest. Since Thailand is currently facing a serious religious and economic crisis, I intend to use my time in Japan to see how these two phenomena is related while trying to learn as much as I can about Japan's mushrooming new religions. I hope this might shed some light on what is happening back home.

Thailand's dominant religion is Theravada Buddhism, which focuses on Buddhism's early scriptures. Although Thai popular Buddhism has been mixed with pre-existing animism and Hindu gods' worship, Buddhist teachings on moderation and the laws of nature – suffering, impermanence and non-self – are still very much in daily vocabularies of Thai Buddhists.

Although the Thai way of life is already deep in consumer culture and very far from Buddhist ideology, the Thais still feel reassured that at least we have some sound principles to fall back on in time of need. Many Thais then feel greatly concerned when Dhammakaya, a middle-class Buddhist movement, changed the essence of orthodox Buddhist teachings that negates greed to include materialism and the here-and-now concrete rewards as part of Buddhist teachings.

Dhammakaya does not see itself as a sectarian movement. And many critics feel concerned about its goal to dominate the centralised mainstream Buddhist clergy with its new religious interpretations. The cleric elders, meanwhile, support Dhammakaya despite its controversial teachings, financial scandals and aggressive fund-raising drives. The result is increasing tensions between the Dhammakaya Temple, which is backed by the cleric establishment, and the so-called liberal and socially conscious Buddhists backed by the mass media.

How should we settle this religious conflict peacefully? I came to Japan with this worry. Although the situation has not much changed back home, I am satisfied that by the time the end of my two month's stay in Japan is approaching, I have gained a new way of looking at things which has eased my previous concerns.

My first revelation occurred when Teo Soh-Lung and I went to the Tokyo National Museum. There was a big exhibition of Buddha statues from various countries and I was overwhelmed by the differences the way Buddha is perceived by different cultures. Different peoples create Buddha of their own. This realisation through seeing – that my Buddhism is not the only Buddhism – is more powerful than any intellectual explanations.

But old habits die hard. Buddhist Thais are brought up to see Buddha's early teachings as the only true teachings, not interpretations by later monks. While being caught in the two-day typhoon in Okinawa, I spent my time reading the hotel's book on Buddhism. It was late at night but I was so unhappy by what I read that I called up Soh-Lung from her slumber just to tell her that "This is not Buddhism!" I then felt sorry for waking her up and started to question myself if my own fixed view -- that there is only one version of truth without any room for differences -- is actually the cause of conflict itself.

The Okinawa and Ishigaki trips have been illuminating on this point. There, I had a chance to ponder upon the tragedies and atrocities that resulted from another kind of religion – militant nationalism. The most powerful image that stuck in my mind is the picture of a mass suicide exhibited at the Malaria museum in Ishigaki.

The Okinawa trip showed me that it is always ordinary people who suffer the most from systematic brainwashing that is created by people in power primarily to maintain themselves in power. The Okinawa tragedies also warned me of the dangers of being enslaved by the ideology based on prejudices, fervour and fear.

The more I think about it, the more I am convinced that the crux of our concerns – Marites in the rise of identity conflicts, Hong-Sup in modern technology's arrogance, Ayu in conspiracy thinking, Soh-Lung in political inertia and Ohashi in inequitable development – are rooted in prejudices in one form or another, and the way the powerful have successfully maneuvered our prejudices and turning them into a fervour to serve their goals.

If prejudices are the root causes of so much suffering, then our challenge is how to free ourselves from them. Prejudices are based on the we/they thinking. It is based on the group perception of collective differences and superiority. In order to transcend prejudices, another view is needed – that we are in many ways the same.

But prejudices are strong emotions. Sheer information or rationality alone cannot easily dismantle deeply rooted prejudices. Here, lies the power of all forms of arts as well as personal interactions to help people understand the way things work without being judgmental, to see the beauty in others' cultures and to appreciate different ways of thinking. I must thank the Okinawa and Ishigaki trips – which showed me the dangers of fanaticism – to reach this personal conviction. For my own research interest in new religions, I have prejudices to undo too.

As I mentioned earlier, I came to Japan heavy-hearted with the religious crisis in Thailand. I was wearied by the Buddhist establishment for being out-of-touch and for succumbing to materialism, thus betraying Buddha's principles and public trust. I was also wearied by Dhammakaya for exploiting the people's faith and by turning religion into a faith commodity.

Thanks to the programme's schedules that allows time for fellow's independent research, and thanks to the I-House Library, I was able to do some independent readings, which have significantly clarified my understanding on new religions as a worldwide phenomenon.

Although my views on religious crisis back home remain largely the same, to understand that the arising of new religion movements is the result of rapid social changes in modern times has made me less judgmental. I have also come to understand that the decline of religious establishments is an inevitable result of modernisation and universal education, which enables the lay society to study religious teachings directly without having to go through monks and priests.

Globalisation has made changes in religious movements faster and more complex. Prof Inoue's articles on how globalisation will shape the way new religions operate in a new arena is therefore a very useful tool for me to understand the situation better.

Through learning about new religions in various parts of the world, I have come to see that religious pluralism is an inevitable phenomenon in a globalised world. No matter we agree with their ideologies and practices or not – we just have to learn how to cultivate tolerance to new religious groups if we want to avoid tension and conflicts.

If we see new religions as an inevitable outcome of modernisation and its discontents, these movements are then not the problem, but the monopolistic religious structure or political policies that suppresses religious diversity and decentralisation in order to maintain old central control.

In case of Thailand, the monopolistic and authoritarian structure of the clergy is empowered to eradicate the sectarian movements they don't like and to support the ones that big gifts and appearances of respect. The

challenge in Thailand, therefore, is how to reform the Buddhist clergy's structure to be more egalitarian and decentralised in order to accommodate religious diversity.

I used to be quite concerned that Dhammakaya's new interpretation of Buddhist teachings which legitimises materialism will seriously contaminate Buddhism' core teachings. Now, I no longer feel that urgency. We are living in the information age when people can have direct access to our Prophets' teachings. With this new power of knowledge, no one can fool anyone as easily as it used to be. And if a group of people have decided to choose a new form of materialistic Buddhism which answers their emotional needs better, then it is their choice. For there will always be other groups who continue to uphold what they see as the core teachings.

As a media person, I feel it is crucial that the mass media realise the danger in overlooking an important cause of religious conflicts – the monopolistic structure – and in letting themselves fanning hatred, distrust and fear between different religious groups.

2. Field Trips

Another important part of the programme is to widen my horizons on the global forces that shape things to come.

Before the visit to Rokkashomura, nuclear power had never been my interest. The trip has changed me. I have done my own reading on nuclear issues in Thailand after that. The visit has helped me relate with this important issue, the complexity surrounding it, and the dangers of ignoring it. Here, I must thank Hong-Sup for being ever so willing to answer my every question on nuclear issues. I think everyone of us, the fellows, share this feeling that we are very lucky to have him as our in-house expert.

Like the Rokkashomura visit, the Okinawa and Ishigaki trips are inspiring because they reconnect me to the women's fighting spirit in the grass-roots movements. Years from now, I may forget the detailed information about their struggles, but Mrs. Yamazato's and Mrs. Kikukawa's quiet tenacity against all odds will remain deep in my memories. Their energy, in fact, is the same energy I feel with women farmers in Thailand. And the same women's energy is happening everywhere around the world. I see hope in another kind of global forces that are shaping the world. Globalisation is not only about the economic forces that turn everything into a commodity to sell to a world market, it is also about the inter-connected energy of ordinary people who are affecting changes in their own localities.

I will remember the Odawara retreat for the resourcefulness of Prof. Sorpong Peou. I was moved by his willingness to share his personal

experiences in Cambodia to remind us of the danger of all forms of fervour, no matter how good intentioned it seems to be at first. He also wisely cautioned us of the danger of any systems with only one single power centre for it will eventually leads to a lack of tolerance and violence. This is not a futuristic picture. It is the world we are living now. It still amazes me how Prof. Sorpong, in just one long informal conversation, could significantly clarify my thoughts while convincing me all the more that our challenge now is based on the two keywords: tolerance and balance.

3. Personal Comments

Despite the wealth of knowledge I have gained here, two months is a long time to be away from an adorable four-year-old daughter and a loving husband. Here, I must thank my other fellows – Ayu, Hong-Sup, Marites, Ohashi and Soh-Lung (in alphabetical order!) for their friendship, fun and many inspirational thoughts. (Including information about lizards and where to eat for best money).

I must also thank Fumi-san, Terada-san and Masayo-san for going out of their way to make our stay enjoyable.

Last but not least, I am grateful to Isamu-san and Naoko-san for their hard work and their foresight to make the programme well balanced between field trips, lectures and independent reading. Please keep it that way, although in hindsight I think we can have one more short field trip without hurting our balanced programme.

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Research Papers

Ethnic Conflict and Accommodation: In Search of Lasting Solutions

Marites Danguilan Vitug

Introduction

I would like to share with you my thoughts on the almost 30-year old Muslim separatist movement in the Philippines. I would describe it in the context of: first, the phenomenon of globalization and the need to assert one's identity; second, the Islamic resurgence that swept many parts of the world in the 1970s and 1980s, and third, the tortuous and seemingly endless search for solutions.

I will be painting rather broad-brush strokes and hope that I will fill up part of a canvass. My interest and study of the Muslim rebellion in my country – and its international influences, largely from the Middle East and minimally from Southeast Asia -- is a continuing journey. So please be with me in the next 15 minutes or so as I tell you our story.

1. Globalization & Identity

Sometime ago, I met a young man, in his early twenties, a Filipino Muslim, from Mindanao, the second largest island in the Philippines. (Mindanao is in the southern part of the country where the Muslim community is concentrated). Fresh from two years of studies in Sudan, he was actively organizing the Muslim youth in support of the secessionist movement, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front or the MILF. Theirs was a legal association but their sympathies were clearly with the MILF – a 14,000-strong rebel group that advocates an independent Islamic state. We engaged in conversation and I found him severe, radical and hard-line.

He didn't want to be called a Filipino. "I'm not Filipino," he told me, his eyes intense and his face somber. "I'm Bangsamoro." Bangsamoro means a nation of Moros. It means their homeland.

I was struck by what he told me. It sounded so final and, to me, so offensive! Why didn't he want to be called a Filipino? What is so wrong about being a Filipino? Wasn't he, indeed, by nationality, a Filipino? He was born in the Philippines, has Filipino parents, and grew up there.

Then the painful reality dawned on me that we may be living in the same Republic but our memories are different, our histories are separate.

(I come from Luzon, the main island, and I'm a Catholic.) Before the Philippines ever came to be, the Muslims in Mindanao already belonged to the Sulu Sultanate. The Sultanate was established in 1390, the first organized government based on Islamic tenets in the country. Five hundred years ago, they were the center of a thriving commerce – maritime trade -- among peoples of Borneo, the Moluccas, Celebes, and China. The Europeans – British, French, Portuguese and the Dutch – came to this part of the world lured by spices, pearls, timber and other products, both basic and exotic.

But the brisk trade was not to continue. The Western powers carved up the region, dividing it among themselves: the Netherlands had its East Indies, the British had Malaya, and Spain created Filipinas.

The Muslims were the last to be colonized in the Philippines. They fought and bitterly resisted the colonizers for more than three centuries, first the Spaniards and next the Americans, long before the rest of the Philippines did. For centuries, the Muslims were rivals to Spanish power on land and sea. If the Spaniards did not colonize us, the Philippines could have been an Islamic country. Today, we are the only Catholic country in Asia. But, as my Indonesian colleague reminded me, we will soon lose this distinct title. East Timor, the newest independent nation, is Catholic as well.

One Filipino historian said that Islam and Christianity in effect globalized themselves, at least in the Philippines, as early as the 14th and 16th centuries, respectively. They kept their global face while acquiring local character. In the Philippines, the Spaniards stayed for 333 years and delineated territorial boundaries. The Dutch, British, and French initiated and accomplished a similar process in Indonesia, Malaysia and Laos – and left their own cultural imprints on these countries.

Ethnic cultural diversity is not new in Southeast Asia. It has been a historical fact of life. There is a wide gulf separating the cultures of those in the majority and minority. There has been little convergence of interests and identity between majority and minority groups. Why? Because the prejudices of majority societies are so deep-seated that it is difficult to arrive at a consensus on how to reconcile the interests of the majority and minority.

In the case of the Philippines, we have been living with a Muslim secessionist movement for more than 25 years. First, it was waged by the Moro National Liberation Front or MNLF which made peace with government in 1996. Today, the MILF, which broke away from the MNLF in the late 1970s, is pursuing a separatist war. Thousands of lives have been lost and many have been displaced or dislocated.

The reasons for the Muslim rebellion in the Philippines are mainly economic. The areas where the Muslims live are among the poorest; literacy rates are low. Government has neglected them for a long time. They have been excluded from mainstream social and political life. At the same time,

the Muslims want to keep their identity and at the core of this is their religion. The Muslim separatists defend Islam militantly because of what they perceive to be the encroachment into their world by overzealous Christians, grabbing their lands, influencing their culture. The leaders of the MILF say that the secular influence of Western culture is harmful to Islamic values.

The Muslims in the Philippines are a minority, about 4 million in a population of 70 million. The moderate Muslims have been trying to persuade the majority that things need changing. They want genuine autonomy. The armed rebels, for their part, have chosen the violent option and claim their right to self-determination. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front has repeatedly called for the creation of an independent Islamic state. They are moved to action by connections of blood and faith. Religion serves to identify, rally and fortify peoples whose identity is threatened by numerical superiority.

Apart from the inequity and injustice, major factors that have propelled the Muslim rebellion, the problem also raises the complex and huge question of identity.   Who are we? Who are they? I find these questions fundamental and timely. These were posed by *The Economist*, in its recent survey of new geopolitics. Indeed, the post Cold war has been marked by a revival of ethnic conflicts. Separatist movements, many of them Islamic, have threatened the fabric of national unity. Never since World War II have there been so many conflicts. Ethnic strife have been cited as the most frequent cause of conflict, resulting in about four million deaths in one year alone, 1993-1994.

There were 62 separate states in 1914, 74 in 1946, 203 today. How many will there be in the next 10 years? From Kosovo to Kashmir, from Aceh to Mindanao, the angry conflicts continue some with the intensity of a volcano. As we know, Asia is not alone. In Eastern Europe, the former Yugoslavia has disintegrated.

What is it that makes a group of a few million or even a few thousands think of themselves as different from all those other groups of people out there? And why does the process of asserting identity seem more radical than ever?

It has been said that a group of people, believing themselves to be different or distinct, usually on the basis of ethnic characteristics, determines that it forms a "self." That definition of self is greatly aided by increased levels of cross-border communication, which leads to a heightened awareness of uniqueness. As such, globalization – which makes the world smaller through communications, technology, transport – can contribute to fragmentation. While we see the sameness, the homogenization taking place, we also see the differences and these become even more highlighted. Today,

it is easier for minority Muslims in the Philippines to relate to their umma (Muslim community) because of the speed of information, high technology, and easy travel.

2. Islam and Islamic Resurgence/Revival

The MILF's call for an independent Islamic state is also heavily influenced by Islamic resurgence worldwide – and this began in the 1970s.

In countries where Muslims ruled, the revival took the form of efforts to bring the whole country in line with the sacred law. Where Muslims did not rule, several processes took place: long-standing efforts for autonomy revived and took on a more Islamic tone, powerful minorities rebelled, and weak ones asserted their rights more forcefully. This Islamic revival also implied greater receptivity to veils, robes, hostility towards the West, and non-territorial loyalties increased along with mosque attendance and devotion to the Sharia.

A number of authors have described two striking features that characterized the Islamic revival. First, it touched nearly all Muslims. Second, the surge took place within a decade; Islam had far greater political impact in 1980 than in 1970.

What happened so that the whole umma nearly simultaneously turned to Islam and what was it that encouraged the Muslims to emphasize Islam as an identity? One author argued that the political revival of a religion usually comes when the religion is subject to new forms of insecurity or when the followers are beginning to acquire a new level of self-confidence. He is convinced that in the case of Islamic revival, both factors have been at play.

What are the factors that led to the revival?

1) The end of the imperial era spurred the revival of Islam in a variety of ways: the West's declining prestige, the end of colonialism, and industrialization. As industrialization took full speed, the poor were dislocated. Thrust out from their familiar surroundings, they sought solace in Islam. Islam, one author argued, was virtually the only aspect of their identities that could be transferred from the village to the slum.

2) The Arab military success against Israel in October 1973 gave further impetus to the growth of Islamic sentiments.

3) The great oil boom was profoundly and broadly influential. Oil wealth affected Islam by enhancing its standing in the world and

improved the attitudes of Muslims towards Islam. Saudi Arabia and Libya acquired the means to promote Islamic causes around the world.

4) The Iranian revolution, waged in the name of Islam, affected Muslims beyond Iran.

5) The victory of the mujahideen in Afghanistan in the 1980s reinforced Islamic revival.

3. Search for Solutions

What then are the trails countries can blaze to end these painful and violent conflicts? What are the pathways governments can tread to resolve long years of war?

At the heart of this extremely difficult problem of ethnic conflict and secession is the establishment of a generally acceptable, just and democratic government that would respond to the needs and demands of ethnic communities, short of destroying the state. What structure would accommodate the divergent and competing claims of the respective communities for equity and autonomy?

Historically, three approaches exist for the settlement of disputes of a religious or ethnic nature: border changes, constitutional adjustment requiring compromise, and international responsibility in the form of mandates, protectorates, peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations.

In many cases of domestic or intra-state conflict, the most crucial ingredient is the political system. In countries with civil wars, political systems have failed to perform essential governance functions, thereby generating political as well as ethnic insurgencies. They were unable to meet the needs and aspirations of their people -- and to reconcile the demands of competing groups within the framework of economic growth and political stability.

In the Philippines, four Muslim provinces have been granted semi-autonomy but the experience, so far, is a near failure. With limited revenues, since these areas are among the poorest in the country, they depend on national government subsidy. Essentially, they do not have fiscal autonomy. A decentralization law was also passed in the early 1990s and this has made local governments less dependent on central government. Instead of turning over most of their revenues to Manila, a bigger share goes back to them, depending on population, among other factors. They can now exercise powers over certain government agencies.

The World Bank, in a recent report, called this "localization" – the growing economic and political power of cities, provinces, and other sub-national entities – and forecast that it will be one of the most important new trends in the 21st century. Localization is a mixed blessing: it could enhance

prospects for human development or it could lead to conflict and increased human suffering. Successful localization, the Bank wrote, creates a situation where local entities and other groups in society are free to exercise individual autonomy but also have incentives to work together.

Localization can be in the form of a general demand for broader popular participation in politics. Or it can take the form of demands for greater local autonomy, which may lead to decentralization or official recognition of a local cultural identity as in Canada and Spain.

In the Philippines, among some sectors today, there is a renewed call for a serious rethinking of the national structure which, they say, has turned out to be unjust. They advocate a restructuring into a federal republic to be composed of several autonomous states.

In Asia, Malaysia and India are countries, which have adopted a federal form of government. Others are Germany, US, Canada, Australia, Brazil, Mexico, Switzerland and Argentina. There are only about 20 countries with federal systems out of almost 200 countries in the world.

A federal system, it is believed, may be able to address the situation in Mindanao not only as a victim of neglect but also as a unique island-region that is host to three groups of people --Muslims, indigenous peoples, and Christians -- of diverse backgrounds, customs and culture. It could be a political option that may avoid separatism, helps to prevent a stalemate and an enduring war in Mindanao.

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Religions, Globalisation and Consumerism: How to Cope with New Gods

Sanitsuda Ekachai

Wisdom from world religions promise to show us a path to social harmony and spiritual awakening. But does ancient wisdom still work in a modern world dominated by globalised consumerism where money is the ultimate God?

Many believe that religions have lost their powers because people today are less religious and more materialistic. If that's the case, how can we explain the proliferation of new faith groups that are fast eating into old territories of conventional religions?

Given negative new reports about religious cults in the media, we tend to view new religious groups with suspicions. But if the proliferation of new faith groups indicate the people's growing needs to have a smaller, more close-knitted spiritual and identity niches in a cold impersonal society, maybe contempt is not the right way to view them.

But what is the correct way? Should we stick to anything-go liberalism for the sake of religious freedom although we know that some of these groups are exploitative? Are there any criteria to differentiate "safe" faith groups from the exploitative or dangerous ones?

Globalisation has apparently made this situation more complicated. It used to be that new religious movements are reformist offshoots of the religious establishments in a country. Or they are foreign missionaries, which are relatively few in number and much slower in their propagation work. Now it is totally a new ball game and each country has a variety of home-grown new religious groups and these groups are all looking outside their borders to win new converts.

Thailand, for example, is now a religious supermarket of new foreign faith groups, many of them from Japan. This is happening when the Thai Buddhist establishment is facing a crisis of public faith and organisational problems that beg for a major reform. We don't know yet what will be the outcome of this situation, whether the crowded religious communities will lead to inter-religious understanding or discrimination. But the emergence of new religious movements tends to entail tension and conflict. Fierce competition in the faith business may also easily strengthen prejudices and discrimination.

I still remember seeing an evangelist Christian preacher telling his TV audience in the U.S. that Hinduism is the reason why India remains

poor. He obviously wanted to prevent his followers from being attracted to meditation guru from India who are popular in America.

This also raises a question of the role of the mass media. As a media person, I often ask myself if my profession has contributed to inter-religious understanding or only perpetuating and strengthening prejudices. The role of the media is particularly crucial in a situation when religious prejudices coincide with ethnic persecution and economic disparity, because the result of judgmental reports can be explosive. Despite the growth of religious pluralism in a modern society, I don't think we can dismiss the power of conventional religions just yet.

Globalisation has made excessive consumption into a worldwide lifestyle. It has made consumerism the world's new religion. This has exacted a heavy toll on the environment on a global scale. To turn things around, much has been said about the need for us to have a new development paradigm, which is kind to both nature and the majority poor. But how can we do this?

World religions, given their common anti-greed messages, are potentially useful to help people rethink their consumer culture and change their behaviours. Unfortunately, we cannot expect much from the religious establishments, which are too busy accumulating wealth or too busy competing with new religions to care about saving the environment and the underprivileged from the onslaught of global consumerism. Here, the information age, which is one aspect of globalisation, may help provide us some of the answers.

Today, religious knowledge is no longer a sole domain of priests or monks. Through books, modern communications and information technology, the lay people can have equal access to the wisdom of their Prophets. This new opportunity, which has automatically undermined the status of priests and monks, means the lay society can no longer blame religious professionals for being out of touch. Now that the lay societies have equal access to religious teachings, they have equal responsibility to make religions relevant and meaningful to society again. And they can only do so by proving that ancient religious wisdom can still solve the problems of modern society.

Much has been said about new religions or reformist movements as an effort to fill the spiritual void of people who suffer loneliness in an impersonal, industrialised world because established religions have failed to do so. And the popularity of faith healing can be viewed as a response to the failure of modern medicine. But if we stop at this analysis, we might conclude that world religions – in order to hold grounds – must reform their organisations to restore public credibility and to learn from the new

religious groups' techniques to answer the followers' emotive needs for a sense of belonging more effectively.

The danger of this analysis is that the religious reform that we demand for will end up offering better medicines for the symptoms of modern society only, but it will still miss the root causes of our modern world's problems. What exactly is the problem, then? Please allow me to focus on my country.

Earlier this year, a group of religious leaders and intellectuals from Buddhist, Christian and Islamic organisations in Thailand met to discuss about Thailand's problems and they commonly blamed greed-driven development as the country's main problem. For the past 40 years, Thailand has joined the development race to catch up with the standard of living in the West. It ended up destroying natural resources to the point of no return to fuel its material economic growth. The result is worsening rural poverty, serious environmental degradation and the breakdown of families and communities.

During this period, the Thai people's moral landscape has also changed drastically. The people predominantly belong to Theravada Buddhism, which stresses loyalty to ancient scriptures. Although popular Thai Buddhism has been mixed with local beliefs of animism and ancestral worship, it still retained much of Buddhism's emphasis on moderation and self-contentment.

This changed after World War II under the military regime of strongman Sarit Thanarat. He issued a stern order to all Buddhist monks in Thailand to stop teaching on contentment because he believed it prevents the country from being developed. To instill a new value, he issued a slogan for a nationwide campaign. It said: Work! Because work is money and money is the source of happiness. That was how we come to have a corrupt military dictator as Thailand's Father of Materialism.

Two years ago, Thailand's economy crashed on a huge pile of environmental and human destruction. The economic crisis has spurred louder calls from civic groups for the government to quit the destructive economic race and pursue a more humane development. But to no avail. Why is it so difficult for the policy elites to change their mindset?

The religious intellectuals from Buddhism, Christianity and Islam in Thailand were in consensus that it is because the policy makers were too deeply under the spell of consumerism –the world's truly new and all-powerful religion.

But are the policy makers only to blame? And what about ourselves? Back to the question whether or not old wisdom from religions can deal with modern problems. For many rural villages in Thailand, this is no longer the question.

There are several success stories of local monks using Buddhist values to restore the community well-being. There are also several success stories of the villagers who, after being bankrupt by profit-driven cash crop farming, become self-reliant again when they quit the money race, turn to natural and self-sufficient farming, and adopt a simple lifestyle. Most of them describe their change not as a result of an economic decision but a religious one, that is to say no to greed spurred by state and media propaganda once and for all.

How to translate this seed of awakening in the local level to national policy change? Here, I see a positive sign as a result of a new religious movement in Thailand which started about sixty years ago. Unlike other new religious movements, which are normally organised, this is an unorganised one, initiated by a monk from southern Thailand. His name was Phra Buddhadasa.

Realising the power of universal education and literacy which makes the population, he wrote countless books, gave countless lectures and use other modern communications technology available in his days to discuss Buddha's core teachings which aims at transcending greed, anger and prejudices. He also warned of the dangers of selfishness that comes with mainstream development.

Phra Buddhadasa emphasised the need to understand the laws of nature in order to transcend greed, likes and dislikes as well as all forms of prejudices. For such understanding enables one to appreciate a simple, moderate life with spiritual contentment. And to see the futility of forever chasing instant material gratification. He also stressed the need for each individual to understand the core of one's religion, to study and appreciate the essence of other's religions and to build inter-religious understanding. This approach is useful at a time when religious and ethnic conflicts are on the rise in the modern world.

It can be said that the majority of intellectuals and NGOs workers who form the focal points of civil society and pressure groups demanding for ecological and democratic development in Thailand are influenced by Phra Buddhadasa's thoughts. That shows how powerful religious thoughts are if they are relevant to the society.

The same yardstick used to evaluate conventional religions should also be used with today's countless new religions. It is not enough for us to differentiate safe faith groups from dangerous ones. Since the information age is supposed to free us from knowledge monopoly of elite groups, it is important to see whether or not religious groups still monopolise their power by making their leaders and their rituals indispensable for the followers' spiritual liberation. Given the destructive forces of consumerism,

it is also important to ask if these religious groups, new or old, encourage or question consumerism.

In the final analysis, the same yardstick should also be used with us. Our choice is governed by our own values. If we don't question the cult of efficiency and productivity which has destroyed much of our nature and humanity; if we still value modern convenience and comfort and equate the ability to consume as happiness, then it is inevitable that money will be our god.

In this sense, we are as guilty as our policy makers in maintaining the system, which destroys nature and the underprivileged. And we cannot just blame the religious establishments for not being able to do a better job in a modern world.

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Gabe Masaaki	Professor, University of the Ryukyus
Inoue Nobutaka	Professor, Kokugakuin University
Kikukawa Keiko	Anti-nuclear fuel facility activist
Matsui Yayori	Director, Asia-Japan Women's Resource Center
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