CONFLUENCES AND CHALLENGES IN BUILDING THE ASIAN COMMUNITY IN THE EARLY 21st CENTURY

The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows
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ABOUT THE BOOK

CONFLUENCES AND CHALLENGES IN BUILDING THE ASIAN COMMUNITY IN THE EARLY 21ST CENTURY, is a collection of papers by the 2008/2009 Asian Public Intellectuals (API) Fellows. The twenty-four papers that comprise this volume cover key areas such as heritage, identity, change and conflict; engaging modernity; religion, gender, and art; changing lifestyles and health; the state, development and globalization; empowering the poor and the vulnerable; and social justice, human rights, and civil society. API publications can be downloaded at http://www.api-fellowships.org.

The API Fellowships Program

As Asia enters the 21st century, it faces political, economic, and social challenges that transcend national boundaries. To meet these challenges, the region needs a pool of intellectuals willing to be active in the public sphere who can articulate common concerns and propose creative solutions. Recognizing that opportunities for intellectual exchange are currently limited by institutional, linguistic, and cultural parameters, The Nippon Foundation (TNF) launched the Asian Public Intellectuals (API) Fellowships Program in July 2000. The Program’s primary aim is to promote mutual learning among Asian public intellectuals and contribute to the growth of wider public spaces in which effective responses to regional needs can be generated.

The API Fellowships Program is open to academics, researchers, media professionals, artists, creative writers, non-governmental organization (NGO) activists, social workers, public servants and others with moral authority who are committed to working for the betterment of society by applying their professional knowledge, wisdom and experience. The Program is designed to stimulate the creation of a pool of such intellectuals in the region.

The API Fellowships Program set three main themes as follows:

• Changing identities and their social, historical, and cultural contexts;
• Reflections on the human condition and the quest for social justice; and
• The current structure of globalization and possible alternatives.

Within these themes, the Fellows are required to:

• Propose and carry out research and/or professional activities in a participating country or countries other than their native country or country of residence;
• Conduct research and/or professional activities in compliance with a schedule accepted by the Selection Committee;
• Attend the API Workshop to exchange results of their research and/or professional activities with other fellows;
• Disseminate their findings and results to a wider audience; and
• Pursue a deeper knowledge of each other, and hence of the region.

Post-Fellowship Program/Activities

Having entered its second phase of the Program, the API Fellowships Program has, for some time, intensified its focus on community building efforts. A number of post-fellowship activities have been launched allowing Fellows to continue to be engaged and further collaborate among themselves and beyond. Through furthering collaboration among Fellows and beyond, the Program hopes to build and promote the API Community and its undertakings, in order to achieve greater social impact. The following initiatives are now being carried out through the post-fellowship programs:
1) Regional Committee and Regional Project

The API Community has selected ten Fellows as representatives to the Regional Committee (RC) to promote activities which are critical for the region, cross-disciplinary in nature, trans-border in scope, and multi-level in approach, recognizing the inter-linkages of locality, nation, and region. The RC aims to foster a greater regional consciousness by promoting relationships among cultures, societies, traditions and so forth by initiating or endorsing collaborative activities, and by confronting public issues with discernment, integrity and commitment. The RC initially focused on the launch of the Regional Project.

The Regional Project, entitled “Community-Based Initiatives toward Human-Ecological Balance”, was launched in November 2008 as a joint effort that mobilized the entire API Community. The project will last three years, involving five sites in the region: Biwako (Japan), Batanes (Philippines), Khiriwong (Thailand), Tasik Chini (Malaysia) and Kalicode (Indonesia). In conducting the Regional Project, the API Community is guided by the values of social relevance, public-policy advocacy, network building, creativity, transparency and accountability. (For further information, please visit http://www.api-rp.com/)

2) API-Salzburg Global Seminar Collaboration

The Salzburg Global Seminar was founded in 1947 by three graduate students at Harvard University as a means to bringing together young Europeans and Americans from countries recently at war to engage in intellectual dialogue.

In the 60 years since its establishment, the Salzburg Global Seminar has evolved and expanded both the breadth of countries from which its participants come as well as the issues that serve as the focus of its programs. To date, more than 25,000 individuals from more than 150 countries have attended Seminar sessions.

In an effort to flow with the tide of globalization, the Salzburg Global Seminar decided to reach out beyond Europe and the US, to Asia, the Middle East and Africa. In so doing, the Seminar found the API Fellowships Program to be a good quality pool of intellectuals in Asia and began planning a new partnership. As a result, a new scheme whereby selected API Fellows (up to ten Fellows per year) attend the Seminar was created. This collaborative scheme provides opportunities for API Fellows to expand their intellectual capacity by exposing themselves to world intellectual leaders and to convey to a wider audience the messages and voices of Asia.

The Nippon Foundation

The Nippon Foundation (TNF) is an independent, non-profit, grant making organization that was founded in 1962. It supports projects both in Japan and overseas. It funds activities in three areas: domestic social welfare and volunteer support; maritime research and development; and overseas cooperative assistance. It works with other non-profit organizations, governments, non-governmental organizations and international organizations.
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The API Coordinating Institution (CI) at the Institute of Asian Studies (IAS), Chulalongkorn University, which oversaw the publication of this book, wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the following people:

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A snapshot of the contribution in their own words is provided here.

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TOHKINWOON served for slightly more than two decades as an Associate Professor in Political Economy at
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WELCOME SPEECH

Yohei Sasakawa
Chairman, The Nippon Foundation

It gives me great pleasure to welcome the API Community members from around Asia, and all the API fellows, to the 8th API Regional Workshop in Osaka.

Osaka has been the economic heart of Japan for more than a thousand years. It has been a major influence on Japan, not only by virtue of its economic strength, but also because of its contribution to Japanese culture and society.

Just a thirty-minute walk from this hall, there used to be a school called Tekijuku. Tekijuku was a private school founded in 1838, at the close of the Edo Period, by a medical doctor and scholar of Western science called Ogata Kouan. The original objective of the school was to educate doctors. However, at a time when Japan was closed to the outside world, there was no better place than this school for the country's finest minds to gather and imbibe Western ideology and knowledge. Over 600 students graduated from Tekijuku over the course of its thirty-year history. Among the talented graduates were individuals who lay the foundation for the modernization of Japan.

One such individual is Yukichi Fukuzawa. At Tekijuku, Fukuzawa studied ideology and technology, which were not taught in any other school in Japan at the time. After graduation, Fukuzawa established a school in Tokyo which would later become the Keio University. As a member of the Shogunate delegation, he travelled to Europe, America, and Asia. Upon his return to Japan, he wrote about the knowledge, ideologies and thoughts he had encountered in his travels, and the books he wrote became widely read throughout Japan. The image of Fukuzawa, an individual who helped bring Japan into the modern era, graces the current 10,000-yen note.

At the beginning of the Meiji Era, most intellectuals, including graduates of Tekijuku, sought a position in the government. However, Fukuzawa remained to his dying day an ordinary citizen, having no special rank or title. His ideas about modernization, while revolutionary at the time, strike a chord with us today—ideas like education as a path to independence, gender equality, and an international perspective.

Fukuzawa’s most famous work, Gakumon no Susume, or “The Encouragement of Learning”, contains a reference to the American Declaration of Independence – “Heaven does not create one man above or below another man”. This concept had a major impact on the values of the Japanese people who, up to that point, had been enclosed in a society founded upon class and social status. These words and the name of Fukuzawa are, to this day, to be found in school textbooks around the country.

Fukuzawa deftly highlighted the absurdities that were taken for granted during his lifetime and provided fresh solutions. He was an enlightened and intelligent leader, brave enough to state plainly the message dictated to him by his own conscience, even when this flew in the face of public opinion or authority. He was, in short, the epitome of a public intellectual.

Now, one hundred and fifty years on from the time of Fukuzawa, we are once again greeting a major revolution: events that demand a reevaluation of the meaning of capitalism itself; political and economic problems that transcend national barriers; regional integration. Many people, confused in the face of these rapid changes, are now seeking solutions.

In this modern age, as was the case in Fukuzawa’s time, we require public intellectuals who can discuss problems and find solutions from the viewpoint of the man on the street; public intellectuals who will work to spread benefit throughout the public sphere. Public intellectuals are people who are willing to raise their voices against the tide of the time and change public opinion. They are people who are not afraid to find and implement solutions to problems in our irrational world.

Fukuzawa

I often remind myself that three things are important when seeking a solution to a problem. Firstly, one must have a powerful passion to take the initiative and meet a challenge head on. Secondly, one needs the bravery to
stand up to a lack of understanding and, at times, resistance to, one's own activities. Thirdly, one must have the perseverance to work with dedication and not lose sight of one's goal until a solution is found and put into effect.

It goes without saying that the specialist knowledge, analytic ability, and actions of the API Fellows are vital elements in bringing change to society. Furthermore, we must remember never to underestimate what can be set in motion by a single individual. Just as a single match can give rise to a forest fire, so can the actions of one person ignite social reform, when backed by a strong belief.

Fukuzawa Yukichi changed Japanese society in the Meiji Era, and his efforts are praised to this day. At times, one must work alone; at other times, with the assistance of one's peers. For Fukuzawa, the human networks and inspiration that he found at the Tekijuku school were the source and driving force behind his momentous activities.

The purpose of the API Fellowship is not merely to support theoretical study. As you are all very much aware, the aim of the program is to build a community of public intellectuals in the Asian region. It is my heartfelt wish that the API Fellowship, and the API Community, can become the Tekijuku of the present time.

And it is the dream of all of us who set this API Program in motion that each of you, as members of the 300-strong API Community, will assist and inspire your counterparts within the community to work together towards a common goal, always striving to bring about real and lasting change to society.

In closing, I would like to ask for your kind cooperation as we work to develop the API Community, and say that, I hope, for both your activities and for this workshop, the very best of success.
KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Yoneo Ishii
Director-General, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen.

I wish to begin by congratulating the API Fellows gathered here tonight for the 8th API Workshop. I take it as a great honor to have the opportunity to give the keynote address to the distinguished participants of this meeting.

Let me start my talk by referring to the history of my academic involvement in Asia and, in particular, in Southeast Asia. In those days I was studying Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit with the hope of becoming a linguist, specializing in Indo-European comparative linguistics. After two years, my interest centered on the comparison of Romance languages such as Italian, Spanish, and French, all of them derived from Latin. But when I was about to learn Portuguese which is another Romance language, my professor suggested that I choose some Asian language, which had been little studied in Japan at that time. Following his advice, I decided to study Thai. It was in 1953 that my Thai studies, which continue up to the present, began.

However, at that time, there were but a few facilities from which to learn Thai in Tokyo, except from Japanese teachers who had been to Thailand. With the hope of going to Thailand for study, I successfully applied for a scholarship from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was in April 1957 when I went to Bangkok where I studied at the Faculty of Letters of Chulalongkorn University. After staying in Chula for two years, I worked at the Japanese Embassy in Bangkok in the subsequent four years. Although my residence was in Bangkok, I was lucky enough to live with a Thai family, who kindly accepted me as a family member.

While in Bangkok, I tried to acclimatize myself to the cultural environment of Thailand, as much as possible. The best opportunity for the purpose was around the dinner table with the Thai family members. I learned a great deal from our conversations at dinner.

In Thailand, there was and still is a custom of temporary ordination as Buddhist monk. It is rite of passage. There is a Thai proverb that goes, “boat rian mi rian” or “To be ordained as a Buddhist monk, to learn and then get married to have a family”. Following this well-established custom for any Thai man, I volunteered to be ordained. Knowing my decision, all of the family members congratulated me and helped me in every respect. I stayed in monkhood for 80 days, living at a thammayut temple known as Wat Bowonniewt. While in monkhood, I practiced mendicancy every morning. It was an ideal occasion for me to observe the daily life of ordinary people. This experiences gave me more than what I might have gained from reading books. What I wish to stress here, ladies and gentlemen, is the importance of learning other cultures, as maintained and practiced by ordinary people.

In this connection, I wish to touch upon the role of language as the manifestation of cultural values. Language is more than just a means of communication. It influences our culture and even our thought processes. According to E. Sapir and B. Whorf, language plays an important role in shaping our perception of reality. When we perceive color with our eyes, for example, we are sensing that portion of electromagnetic radiation that is visible light. In fact, the spectrum of visible light is a continuum of light waves with frequencies that increase at a continuous rate, from one end to the other. In other words, there are no distinct colors like red and green in nature.

Our culture, through language, guides us in seeing the spectrum in terms of the arbitrarily established categories that we call colors. Different cultures may divide the spectrum in different ways. For example, in Japan we usually do not distinguish between green and blue. Traffic lights change from green to red. We call it a change from ao to aka. But for the blue sky, we use the term aoi sora. The reason we speak English here is merely for convenience’s sake. We should not forget, therefore, that by doing so, we are in the world of the English culture, where “green” should be distinguished from “blue”; these two colors are distinct in the English culture.
In the European Union where no common language policy exists, twenty-three different languages are accepted as official languages, of which Danish, Dutch, English, German and Swedish belong to the Germanic languages, while French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian and Spanish are Romance languages. As for the Slavic languages, there are the Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Slovak, and Slovene languages. The Baltic languages are Latvian and Lithuanian. In addition, there is Irish, which is one of the Celtic languages. There is Greek as well. All of them are Indo-European languages. There are also non-Indo-European languages such as Estonian, Finnish, and Hungarian which belong to Finno-Ugric; while Maltanese is the only Semitic Language.

The cost of maintaining the institutions’ policy of multilingualism (i.e., the cost of translation and interpretation) amounted to 1123 million euros in 2005, which was 1 percent of the annual general budget of the European Union. This was also equivalent to 2.28 euros per person per year. Why did the members of the EU admit to such a huge budget for the salaries of translators and interpreters? This was mainly because of their adamant belief in the importance of language as a carrier of their respective cultures and values.

Meanwhile, the API fellows are invited from the different countries of Asia where a multilingual situation prevails. We should not forget that our use of English is merely for convenience. In this connection I remember an instance which I experienced in Indonesia several years ago. That was during the Indonesia-Japan cultural forum held in Jokdjakarta. When we started the forum, we agreed to use English as the medium of communication. Among the Indonesian participants, there was a well-known Indonesian actress who is a good speaker of English. She started her talk in beautiful English. But at one point, she suddenly stopped to speak and said, from now on, I wish to speak in Bahasa Indonesia since what I really want to say might only be expressed in Bahasa Indonesia. Fortunately, we had among the Japanese participants a good Bahasa speaker, who volunteered to be her interpreter. Then she continued her talk about Indonesian culture and values.

One of the most important tasks expected of public intellectuals, I believe, is to promote mutual understanding among people of different cultures and values. Therefore, it might not be an easy task to make people understand exactly what the speaker really wishes to say. We should not forget that in English, "green" should be distinguished from "blue".

One of the most important missions expected of public intellectuals, I believe, is to help promote mutual understanding among people of different languages and cultures. In the case of the European Union, respect for linguistic diversity is a fundamental value, in the same way that respect for the person, openness towards other cultures, and tolerance and acceptance of other people are. The European Union began the Lingua Program in 1990 and has invested more than 30 million euros a year, promoting language learning.

A similar situation prevails in Asia. So many languages are spoken and so many religions are subscribed to by the people. As is usually the case when people of different cultures and values meet, Asians tend to interpret their partner’s thoughts and behavior in light of their own values. I wish to repeat, ladies and gentlemen, that communication using a common language such as English, is merely a convenience. But insofar as we speak English, much might remain untouched. Here is where public intellectuals are expected to play an important role. It is my sincere hope that public intellectuals are good enough to be interpreters of other cultural values so that the rest of the people shall have a real understanding of the culture and values of the other people whom they encounter.

To achieve real understanding among people of different cultures and languages, we are required to humbly study other cultures and other ways of thought namely, other values. It is rather too much to expect the achievement of such a task from ordinary people. Here again is where public intellectuals are expected to play an important role. I sincerely hope that the public intellectuals will play the important role of cultural interpreters so that real peace will prevail in Asia for many years to come.

Thank you.
The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows

OVERVIEW

Patricio N. Abinales
Workshop Director, the 8th Regional Workshop of the API Fellowships Program

The papers in this collection should not be read simply as official reports or academic treatises. Instead, they should be viewed as a series of texts that seek to seduce you out of the dull routine of everyday life and dare you to get out and learn more about complex communities “out there” in the Asian region. What this introduction will try to do is lay out an overview and synthesis of the themes that motivated the authors, and in the process, also give readers some idea of the interests and depth of the intellectual curiosities of this particular Osaka cohort group of API fellows.

The Intellectual and Her Public

Let me start with the notion of the public intellectual. The peculiarity of the term has to do with a couple of inherent contradictions. On the one hand, there is that strong affiliation with the “public”. One sees oneself as, on the one hand, belonging to and embedded within the public and, on the other hand, being able to talk on behalf of the public. But what is often unquestioned is the fact that these statements are also based on an assumption that one knows what the public wants and thinks and, more importantly, that the public approves of the way one talks about or on behalf of them.

Public intellectuals likewise generally imagine themselves as democrats and populists – two concepts that connote an ability to be able to do work with the people. Yet in many instances, public intellectuals actually prefer to work alone and the regard their works as reflections of their much-protected individuality. An intellectual, in short, is also a loner, despite the fact that she may claim that she works for and expresses the sentiments and interests of the people. This is in fact an extremely strenuous position: to be a spokesperson of the public but also be in a position where one could potentially be charged of patronizing and even being detached from the same public. It is a situation in which academics like myself, ensconced in the comforts of our ivory towers and writing only to a limited audience, cannot imagine ourselves.

But it is also this contradiction that also distinguishes the public intellectual from her university counterpart. The question then is not how to avoid these contradictions, but how to live with them. How does one strike a balance between the “dark” and “light” sides of being a public intellectual? More importantly, how does one not only talk on behalf of the public, but also to the public? Yet consider this: the desire to create or strengthen a community can never move forward without that public behind it, talking to its advocates and proponents, questioning and nagging them, even suspecting their intentions, but also welcoming and loving them. And those in that public intellectual community can also do much even if they do not continue to engage the public, talking to them, questioning them, welcoming and…falling in love with them.

It is from this fraught condition that we should approach the issues that bound the papers in this collection together.

First, among the specific publics that the papers seek to address, four stand out: the forgotten bottom, the marginalized cultural minorities, women and children.

Of the forgotten bottom and marginalized cultural communities, the papers of Jay Estuar, Hiroko Aihara, and Jonas Baes argue that we examine worlds and realms that are not only poor and oppressed, but also inaccessible to us in terms of place, language and signals (note how Baes describes the role of stones in intra-community interaction). These are societies that also try to make themselves as unintelligible as possible to outsiders (public intellectuals included) because of their long-term suspicion of anyone who represents authority and power. Those above them are, after all, the very people and institutions they felt made them poor and forgotten.

In a sense if you imagine putting the people that Estuar, Aihara, Baes and Tsukasa Iga write about in the same room as Kin Woon’s politicos, Pichet Maalanond’s justices, Ukrist Pathmanand’s generals, and Yuwadee Silapakit’s pimps, the immediate response of the former would be to run away from the latter as far as they could, for they would immediately spot “power” (again good and bad) that is about to be
imposed upon them. The most potent theme in the session on power that kept us riveted during the workshop was the extent to which communities have very little regard for those in authority, especially those in government. Yes, they do receive subsidies and roads are being built in their towns and villages by those who rule over them; yet, at the end of the day, they want to be left alone!

How then does the public intellectual talk about these hidden publics, while respecting their realm and desire for privacy? Can one discuss their lives without exposing them to the very people and institutions whom they do not trust? The paper of Ekoningtyas Margi Wardani and Baes’s stones are actually the most worrisome to pore over because they talk about what happens when marginalized and dying communities become exposed to politics, globalization and ecological degradation. One sees despair painted all over their subjects as they try to cling to a system that will soon disappear because of these forces that are outside their control. If they want to survive, the only option left for them – as Wardani and Baes seem to suggest – is to embrace these forces, but in the process lose their identities. What shall the public intellectual do? Will she try to reverse this slow death or help them lose their identities. What shall the public intellectual suggest – is to embrace these forces, but in the process lose their identities.

The third public is closely related to the second. And here, what is engaging about the pieces of Mohammad Zariat bin Abdul Rani, Tan Sooi Beng, perhaps Karnt Thassanaphak, is their suggestion not to take the younger generation for granted. Their papers reveal to us complex worlds, complete with their own lingua franca and symbols, in the *sastra wani*, the songs and skits of kids exposed to war and sexual exploitation, and in the works of the young. The question these papers pose, and which I think we still have not adequately answered, is this: how much are we capable of understanding their worlds given that we do not think like them simply because we are adults?

What is striking about this cohort group, for example, is its average age: 41.73. The youngest, oddly, is Japanese, a citizen of a society that is dominated by old people, while the oldest come from societies with fast-growing populations (Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand). In short, we are old, and, like all other “old people”, we generally do not know how to talk to the young, and, especially, the children, because we will always operate under the assumption that as “older people” we know more than them. But are we sure about that? Look at for example how in Iwai’s film the mother was trying to cut her kid’s hair and make him listen to Thai music, only to be painfully aware that he is listening to something else (Thai *hip hop*) on his iPhone!

Sooi Beng and Zariat suggest that we probably should start to disabuse ourselves of this misplaced intellectual arrogance. There is some basis for discussion here and I think this is a thread that the API community should continue exploring given that the publics it wishes to be in conversation with is increasingly becoming younger (again I watched with slight amusement the discomfort – and even shock – of some participants in the workshop when Zariat showed samples of the Indonesian *chick-lit*: kids reading and enjoying stories about menstruation, petting, having orgasms, and being gay!!! I also noticed a couple of people shifting their positions uncomfortably, albeit without making any vocal comment, when Sooi Beng talked about the trauma children underwent after seeing blood, dead bodies, and likewise after they were sexually molested by – who else? – “adults”).

Our inability/ignorance to talk to the younger generation becomes more pronounced when we shift our attention to new technologies. The internet, cell phones, videos and digital cameras have become instruments with which the young enrich the way they
interpret their world and know more of other worlds. These new media have likewise allowed them to explore alternative ways of thinking about and presenting reality to us. Tomonari Nishikawa’s documentary attests to that, and the generation gap in terms of mindsets became apparent when the older participants could not understand the film, while the younger ones nodded and smiled. How then would your group, or the larger Asian public intellectual community facilitate the conversation between generations? Can you? Will you?

Paradigms and Authority

The next issue comes closely after the question of publics: paradigms. The papers of Yonariza, Semiarto Aji Purwanto and Nur Indrawaty Lipeoto are interesting not only because of the power of their economic analyses; more importantly, their potency comes from being profoundly moral discourses. The issues they talk about are not simply about commercial reforestation and domestic timber needs, urban agriculture, or reappraisals of adequate nutrition. They are actually suggesting a radical shift in the way we look at spaces and ecosystems and how we can preserve or recover our humanity amidst the alienation that comes naturally with globalization, urbanization, and, alas, modernization. They are nostalgic about the past but are try to describe how a sustainable future world would appear.

But shifting the way we think is also mediated by the way we present them. And here, the papers on cultures and landscapes tell us how much we still need to learn from our communities. Iwai’s video montage is quite intriguing because it somehow suggests how what Salman Rushdie calls “city eyes” is concretized through a medium other than the novel. The snippet of a group of people eating dinner is not simply a film about a particular family. As you watch them, you also hear the rest of society passing by, eating, reading, and getting ready to sleep. The nation is imagined through one family and one video lens. In the world of the younger generation, life, the family, and the individual are better (?) depicted and understood through new technologies. What will those of us so comfortable with old technologies do now? How can we – as it were – catch up and avoid becoming irrelevant in the conversations of the young?

Aji Purwanto and Narumol Thammapruksa also force us to re-think our idea of space. Do we go up or down (high rise buildings)? Do we block and narrow our sights? Or do we open our houses and spaces? In December 2009, Cornell professor Benedict Anderson gave a talk in Kyoto about the Jakarta of his younger days. He recalled that in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the city was remarkably personal and open. Families – even those who belonged to the national elite – welcomed people, even strangers, to their houses (Anderson recalls being invited by Sukarno’s minister of intelligence, to chat while the minister was cleaning his car at his garage!!). But under Suharto, suburbia and air-conditioning, Jakarta became an ugly city (Chiang-mai too!!). Can we (re)discover beauty in such ugliness? Can we restore the intimate interactions in the urban jungle? Or, as Narumol suggests, do we need to rethink our view of the city such that even a boring public facility may turn out to hide some complexity or beauty in it?

Talking to Each Other and Returning to Our Public

Let me close this synthesis by raising an issue that I know has always been in our minds. How do we talk to each other? Or perhaps to put it in a slightly different way: can we – given our linguistic differences, professional focus and private interests – find a common language? Is there a way to become like the Asian that the late Prof. Ishii, in his keynote speech, wanted us to become?

My immediate and somehow expected answer is “No, we cannot”. Why? Because we have no time, we have no money, we are old! Yet, we must also bear two points in mind when we hear these complaints. First, if we are indeed penniless and mentally tired, then the best thing to do is focus our remaining energies on creating the space, the domain for the next generation to do what we cannot do. After all, children and teenagers have time, no need of money, and the energy to talk to each other.

But how do we go about this? Narumol’s people – from the artists to the architects – offer us options. What is revealing about her paper is not only, I think, how Narumol’s subjects work with NGOs; what struck me was how they approached their work “with fun”. Tomonari’s film as well as Mohammad’s Indonesian chick-lit also offer us another glimpse on how to reach out to the young who are, after all, the ones prone and open to experiment.
Second, is it possible that our intellectual, personal, psychological and material fatigue have something to do with our becoming too comfortable with our lives, our professions and perspectives? What if we move laterally instead; will we recover that energy to talk to each other, to recover our city eyes, and capture the demon of comparison? I think we can. But this will entail economists turning their tracts into poetry and poets playing around with statistics. It will demand of political scientists to become filmmakers, and composers collaborating with nutritionists and engineers to produce a musical libretto. And it will ask of lawyers to draw humane landscapes together with architects and manga artists. These are experiments that may boggle our minds, but we can also look at them as alternative ways of communicating with each other given the above obstacles.

Forums like the API community are just the right kind of setting for all these things to happen. In Osaka, these remarkable authors took some of the first steps towards this end.

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Kyoto University

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NOTE

1 As an aside, I could not help but giggle when, during the Osaka workshop, John Haba asked Ukrist about his methodology. I saw it as hinting of the typical academic male discomfort about intimacy. My sense was that, in so many words, John was trying to tell Ukrist "to go back to political science!" None of that immeasurable intimacy, please!

2 At the minimum, one needs a year to be able to be conversant in a language other than one's own.
Explorations in Financial Services Delivery Innovations for Marginalized Populations and Frontier Areas: Insights from Malaysia

Jose Atanacio L. Estuar, MTM

This work is made possible through the Asian Public Intellectuals Fellowship (API) of The Nippon Foundation under the theme “Reflection on the Human Condition and the Search for Social Justice”. The full research work will include Thailand data and will have comparative insights.

Introduction

Project Context

Poverty and marginalization continue to be issues in our globalized world. Microfinance has gained the limelight in the global stage as a viable intervention for poverty. Microfinance has evolved from its myopic supply-led, credit-focused paradigm, to one that aims to provide access to various financial products such as savings, social insurance, loans, transfers and pension services\(^1\) (CGAP). In doing so, microfinance is better able to cater to the lifecycle needs of poor clients.

This development has expanded the initial impact of microfinance on livelihood and enterprises to the areas of empowering women (Larance-Young, 1999), asset building (Rutherford, 2000) risk mitigation and management for vulnerable groups (Churchill, 1999). Still, it has never been claimed that microfinance alone is “a panacea to the complex and multi-dimensional issues of poverty and social exclusion” (Karnani, 2007). Microfinance is viewed as a strategy that is used in the context of a poverty eradication plan that includes other interventions such as human capital development and access to other social services.

Financial services delivery to economically challenged clients has been done through a variety of service providers ranging from informal to formal.

![Table 1: Illustration of financial services providers to economically-challenged clients ranging from informal to formal](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informal</th>
<th>Formal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kin, Friends, traders and local money lenders (“Along” in Malaysia and the “5-6” in the Philippines)</td>
<td>Revolving Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other informal groups (“Kutu” in Malaysia and “Paluwagan” in the Philippines)</td>
<td>People’s Organizations, NGOs, Self-help groups,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Banks, Cooperatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Microfinance Institutions (MFIs), Duly registered NGOs, Government Agencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dynamic debates within the microfinance industry continue to shape the contours of its dominant paradigm as well as the issues of the day. Studies have shown the positive effects of microfinance on “six out of the seven millennium goals particularly on income and reductions in vulnerability” (Morduch et al, 2002). On the other hand, studies have also questioned the efficacy of microfinance particularly for the ultra poor and excluded sectors.

The gains of microfinance over the last three decades have been monumental but the challenges that face the industry remain. Gaining access to microfinance has proven difficult and costly for economically-challenged sectors. The Asian Development Bank (2000) cites that “95% of some 180 million households in the region have little or no access to institutional financial services”. Poverty and social exclusion continue to be barriers to access (Peachey and Roe, 2006) compounded by the lack of appropriate enabling frameworks (World Development Report, 2004).

Within the industry, the increasing push for
profitability and sustainability challenges practitioners to balance the double bottom line of sustainability and depth of outreach. In some cases, this phenomenon has caused ‘mission drifts’ among service providers resulting in the concentration of services on the “moderately poor” to the detriment of the “extremely poor” sectors (Cohen, 2003).

![Figure 1: The challenge of Microfinance Outreach (Adapted from Cohen)](image_url)

Social innovators within the industry refuse to rest on their laurels and continue to find new ways to improve financial service delivery and to reach poorer clients. Grameen Bank, a pioneer in microfinance already claims 7,670,203 members, 97% of which are women (Grameen Bank Annual Report, 2008). However, Grameen Bank continues to set the bar when the bank introduced its “struggling members” program, popularly known as the beggars program in 2002. This program follows a more flexible scheme than Grameen’s regular services and by December 2008 reports 108,741 members. (www.grameen-info.org)

The Focus of the study: Frontier Areas and innovations

1.) Frontier Areas

In this study, the term frontier areas is used to refer to providing access to financial services for clients that exhibit any one or all of the following characteristics:

- a.) Socially excluded groups
- b.) Populations in geographically distant and hard to reach areas
- c.) Populations with poverty characteristics that are difficult to eliminate.
- d.) Limited and often expensive access to formal financial services

2.) Innovations

In this study, innovations are referred to as “new ways of thinking and doing microfinance”. (Llanto and Fukui 2003).

For the purposes of this study, the author conceptually classifies innovations into the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF INNOVATION</th>
<th>DEFINITIONS and ILLUSTRATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technological Innovations</td>
<td>Definition: Refers to the use of technology such as cell phones, “Branchless Banking” and related money transfer technology, “Alternative Channels” such as cash kiosk, roaming vans and Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Illustration: The Microenterprise Access to Banking Services (MABS) program works with Philippine rural banks to expand access to financial services of small farmers and low-income households. In hard to reach areas, MABS supports the use of mobile phone banking to lower costs and improve operations efficiency. (RBAP-MABS presentation at the Ateneo de Manila University, March 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Innovations</td>
<td>Definition: New method of service delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Illustration: The group methodology utilized by Grameen Bank has been touted as one of microfinance’s earliest innovations. A group of women self selects members and enforces “social collateral” through peer pressure. This allowed for the inclusion of clients that do not possess the traditional physical collateral.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows

3

ECONOMICS IN FLUX

Table 2: Classification of Innovations adapted from Llanto and Fukui

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product Innovations</th>
<th>Definition: New Financial Products</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Illustration: The introduction or addition of a savings product to supplement an existing credit product. In some cases this is the development of an entirely new financial service product such as the Development of the “Index-Based Insurance Products” which allows for risk management of uncontrolled weather effects on crops which traditional insurance does not cover.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutional Arrangement Innovations</th>
<th>Definition: The nature or legal identity of the service provider evolves into a different organization or the creation of new entities that are better able to serve excluded clients.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Illustration: Microfinance NGOs and cooperatives evolving into a Bank.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Innovations</th>
<th>Definition: Catering to clients with different characteristics from clients it is used to serving. This is distinguished from process or product innovations in the sense that there is a conscious effort to develop products or processes that cater to clients which the institution does not previously serve.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Illustration: A financial service institution catering primarily to urban based small and medium scale enterprises moving into markets that serve primarily rural workers with irregular incomes. In some cases, this is also true for institutions serving different ethic groups with different notions of business and money.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Cases

2 cases will be presented which include:

1.) Amanah Ihktiar Malaysia (AIM, Kuala Lumpur)

2.) “The NGO” and “Partner Orang Asli Cooperative” (* The NGO has requested to remain anonymous)
Case 1: Institutional Arrangement Innovation at Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM)

Conroy (2002) refers to Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia (AIM) as Malaysia’s “dominant Microfinance institution” and is “widely recognized as the first successful grameen replication outside of Bangladesh” (Wong Chaa lee, 2003). AIM was initially organized as project IHKTIAR by two notable microfinance personalities namely Sukor Kasim and David Gibbons as a pilot project to test the Grameen approach in northwestern region of Selangor. AIM pioneered in reaching poorer sectors and adjusted operations to cater to the sensitivities of Islamic clients particularly in levying service charges instead of interests. (Conroy 2002).

In Malaysia, “the directed credit paradigm is still dominant with ongoing efforts to shift from government regulated and subsidized microfinance to liberalized but government enabled microfinance, thus moving the industry out of its infancy stage” (Hamp, 2005).

AIM, by its own definition, is a “Government enabled microfinance institution”. The state actively participates in governance through representation in the board. Utilizing the Grameen methodology, AIM, at the time of interview, claims 183,901 members with a repayment rate of 96%. AIM provides services such as “Simpanan” (savings), “Takaful” (insurance) and loans as well as entrepreneurial support.

Interviews with women members in Kelantan, specifically Pasir Putih revealed that the women members of this 15-year center are aware of the importance and their responsibility to repay and make deposits. This perhaps reflect that AIM is a professional world class institution than the numerical indicators that reflect the excellent performance of its branch.

AIM faces the same issues as many large institutions such as “aging” members, questions on drop outs and financial sustainability in a non-subsidized context. The government enabled model itself is a subject of discourse among Malaysians and is not without its share of critics.

Innovations

AIM is considering transforming the nature of its institution as a “Trust” to one that is similar to a “Tabung Hadji” organization. As explained by AIM colleagues, the Tabung Hadji has a clear regulatory framework for its deposit taking to use for assisting pilgrims going to Mecca. During the time of the interview, the Board of AIM was still considering this option with the strong possibility that this will be approved. In essence, within the context of Malaysian laws, AIM will transform itself into an entity with stronger savings mobilization mandate and regulatory framework.

AIM has also started operations in urban areas within the Malaysian Indian community staffed by members of that community. This move allows AIM to expand its outreach from a predominantly Malay clients to one that serves the Malaysian Indian community.

The innovations are not without their critics who claim that these are politically motivated. However, the professionals within AIM are not deterred. The transformation of institutions is not new globally. Microfinance institutions have transformed into banks. In the case of AIM, these innovations are new and will require time for their impact to be felt.

Case 2: The “NGO” and Orang Asli Partner Cooperative: Product Innovation and Institutional Arrangement Innovation

The Orang Asli are indigenous people of Malaysia comprised of 18 ethnolinguistic communities and form a significant portion of remaining poor. Aside from income poverty, issues faced by the Orang Asli include those that revolve around “mainstreaming versus self determination” and “contested resources” (Nicolas, 2000).

This is visually reflected in the areas of Pos Bersih and Cluny through the physical landscape stripped by mining activities. Oil palm estates surrounding the villages also portray a stark contrast to the remaining resources available for use of the people.

Government social amelioration projects can be seen through colorfully constructed houses highlighted by a conspicuous sign. Bersih is a 30-year relocation site where some houses are still made of old materials and electrification came only very recently. The headman claims that most members’ livelihood are connected to the land and forest in the area of Cluny, a review of the forms filled in by new members identify livelihood as “Penoreh Getah” (Rubber tappers) and “Suri Rumah” (Housewife).
Innovation

An NGO through its Rural and Community Development program began its partnership with Orang Asli in 1991. In the early years, cash transfers were made to support livelihood projects. These were considered more as “helping a friend” type of transfers which evolved into an arrangement where the cash would be returned “interest free” in pre-agreed installments without any pressure. It must be noted that, throughout the years of the partnership, this microfinance initiative is only part of the projects between the NGO and the Orang Asli communities which include education, computer literacy and eventually support for sustainable agriculture through the development of demo farms.

Partnership with an NGO and others that began with informal arrangements have evolved to the current achievement of formation and registration of a cooperative. While still in the tail-end of its infancy stage, the initiative has completed the legal registration of a cooperative with over 450 members spread into 20 groups with internally mobilized cash resources including “simpanan kanak-Kanak” (children’s savings).

The savings have grown to over 99,000 by year 2007.

In this case, we can see a partnership between an NGO and the Orang Asli community evolving from friendly cash transfer assistance programs to one that led to the organization of a registered cooperative. Second, the savings product when introduced produced a response from the community wherein this product was patronized.

This case highlights that even poor populations can save given the appropriate and trustworthy mechanism for mobilizing the savings. In this case, a marginalized group has utilized a mechanism where it registers with the state. This issue will need to examined further in the future.

Synthesis and recommendations for future work

Malaysia “has reduced poverty by as much as 48-54% since the inception of the New Economic Plan” (Mok, Gan and Sanyal, 2007). In the face of economic growth and poverty reduction, the evolving challenges such as income inequality with racial divides and pockets of hardcore poverty among the indigenous populations provide new challenges for microfinance. Even with large government institutions, smaller NGOs, cooperatives and self help groups continue to find niches to serve.

The innovations documented are on-going processes. Most are in the beginning stages and will take years before impact is felt. This lays the ground for future work returning to these innovations in 3 years time to determine how it has made an impact on the institution and the new clients it has reached. While some financial data were not available for this study, it would be of interest to the practitioners to determine how the new ways they have adapted have changed figures of outreach and sustainability based on the target indicators in their business plans.

Alternately, institutions may elect to document these innovations with process oriented methodology (i.e. as it happens and the processes involved) that provides insights based on an organizational development paradigm. These studies will prove valuable side by side with studies that focus on the technicist discourse of financial ratios and economic efficiency.
Microfinance institutions never exist in a vacuum. These institutions exist within a framework of macro regulations and, more importantly, a particular social, economic, political and cultural context. Financial services for marginalized populations and frontier areas are dynamic processes that require constant review of the environment and organizational development. Innovations should then be well thought out processes in line with a broader goal of financial for all.

NOTES

1 The Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP) is a consortium of donors. For a thorough discussion of microfinance, see article “What is Microfinance” through the following link http://www.cgap.org/p/site/c/template.rce/1.11.947/

2 I first used the term “Frontier areas” in a paper entitled “Innovations in Financial Service Delivery for Cultural Communities in Frontier Areas” (Estuar, 2008) presented in the First Cordillera Studies Conference in Baguio City, Philippines. The initial use of the term referred clients in Highland villages in the Philippines engaged in Savings and Loan Associations. In its original formulation, I had in mind the characteristics of these communities which are geographically distant places populated by indigenous peoples.

3 I encountered the term frontier areas much later in an Asian Development Bank, Technical Assistance Completion Report prepared by Eiichi Sasaki entitled “Enhancing Access of the Poor to Microfinance Services in Frontier Areas” 2006. The characteristics outlined in this report are similar to the definition in the ADB document. Which defines frontier areas as areas “... with the following conditions: (i) hard to reach or where access is a problem because of geographical location (highlands or islands); (ii) high poverty incidence and high magnitude of poor families based on National Statistics Office and National Statistical Coordination Board data; (iii) areas that lack access to other basic services and infrastructure facilities; and (iv) areas where the saturation rate, in terms of access to microfinance services, is very low or zero (saturation rate is the ratio between the potential poor target households and the actual number of clients reached in a given area)”.

4 Llanto and Fukui (2003) cite various authors and taxonomies of innovations. Innovations may be defined and classified in various ways. I have only included a few for illustration purposes.

5 During the Osaka workshop presentation, comments from reactors and participants were heavy on the absence of technology use in the cases. While this is true, it should be stressed that innovations is not synonymous to technology.

6 For details on designing innovative insurance products, see Sustainable Development Innovation Briefs Developing Index-based Insurance for Agriculture in Developing Countries Issue 2 March 2007 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for sustainable Development Policy Integration and Analysis Branch Erin Bryla, Joanna Syroca from the commodity Risk Management Group at the world bank.

7 “Al Qurdul Hasan” is the practice of charging service fees instead of interest. Other Islamic colleagues have raised the issue that this is still prohibited. It is not within the scope of this paper to analyze the compliance with Islamic Law. Suffice it to say that Islamic clients of AIM accept this practice. Researchers who wish to delve deeply in this issue are referred to the paper entitled “Transforming decreasing partnership (mushârakah mutanâqisah) structure for micro financing: possible enhancements and modifications” by Dr. Muhammad Abdurrahman Sadique, Assistant Professor at the Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyyah of Laws, International Islamic University.

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The Effects of the Logging Ban in Thailand’s Natural Forests on Timber Tree Domestication

Yonariza

Introduction

The logging ban in natural forests and other policy tools utilized to restrict timber cutting are seen as a panacea to halt continued forest degradation. In Asia, this policy has been adopted by Thailand, China, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka (Waggener 2001), and, to a lesser extent, by Indonesia (Wardojo et al 2001 and Fathoni 2004). One reason behind its adoption was the alarming rate of deforestation that devastated the environment. However, there has been no attempt to understand the long-term effects of the logging ban on human interactions with the environment. Many studies are mostly focused on short-term consequences, such as the effects on timber market (see Lakanavichian 2001), where the logging ban has merely induced local people to engage in illegal logging (Nalampoon n.d). There has been no attempt to assess how the logging ban in the natural forest could affect timber tree domestication, given the shortage in wood supply and increasing timber prices.

Thailand is the first country to adopt a logging ban when she revoked 258 logging concessions in the kingdom in 1989. The emerging questions then were as follows: What are the effects of the logging ban on the domestication of timber? What are the factors behind timber tree domestication? What organizations and institutions were involved?

This exploratory study relies on various sources and techniques of data collection: secondary and documentary data; insights from interviews with key informants; a wood lot survey; and a tree grower survey. All data were collected between August 2008 and March 2009.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Sub total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Number of logging concession by province prior to Logging Ban in Thailand 1989

Sources: Processed from RFD, Forest Industry Permission Section.

Site selection was guided by data on the distribution of logging operations in the Kingdom prior to the logging ban (Table 1). Based on this, the northern region was chosen as the main research site, with particular focus on Chiang Mai Province as the main logging area with 42 concessions. Of these 42, the Chiang Dao and Mae Chaem districts were the main logging areas, with nine logging concessions operating in each district.

The Mae Sariang District in Mae Hong Son Province was also visited, considering that a significant number of farmers were involved in tree planting programs. (Figure 1 shows the research sites).

In the selected districts, a wood lot survey was carried out on a plot-to-plot basis. This aimed at generating data on the population of timber growers in the study sites, especially in terms of areas planted and the number of people involved. The amassed information included: a) the different types of wood lot, b) the types of management, c) estimated plot sizes, d) estimated ages of trees, e) types of land, f) the plot’s administrative location, and g) the owners of the wood lot and their addresses. A total of 400 wood lots were surveyed.

Once a wood lot was identified, the next step was to conduct a tree grower survey. Investigated were the land use history, the land tenure status, the history of the wood lot, the planting initiatives, and the reasons for growing timber tree. The survey also came up with a brief, background information on the household. Out of the 400 tree lots found, 89 tree growers were interviewed. The findings were then organized according to the research questions. To highlight the importance of the research questions, a brief overview of the logging ban policy and its aftermath are outlined.

An Overview of the Logging Ban Policy in Thailand
Figure 1 Thailand map showing study sites
In the beginning of 1970, Thailand’s forest area was estimated to measure 23,096,354.17 hectares or 45 percent of its total land area (RFD Statistics). Government regarded this as a resource to boost the Kingdom’s march to a modern economy. The forest industry was promoted to supply the international markets in Europe and Japan, and from 1970 onward, the government issued more than 250 teak and non-teak forest concessions. A teak concession was exclusively granted to the state-run Forest Industry Organization (FIO), while other reserve timber species were given to the provincial timber companies, other state agencies, and other organizations. These concessions were given 30 years to exploit the forest resources.

However, in the late 1980s, environmentalist groups in Thailand voiced out their fears regarding the possible ecological effects of these logging activities. They were, unfortunately, ignored by the government for most of the time until 1988, when southern Thailand experienced floods and mudslides (PER 1992). The calamity killed more than 370 people and caused US$240 million worth of property damage (Saddof 1992). This triggered more anger among environmental activists, who claimed that the mudslides from the rain buried villages under tons of uprooted and illegally cut logs, swept down the hillside by the storm (Saddof 1992). The enormity of the disaster, coupled by persistent public pressure from the NGOs and the media, finally convinced the government to impose a logging ban on 17 January 1989 through a Cabinet resolution (Order number 32/2532).

The logging ban policy affected 95.3 million rai of 276 forest plots. Of these plots, 103 were in the north covering about 37.4 million rai; 78 were in the northeast covering 27.8 million rai; 33 were in the central plains covering 19.6 million rai, and 62 were in the south, covering 11.5 million rai (Bangkok Post 18 January 1990). The policy revoked 136 concessions nationwide, except those operating in the mangrove forests (Bangkok Post 1989). An immediate effect of the logging ban policy was, of course, a radical reduction in domestic timber supply, prompting the government to import timber from Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, and Malaysia. By 1991, some 77 percent of the logs used in Thailand were imported (Sadoff 1992) and the Thai Farmer Bank calculated that the imported logs cost about THB15,000 million, with the price more likely to go up further (Bangkok Post 1989 and 1996). According to the Master Plan of Forestry Development of Thailand, the annual amount of wood imported would increase steadily from 14.7 mio cubic meters in 1996, to 21.3 mio cubic meters by 2007, and was predicted to go up to as high as 24 mio cubic meters by 2012. The value of wood and wood product imports, which included pulp and paper, reached THB44,464 million in 1994. The Bangkok Post of 28 June 1996 also reported that the value of wood product imports had risen from THB804.6 million in 1990 to THB1,481.1 million in 1994.

Many researchers, the Royal Forestry Department (RFD), and the Forest Industry Organization (FIO) officials have suggested that Thailand produce more of its own timber and wood products for domestic consumption, while also protecting its natural forests and environment (Lakanavichian 2001). Hence, the importation of logs was to be viewed as a temporary remedy. For the long term, these researchers agreed that Thailand must become independent in wood production for local consumption (Bangkok Post 1989). The RFD has been urged to focus on this issue and to engage in commercial reforestation on 23 million rai of land for the next 25 years, in order to cope with the domestic demand for wood (Bangkok Post 1994). It is in this context that the domestication of timber trees became more important in Thailand. This study explores what happened with regard to timber tree domestication after the logging ban policy took effect.

The Effect of the Logging Ban on Timber Tree Domestication

Tree domestication is the management of trees to increase their benefits to humankind. It involves choosing trees that offer the best combination of adaptability, growth, wood properties, and disease resistance (http://www.camcore.org/tree-domestication/). The simple concept of domestication is in effect when trees are planted by humans and the planting materials are not simply harvested in natural populations (Kjaer et al. n.d).

One major criticism of the logging ban policy was that it lacked consideration for the domestic wood supply. Thailand, this position argues, has had local timber tree species that had been used for timber for a long time now. Among these are teak (*Tectona Grandis*) and yang (*Diptero carpus alatus* Roxb). There are also
more than 600 species of merchantable timber that could be tapped for domestication. In this study, the effect of the logging ban on timber tree domestication is analyzed from three angles: government’s response to the shortage of wood supply, field evidence on timber tree planting, and tree grower response.

**Government’s response to timber production**

Upon realizing the serious effects of the logging ban on the domestic timber market, the Thai government began to promote economic tree planting on private lands. This was carried out using various tools: the provision of legal support, the launch of a tree planting project, and the establishment of nursery units.

The Thai government realized that the 1947 Forestry Law did not support timber tree planting by private landowners, since it stipulated that all reserve timber trees species (*krayaloi*), wherever they grew, were regarded as state property. Thus, a state permit was required before they could be cut. To offset this drawback, the Reforestation Act (also known as the Forest Plantation Bill) was passed in 1992 to provide the legal basis for the private sector and landowners to join wood production.

To accelerate timber tree planting, the Department of Forestry launched the commercial tree farming promotion project in 1994. The project targeted five million rai of land (*Bangkok Post* 1996), while the government provided subsidy to landowners who grew timber trees in their farmlands. This subsidy was intended to cover the cost of land preparation, of buying planting materials, and keeping costs down for the first five years. Participating farmers received a five-year allowance (THB3,000 per rai, or about USD 600 per ha), up to 50 rai. This subsidy was graduated – THB800 in the first year, THB700 in second year, THB600 in third year, THB500 in fourth year, and THB400 in the fifth year. It was reported that at least 1,904,087 rai of private land has been reforested, with THB1,381,122 million distributed to more than 100,000 farmers (*Bangkok Post* 1996). This project was ended in 2001 due to budget constraints and a shift in administrations.

The tree species promoted depended on the growers’ choices. In northern Thailand, teak (*Tectona Grandis*) was strongly promoted, while in the other part of the kingdom, farmers choose the yang tree (*Dipterocarpus alatus* Roxb.). All in all there were 50 timber tree species domesticated under this project, among others; sak or teak (*Tectona Grandis*) SADAO or (*A. excelsa*), and PRADU PA (*Pterocarpus cambodiensis* P.).

Under the Reforestation Act, the landowners who wished to grow timber trees were requested to register their land with the RFD provincial office. The registered lands are government’s bases for issuing harvesting and transporting permits later on. A transporting permit in the form of a seal is issued by provincial governments. The total area allocated to the private sector in 1995 was above 45,000 ha (*RFD*, 1995). Thus, the majority of teak planting was on private land. That said, the lack of available land could still become a severe limitation in the future (Kaosaard, Suangtho, and Kjær n.d).

The Thai government has set up nursery units nationwide as part of its reforestation program. The seeds in the nurseries were either collected from the wild or bought from suppliers. This nurseries took charge of the sowing. The seedlings were then distributed for free.

**Timber Tree Domestication: Field Evidence**

How the landowners responded to the promotion of tree planting was evident in the wood lot survey which found more or less 400 plots where timber trees were planted either as fences, plantations, or other forms of tree management, with the majority being plantations. Based on the woodlot survey in the Chiang Dao, Mae Chaem, and Mae Sariang districts, the estimated total area occupied by domesticated trees was 16,078.86 rai (1 rai is 1,600 m²) out of a total 1,150,964 rai of agricultural lands that comprised the study site. It is a relatively small area compared to the farmlands in the study areas (which ranged from 1.5 to 2.0 percent of total agricultural lands in each district). This could be because landowners still valued farmlands over tree plantations. Nevertheless, some evidences of timber tree domestication can be drawn from this wood lot survey that tackles tree species selection, the age of trees, and plot selection.

Among these plots, the teak plantation was the most dominant as teak is a native species of northern Thailand, where it grows in the wild. It is suitable for small-scale planting because of its high value, relatively fast growth rate, and ease of cultivation. Its market value has increased rapidly and its regional supply is dwindling (*Mittelman* 2002). Teak planted in farmlands is evidence of timber tree domestication.
Based on age estimation in the field, majority of these trees were below 20 years, planted after the logging ban implementation. Only 10 percent of these lots have trees older than twenty years, and these lots were mostly government teak plantations and teak plantations in protected areas.

Some 95.7 percent of these plots were below 15 percent slope. Following Thailand watershed management category, the land with the slope below 15% belongs to lowland farming which encompasses gentle slopes or flat areas needed for paddy fields and/or other agricultural uses, with a few restrictions (Tangtham 1996 cited in Lakanavichian 2001). This finding also proves the domestication of timber trees in farmlands.

**Timber Tree Domestication: Evidence from the Tree Growers’ Responses**

The wood lot survey was followed by a tree grower survey. Eighty one out of the 223 identified wood lot owners were interviewed to further investigate the domestication of timber trees from certain aspects, such as the following: initiative behind timber trees planting, land tenure, sources of seedlings, compliance with government regulations, and reasons behind the planting of timber trees.

The initiative behind timber tree planting can be categorized into Own Initiative Tree Grower (OITGs) and Government Sponsored Tree Grower (GSTG). GSTGs received subsidy from the government, while the OITGs did not. The survey accidentally found out that out of the 81 private tree growers interviewed, 40 were OITGs while 41 were GSTGs. Both groups were similar in their socioeconomic backgrounds (age, number of years in school, household size, and number of dependents). But they differed in terms of the size of their work force from within the family (the OITGs had more workers) and in terms of occupation (the proportion of non-farmer tree growers was higher among OITGs than GSTGs). Hence, non-farmers tended to reap more economic opportunities from the logging ban than did farmers; the same held true for tree planting projects.

GSTGs had larger plantations because of the subsidy they received from the government. Their mean plot size was about 21.05 rai, while those of OITGs was only 5.5 rai. But the domination of the former had to do with the fact that two GSTGs which measured 200 and 250 rais, respectively, happened to be former logging operators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land tenure</th>
<th>Planting initiative</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Own initiative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chanot (Nor Sor 4) (title deed)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nor Sor Kor 4-01 (land reform object)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22.5%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nor Sor 3 Gor (not yet a full land title)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nor Sor 3 (ownership is relatively ascertained)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possessory Right (inherited land right)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 2 Land tenure of timber tree plot by planting initiative*

In terms of land tenure, less than half of the plots had title deeds, suggesting that the growers planted timber trees even in areas where ownership was not secure (see Table 2). GSTGs, however, tended to plant timber trees in lands with secure land rights, while OITGs planted wherever they liked. It can be said that the logging ban did affect timber tree domestication and the tree planting was not necessarily because of the government project alone. Timber trees were grown even by those with non-secure land rights or those without land rights.

The respondents cited three categories of sources of seedlings: government agencies, private nurseries, and the nearby forests/mother trees.

Both OITGs and GSTG relied on government agencies for seedlings although the former tended to also use private nurseries as source. Nevertheless, since the seedlings from government agencies were not always enough, both groups got seedlings from different sources. The producers of different seedlings mentioned that they collected seeds from the forest, which was additional evidence of timber tree domestication.
The Forest Plantation Act of 1992 required planters to register their timber tree plantations, but tree growers responded differently. Majority of GSTGs registered their plantations at the time they received their subsidies, while OITGs had yet to register despite their knowing about the regulation. Some of them mentioned that they would do so later, when they were about to cut their trees.

It is interesting to note the reasons of growing timber trees, mainly teak, in the farmlands. The logging ban policy was the paramount reason, the underlying factor behind the decision to grow timber trees (Table 3). The rest of the reasons were as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for planting timber tree</th>
<th>Planting initiative</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>related to teak</td>
<td>15  9</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62.5%  37.5%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>related to planter</td>
<td>8  5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61.5%  38.5%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>related to alternative land use</td>
<td>8  3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72.7%  27.3%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>related to government program</td>
<td>0  12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%  100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>related to land</td>
<td>4  7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36.4%  63.6%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>related to logging ban policy</td>
<td>2  2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50.0%  50.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>3  3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50.0%  50.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40  41</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49.4%  50.6%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 Reason for planting timber tree

Reasons related to teak

*Teak will be good for the next generation and the environment.* Since the population of teak is diminishing and the people want a cooler environment surrounded by trees, they want to revitalize the teak forest in their village.

*Teak is easy to grow* compared to other timber trees. It does not need much water nor fertilizer the way fruit trees do.

**Reasons related to the planters.** Planters like to grow *teak* as a teak plantation does not require much labor, which the planter does not have too much of to begin with. Households with smaller work forces tend to grow timber trees.

**Reasons related to previous land use.** Two main reasons for the decision to revert to timber trees are crop failure and low price. Most of those who decide to plant teak have had previous experiences with annual crops that failed or sold for very low because so many other people grow annual cash crops like chili and garlic. Some teak growers also experienced failed rice or fruit tree harvests or low yields. Fruit trees especially required huge investments so any failure relating to them meant huge losses. Fruit trees also required intensive labor and encountered problems with pests like bats and insects.

**Related to the government program.** The growers chose teak plantations because of the attached government subsidy. This is valid for many GSTG.

**Related to land:** There are two types of lands. For teak, good land is land that was planted to teak before. Bad land has problems with water, soil that is not fertile, but is rocky and sandy.

**Related to the logging ban policy:** Tree growers were aware that cutting trees in the forest had been prohibited. They thus grow timber trees for the sake of their children and grandchildren, so the younger generation would not have to cut down trees growing in the forest.

**Other reasons.** The planting of timber trees is a royal forestry project for the king. Environmental reasons such as forest degradation, the need to protect the soil, to preserve the trees in the forest, the desire to maintain forested land, or to simply follow what the others were doing were among the reasons cited by respondents for going into teak growing.
Factors influencing timber tree domestication

The factors that influenced timber tree domestication could be classified as encouraging or discouraging.

Encouraging Factors

At the macro level, policies and projects like those on reforestation and forest plantations, the commercial tree planting promotion project, seedlings provision, and marketing support promoted timber tree domestication. The Reforestation Act, B.E.2535 (A.D.1992), for example, has encouraged the private sector and individual growers to grow trees on their own private lands. This Bill is significant because it counters the 1941 Forestry Law which allows almost no room for people to grow timber trees because all timber tree species were considered as state property (reserve species). The Reforestation bill only requires that land be registered to re-grow and improve the trees, thereby freeing growers of the restrictive provisions of the old law.

Government’s long-term subsidy (an average of 5 years) to encourage the private sector to engage in timber tree plantations has also been a positive factor. The provision of seedlings has been equally vital to tree planting since farmers or tree growers often lack the capacity to procure seedlings themselves, especially teak (*Tectona grandis*) which has poor germination rates (between 25 and 35 percent) due to the strong dormancy behaviors of its seeds that cause low plant percentage in nursery production (Keiding, 1985). Germination behavior thus causes a large variation in both the quantity and the quality of the seedlings (Tewari 1992). But with government support, these seedlings are available at the district level.

Government also provides guidelines on timber prices and circulates timber price lists and a list of potential buyers to tree growers. The government has made an attempt to control the domestic market and the price of timber to help timber producers since the state itself is also a timber producer.

Discouraging Factors

Unfortunately, the same Forest Plantation Bill also discourages timber tree domestication in part because of the complex bureaucratic procedures a tree grower has to follow. These include the registration of land for timber tree planting, the need to obtain a seal hummer before cutting the trees, and the need for a transportation permit before moving timber to their destination. Having to deal with bureaucratic procedures has troubled some people because it takes time and incurs additional costs. Lakanavichian (2001) suggests that the RFD simplify the guidelines, rules, and logging procedures for non-government forestry operations.

There are also widespread reports of heavy “informal taxes” levied on teak harvests and transport, which reinforce the impression among the majority of Thai farmers that devoting even a limited area of their smallholdings to teak planting is impractical and unprofitable (Mittelman 2002). These “collections” often take place at the Provincial Office. Those who have friends at the RFD office get their applications easily approved, but many rural Thai do not because they do not have these kinds of bureaucratic connections.

Mittelman (2002) also reports that larger-scale and better-connected plantation owners seem able to overcome these difficulties more successfully. Thai urban investors have also capitalized on the relatively low price of rain-fed uplands by purchasing them and converting them into teak plantations with sizes ranging from 5 to 100 ha, thereby reinforcing the pronounced gap between the rich and the poor farmers in Thailand.

Organization and institution of timber tree domestication

The Royal Forestry Department’s private plantation unit plays a key role in the domestication of the timber tree program, while its forest plantation office provides the guidelines for private forest plantations. The provincial governments’ offices of Natural Resources and the Environment likewise play similar important roles at the local level, as they are responsible for the registration and monitoring of plantations.

Timber production has been under the jurisdiction of the Department of Forestry. Farmlands, on the other hand, are under the jurisdiction of the Department of Agriculture (DA). Timber tree domestication has caused an overlap in jurisdictions between these two departments. However, it is not clear how this overlap will be resolved. Project competition between these two agencies has taken place.
Conclusion and implication

1. Although it is difficult to pinpoint a single causal factor, the logging ban policy does affect the domestication of timber planting of indigenous species. This is because the government issued a follow-on policy promoting timber tree planting. Field evidences reveal that there has been timber tree planting going on after the logging ban was imposed, and that Thai farmers and non-farmers have planted trees in former farmlands after the logging ban was implemented.

2. The government policy on forest plantations both encourages and discourages timber tree domestication. It encourages those who can afford tree planting and discourages those who cannot. In addition, the market looks attractive for timber tree domestication.

3. Government institutions play important roles in timber tree domestication because timber tree planting is highly regulated. However, there seems to be an overlap in the jurisdiction between the Department of Forestry and the Department of Agriculture since timber trees are planted on farmlands.

The findings have far-reaching implications on the future of forest management in Southeast Asia. Countries in the region have similar characteristics as far as past forest management is concerned. The primary rain forest in Southeast Asia has shrunk from 250 million hectares in 1900, to less than 60 million hectares in 1989 (Pofffenberger 1990) due to intensive logging and population expansion. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the forest is no longer a wealth resource; reforestation demands a lot of investments.

After natural forests were closed to logging, an alternative solution for timber production by way of the domestication of timber trees has become increasingly popular (Bertomeu 2008). This is in line with the global agenda of planting trees outside forests that is being carried out by the Food and Agricultural Organization (see Bellefontaine et al. 2002). It is a way of bringing the forest back after massive exploitation in the past that caused the degradation of tremendous swaths of land (Sim et al. 2003). Tree growing by smallholder farmers has the potential to play a significant role in sustainable land management (Nair 2008). Moreover, planted trees relieve the pressure on remaining forest resources, and restore and safeguard the ecological and socio-economic sustainability of agricultural landscapes (Snelder and Lasco 2008). Smallholder tree growing has also been considered in recent times as a policy option that is part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/) of countries.

The Thailand experience in promoting timber tree planting, however, is both an optimistic and a pessimistic, cautionary tale. This might have some implications for the rest of countries in the region. In Thailand, the logging ban policy has created new economic opportunities through the domestication of timber trees outside forest lands. Planting materials are readily available to farmers who have a good deal of knowledge on planting local species. However, whether farmers would benefit from domestic timber tree production or not is very much related to larger forestry and forest plantation policies.

Tree planting is a long-term investment, and unless landowners have low opportunity cost, they would hesitate to invest in timber tree production. Hence, some subsidy from the government to cover planting materials, maintenance costs, and guaranteed-prices is necessary.

Countries in Southeast Asia, inclusive of Indonesia, have put more forests under protection and reduced forests available for production. To overcome the domestic timber supply shortage, it is suggested that timber tree planting be promoted. Distributing degraded lands for cultivation to the landless people has proven to be effective, especially if their cultivation is aimed towards helping the land recover. This happened in Thailand, where cultivation rights have attracted many growers who are assured about the future of their harvest.

It has been stated that the future of trees is in on-farm production (Simons 1997). This is likely to hold true as trends indicate that tree-planting on-farm is increasing, and awareness of the need to grow trees on-farm in the future is growing. Although uncertain, it has been estimated that small farmers actually constitute a majority of tree planters, the trees in their lands exceeding the number of trees in the plantations (Simons 1997).

Finally, tree planting outside the forest area would not help the poor, who must first own the land in order for them to plant trees. In Thailand, 8 million people are...
landless; these are the hill tribe people who occupy the state forest. The Thai case also shows that those who appear to benefit more from the program are the rural and the urban rich because of their resources to own land (Snelder and Lasco 2008).

**NOTE**

1 There was no reliable data on the population of timber tree growers in Thailand. Although the government requires the tree growers to register their tree plantation, not all have done it. The provincial RFD offices do have a list of farmers who registered their land as forest plantations; however, this list is not a reliable basis for drawing timber grower samples for the following reasons: 1) the list mainly contains the participant of government-sponsored forest plantation projects and the tree growers who registered their land. It lacks the total population of tree growers. The RFD does not record tree planting in the field; as such, those who have not registered their plantations in the office are not in the list. 2) This list contains the applicants for forest plantations, but not necessarily those who have already planted timber trees. As warned by the officer at the RFD office, these applicants may end up not planting timber trees at all after registration. The other list available at the RFD office is that of beneficiaries of free seedlings. But this is not a reliable list of the population of timber tree growers since not all beneficiaries ended up planting trees.

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Urban Agriculture in a Developing Country: The Experience of the Philippines’ Urban Agriculture Programs

Semiarto Aji Purwanto

Introduction

My first encounter with urban agriculture took place three years ago when I was conducting a research for my dissertation in the southeastern part of Jakarta. There a lot of people planted vegetables for a living. Upon investigation, I learned that they were migrants from the neighboring region, Karawang, about 100 kilometers away. They occupied vacant lands, moving from one place to another, whenever the landowners took back their property. In many cases, the farmers merely occupied the land, without notifying the owners or the government. Further, as the Municipality of Jakarta and the Department of Agriculture did not have any guidelines for the farmers to follow, the practice of urban agriculture was mostly seen as an illegal or informal economic activity.

Later, when I read through my findings and compared them with the experiences of the other developing countries, I found out that urban agriculture could be an alternative solution to poverty and other problems involving food supply, the environment, and employment/livelihood in the urban areas. The existence of policies or regulations was important, however, as farmlands were problematic, not only in the sense that they were subject to environmental hazards like pollution and contamination, but more so because of land control and ownership issues. In Jakarta, urban farmers occupied and cultivated vacant lands owned by private individuals or groups. In the Philippines, this also happened and there were instances, besides, when urban lands already allotted to an individual or group were cultivated by them, only for the same land to be suddenly taken back by the owner from the hapless urban farmer because someone was interested in buying the land.

From my review of literature, I determined that in the Philippines, there are some attempts to promote urban agriculture, as initiated by government agencies, NGOs, and universities. I believe that my learning about this country’s experience will help me promote urban agriculture in Indonesia.

About urban agriculture

A city is often perceived as the center of government, industry, trade, and service. Some anthropologists argue that a city differs from a rural area because of the fact that the latter is mostly characterized by subsistence agriculture (Fox 1977; Maccionis and Parrillo 2001). While this may be generally true, in some parts of some cities, the city dwellers also carry out agricultural activities.

Researches on the persistence of agricultural activities in the city have attracted experts to explain their presence. One of those experts is McGee (1991), who noticed the changing settlement systems in Asia. He said that the desakota region, a transition settlement, was characterized by a mixture of agricultural and non-agricultural activities. Recently, Luc Mougeot (2005) conducted a more systematic study on agriculture and revealed that it was actually a strategy taken up by the poor in the city, alongside other strategies, for their survival. Mougeot (2005, 18) defined urban agriculture thus:

an industry located within (intra-urban) or on the fringe (peri-urban) of a town, a city or a metropolis, which grows and raises, processes and distributes a diversity of food and non-food products, (re-)using largely human and material resources, products and services found in and around that urban area, and in turn supplying human and material resources, products and services largely to that urban area.

Per Mougeot’s definition, urban agriculture may be found, not only in desakota, but also in the peri-urban and even in the core of a city.

In addition, Dreschsel (2005, 5) explained that in urban agriculture, as a manner by which urban citizens produce their food by themselves, the vegetables planted are based on their lifespan. For instance, fast-growing ones are preferred. In the model of Von Thunen (1828), meanwhile, he also said that urban agriculture relies on geographic orientation. His thesis is slightly consistent with McGee’s geographic
approach. He further argued that a city is a significant center for marketing agricultural commodities. He pronounced that produce with shorter life spans should be planted closer to the city or around the urban core areas. Meanwhile, livestock, cereals, potatoes and the other, more durable commodities may reasonably be raised farther away from the city.

A report from the FAO seminar (2005, 9-18) raised the issue of urban agriculture as a way of coping with problems of food supply in the city. The report started with the notion of urbanism, which has become a major trend in almost every developing country. It is followed by poverty's expanding into the city as a consequence of rapid in-migration. On the other hand, agricultural lands around the city are sometimes lost and transformed into housing projects (residential subdivisions) or become the site of city infrastructure. Such transformations have created a circumstance in which the city inhabitants' demand for food increases faster than supply. In Asia where urbanization is an everyday phenomenon, although food supply is a real problem, urban agriculture remains an idea that has yet to be discussed.

The Philippines is one of the foremost countries in Asia to promote urban agriculture as a national program. In early 1990, groups of scholars and local bureaucrats formulated an urban agriculture program in Quezon City (Nitural 2006, 137). The program was fully supported by the government and facilitated by the NGOs (Duran, Batac, and Drechsel 2001). Some pilot projects enjoyed the support of international donors such as the GTZ (Burleigh 2002, 2003) and the CIP-International Potato Center (Boncodin, Campilan, and Prain 2000). It was believed that the people readily accepted the programs because, to begin with, the poor in the city had already been practicing urban agriculture. In Metro Manila, for example, urban agriculture has been ongoing for a long time, way before the local bureaucrats, the academicians, and the scientists promoted it. According to Guzman (2005), it existed in various sites and forms, and for various reasons ranging "from backyards, to communal gardens, and from institutional to commercial plots, geared for household consumption, for the market or, more commonly, for a mixture of both".

Given Indonesia's problems vis-à-vis the Philippines' experience in conducting urban agriculture programs, I would like to advance three important observations. First, I found out that the model of urban agriculture initiatives or the policies related to the same are insufficient, in light of the growing number of urban farmers in the world, including Indonesia. Second, in the developing countries, urbanization has created an unsolved problem for policy formulation on urban planning. Third, a study on how urban agriculture was initiated, promoted and managed by several agencies in the Philippines may give Indonesia valuable insights. As it is, the Philippines has many examples that illustrate the different stages in the development of various urban agriculture projects. These stages are as follows: coming up with the idea, project formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. By examining the projects along the different stages, I believe that a comprehensive understanding of this issue will be achieved.

The urban agriculture programs in the Philippines

Policies on agriculture, in general, and urban agriculture, in particular

Agricultural development is very important for the Philippines. To illustrate, in 2007, the agriculture sector accounted for about 22 percent of the country's GNP. But what makes it even more important is that it provides income and livelihood to millions of Filipino people.

The agriculture policies in the Philippine are based on Republic Act 8435, which is also known as the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA). Its main objective is to modernize the agriculture sector in the country, while at the same time trying to enhance the level of participation of the small landholders, in order to maintain food security and food self-sufficiency. It also aims to promote private sector participation and people empowerment. Under the presidency of Gloria Macapagal, the Department of Agriculture (DA), in line with AFMA, launched the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani (GMA), which served as the blueprint of her administration's agriculture program. Its top two priorities were to achieve food security and alleviate poverty through agricultural or food production.

In 2006, DA Secretary Arthur C. Yap said that "the nascent rebound of the economy will remain as cold statistics to ordinary Filipinos unless this turnaround can put a dent on the high incidence of hunger and poverty" (Dela Cruz 2006). His office then created a special program, the Gulayang Para sa Masa project or
Programang Gulayan ng Masa Tungo sa Kanayunan Malusog sa Pag-asa, which is also known as the Family Farm Program. This program is actually part of a bigger, more ambitious project that includes three others, namely, Manukan Para sa Masa, Isdaan Para sa Masa, and the Barangay Food Terminal.

Gulayan para sa Masa or, in short, Gulayan ng Masa is anchored on promoting integrated food production through backyard gardening in the country’s most vulnerable rural communities. It also encompasses the provision of training and starter seeds, planting materials, chicken, swine, small livestock, and fish. Meanwhile, Manukan para sa Masa is focused on the fulfillment of a family’s need for food and protein, through the provision of chicken and livestock. By raising chicken, a poor family is expected to be able to get protein from its meat or eggs, or to realize income from selling the same. For those areas where the water supply allows it, Isdaan para sa Masa was launched through the provision of catfish. For food distribution purposes, the government also established the Barangay Food Terminal from which people could buy nutritious and affordable food.

In the urban areas, AFMA and the Gulayan ng Masa program came up with the idea of developing urban agriculture as a way of assuring the urban populace, especially the poor, that they could get food from their own farm or generate income from the harvest of their own produce. The urban agriculture program was named Kabuhayan sa Gulayan at Bulaklakan or the Gulayan at Bulaklakan Project, which served as the government’s urban agriculture program.

The history of urban agriculture in the Philippines can be traced back to the time when President Joseph Estrada was in power. In 1998, the First Lady, Loi Ejercito, initiated a program that combined agriculture, which produced vegetables for consumption, and flower propagation for beautification purposes. In the beginning, the program was under the supervision of the Office of the Presidential Assistant for Food Security. For its implementation, the local government units established a working group of several agencies. In Metro Manila, for example, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, the Office of the First Lady, the local government units (at the barangay level), and some NGOs worked together to introduce and implement the program. According to Anenias (2001), two years after it was initiated, the program had launched 30 vegetable gardens, with a cumulative total area of 230,000 square meters. It improved the lives of 2,500 beneficiaries.

Under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the Department of Agriculture became the program’s implementing agency. One of its offices, the Bureau of Plant and Industry (BPI), assumed the responsibility of implementing the program that would increase farm productivity, create jobs and livelihood opportunities, both in the rural and the urban areas. However, the coordination of the urban agriculture program was handled by the regional office of the DA. In DA Region IV, for example, I noticed how a special task force was created to support the urban agriculture program. Its coordinator explained that the program was part of Serbisyo Muna, a program launched by President Macapagal-Arroyo to prioritize the needs of the vulnerable people.

On 16 January 2009, to cope with the worsening world economy, President Macapagal-Arroyo issued Executive Order No.776 entitled “Rolling Out Backyard Food Production in the Urban Areas”. It was a call to run a massive program on urban agriculture through the setting up of vegetable gardens and backyard fishponds on private lands and, if necessary, on vacant lots and government lands. The President specifically asked the DA, the local government units and PAGCOR to actively participate in this program.

Urban agriculture and the initiators

In the Philippines, several agencies were involved in promoting and implementing urban agriculture programs. The Department of Agriculture, along with other government offices and corporations, was one of them, but there were others as well, among them NGOS, universities, the Church and various individuals.

The Department of Agriculture’s Initiatives

At the start, I presumed that collecting data from the DA would be easy because I thought that all the information about the program could be found there. I approached some contact persons involved in the program and was very glad to find Mrs. Tita Garcia, the coordinator of Urban Agriculture in the office of the DA Region IV. She was excited to find out that my mission was to study what she was doing.
One Sunday morning, she took me to a meeting in her house, which was in the office compound. There I gathered many stories about the program but did not receive any document on strategy and planning, which I believe should be data basic to every development program. She explained that all the programs she had carried out so far were decided based on the statements issued by the of DA Secretary, whereas the big picture pertaining to the agriculture program was prescribed in the AFMA document. She let me observe the works thus far accomplished, and allowed me to join the seminar that would disseminate the program in elementary schools.

DA Region IV worked with the urban poor by implementing the program through various barangay, schools, the Church, and government offices. From 1998 to 2009, according to the most recent program status report given to me, the office had conducted 121 projects over an area of 947,875 square meters. These had 6,373 beneficiaries from Bulacan, Laguna, Cavite, Rizal, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Marikina, Valenzuela, San Juan, Parañaque, Pateros, Navotas, Las Piñas, Manila, Muntinlupa, Malabon, Caloocan City, and Quezon City.

Some government offices in Quezon City, like the Office of the Ombudsman and the DA office, started their vegetable farms in 2006. In the Office of the Ombudsman, the DA Region IV program was welcomed such that the office even offered its backyard for planting. The artistic shape of the vegetable field could be viewed from the top of the building. It was a big circle with a diameter of around 50 meters. Aside from the circular portion was a square area but this was destroyed by a flood.

The Office of the Ombudsman hired 10 to 20 people to prepare the land, and 7 to 10 people to care for it. Meanwhile, a farming competition was held for the officials from the lower to the higher ranks to attract them to the program. They planted the vegetable seeds on the prepared plots and waited for them to grow. The hired people maintained the plantation every day. When harvest time came, everyone in the office converged in the field, searched for the best plantation, and declared the best one as the winner. None of the harvested produce was sold, however; instead, they were given to the lower rank officials or anybody in the office who wanted to take some of the harvest home.

I was also informed about a parcel of land near the DA office in Quezon City that was given to a family to farm. Unfortunately, the field had become the site for a new building by the time I arrived at the place.

Basically, a DA officer told me, all the government offices had shown their support for the urban agriculture program by creating vegetable gardens. In the case of the DA, its garden's produce was also given to lower-rank officials or to a poor family, as mutually agreed upon.

One day, I had the chance to follow a group from DA Region IV that was disseminating the urban agriculture program. They went to two elementary schools in the Malabon area to conduct a seminar on the prospect of urban residents' having vegetable gardens. The first school we visited was the Dampalit Elementary School along a coastal area that was flooded most of the time because it was below sea level. The seminar was attended by 80 pupils from grades 5 and 6, who crowded a classroom on the second floor. The other elementary school we visited had a better seminar room for around 100 pupils from grades 5 and 6. Three officials talked about how important it is to eat vegetables, and about other topics like health and the people's livelihood, how to make vegetable gardens, manage and recycle waste, and produce compost. During the seminar, the pupils listened quietly until the question and answer portion, when two or three pupils asked questions.

At the Dampalit Elementary School, I did not see any vegetable garden but there was one in the other school. However, it looked like nobody was taking care of it. The kangkong (morning glory), spinach, and chili looked undernourished, and a lot of weeds were growing wild.

Barangay initiative

When then First Lady Loi Estrada first launched the urban agriculture program, a barangay in Quezon City responded to her call by putting up a demonstration plot to attract people so that they, too, would put up their own vegetable gardens.

In 1998, the barangay captain of Barangay Holy Spirit, Felicito Valmocina, also known as “Super Cap”, turned a disputed parcel of land that had been abandoned and had become a garbage site, into a garden. He organized a group called the Samahang ng Munting Manggugulay ng Holy Spirit and with them started cultivating the 2.3 hectares of land. They were joined by 100 people from the barangay who enjoyed...
the harvest, initially. However, after learning that they could only use the land but not own it, they quit the program.

Four years after the program was established, the barangay official took control of the field and appointed an agriculturalist, David Balilla, to manage the farm. Using indigenous methods to compost waste, he claimed that every kind of plant could thrive there. He joked, “Every vegetable mentioned in the song Bahay Kubo can grow here”.

Now, the vegetable and flower gardens in Barangay Holy Spirit have become models for urban agriculture and waste management, since they also have a composting unit that manages waste from the barangay. The composting unit was financed by a grant from the Asian Development Bank.

Other institutions and individuals have also participated in the maintenance and enhancement of the demonstration plot. The DA supplies its agricultural needs such as seeds and tools, while the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources provides the technology for culturing tilapia. When I visiting the barangay, I noticed a big banner with the picture and name of a senator. Mr. Balilla explained that he had donated a solar irrigation pump.

**Individual initiatives**

Aside from government-initiated urban agriculture programs, similar ones have been mounted by other entities in Metro Manila. Right behind the UP campus in Diliman, Quezon City, for example, I found a large rice field. Per my informant, this parcel of land was actually owned or claimed by the university. A road through the farming area was just about to be built when I observed the place in April 2009. Managed by some families, the rice field was intensively cultivated by the farmers whose ancestors had been there long before the university was established. Totoy, a farmer who descended from among them, said that he managed two hectares of the rice fields that could be planted to rice twice a year. He planted IR 66 during the season I saw him. According to him, the variety allowed him to harvest 70 to 100 sacks of rice. Granted that one sack contained 40 kilograms of rice, then that would bring his total harvest to 2800 to 4000 kgs. He said that his extended family of 12 could consume his entire harvest, so he never had any left to sell.

I found another case of a farmer consuming his harvest rather than selling it in the market. His vegetable garden lay along the sides of the Marikina River. Its length spanned the River Banks Mall up to the Marikina market, or measured approximately two kilometers. Around 100 farmers cultivated the side of the river bank beside the Animal Park, a recreation site in the City of Marikina. As they were managed by the city hall, they had to obtain a license from the local government before they could cultivate the land. An association was established to organize the farmers: the Samahan ng mga Mamananim sa Patay na Ilog. Mang Jose, the 65-year old farmer that I met, told me that he never sold his harvest nor planted the vegetables for a living. He explained that he had survived a stroke that paralyzed him for about a year. Recovering from his disease, he felt that he needed a regular physical activity. Along with another retiree, he asked the government to allow him to cultivate the riverbanks and was granted permission. However, when asked about the urban agriculture program and the DA’s assistance for urban farmers, he said that there was no such program for them. I argued and explained about my visit to DA Region IV. He replied with the question, “How long have you been staying here?”. When I said that I had been around for three months, he smiled and said, “Okay, one day when you stay longer, you will know what the government does for us farmers”.

**University initiative**

To complete my observation, I also visited Cagayan de Oro in Mindanao. From the Internet, I had found out that this city had implemented the program with assistance from Xavier University. Dr. Holmer of the university said I was welcome to visit his project. Unfortunately, was abroad when I went to his Peri-urban Vegetable Project (PuVEP). In line with the urban agriculture program, the university conducted research to determine what species were suitable to be grown in particular areas. The PuVEP built a laboratory and set up a demonstration plot near the university campus in Cagayan de Oro City. It collaborated with the Mayor’s office to disseminate the program.

PuVEP began its work in early 2002 by establishing four projects of allotment gardens: one each in Bugo and Gusa, and two in Lapasan, with funding support from the European Union. An allotment garden consists of several parcels each measuring about 200 to
400 square meters. It was assigned to individuals or families that were organized into an association. Each parcel was cultivated individually to differentiate it from a communal garden which was usually managed collectively by a particular group. Though it was common in some European countries as early as two centuries ago, the allotment garden was quite new in Asia. Therefore, PuVEP tried to settle all the necessary requirements to put up the garden, from the legal aspect, to providing technology, to the establishment of groups, to extending start-up financial support, and mentoring the farmers.

In barangay Macasandig, I observed two allotment gardens: Christa Holt and Dietrich, which were named after two Germans who had donated funds for the garden. The gardens were well organized, and grew many kinds of vegetables: beans, mustard, spinach, eggplant and lettuce. In Lapasan, a newly initiated allotment garden named Hillside also proved quite interesting. This garden was managed by women who said that farming allowed them to spend their time more meaningfully. Before they had Hillside, they had used up their time gambling, gossiping, and watching TV. Further, the money they raised from the garden allowed them to buy additional food for the family and finance their children’s education.

Although PuVEP had attended to all the legal aspects of the garden, as mentioned earlier, the staff that guided me during my visit was surprised by what he saw when we went to the garden in Lapasan—the entrance had been blocked by the landowner so that the farmers could not cultivate the land. Some tried to climb over the fence to get to their plots, but the others simply gave up. The landowner explained that he had made a deal with a buyer who wanted to buy his land.

Concluding Remarks

From my observations, I now conclude that urban agriculture programs in the Philippines vary in form, initiators, program strategy, and sustainability. The projects initiated by government agencies like the DA, took on the form of assigned farmlands and benefited from government’s provision of seeds, agriculture tools, land preparation assistance, and technical knowledge support. Slightly similar to the government-initiated projects were the initiatives of the barangay and the university, whose programs also took on many forms. At the barangay level, the small coverage made it possible for a demonstration plot to be created, to show the citizens what gardening was about. Meanwhile, the university project had a research component that helped in the selection of species that would grow well in the area. It also usually came out with manuals or books on farming. Important to point out would be the fact that all three had access to funding from other parties.

On the other side, individual initiatives mostly had no specific programs attached to them beyond the existence of the garden itself. Unfortunately, they had to contend with land availability and/or the legal status of the land they cultivated.

The different initiators used different strategies to promote urban agriculture. The DA claimed that it used the participatory approach to introduce the program. However, I noticed that most of the projects had been planned in detail from the top, by the officials and experts in the office. The program, as designed, was then delivered to the school, the government office, the barangay, and the church. They all had similar templates.

But the university had a distinct approach. It started with research and, in the case of PuVEP, the research took a while to accomplish: almost three years before the implementation could begin. In terms of choosing potential participants, the university kept the magnitude small relative to the number of participants that government projects had.

For their part, the individual initiatives had more variations. For instance, the farmer around the UP campus simply continued his forebears’ practice. There were no indications either that he had any intention to develop any other agriculture activity. His style was different from that of the farmers along the Marikina riverbanks, which had an association and clear objectives. They knew exactly how farming would benefit their livelihood, leisure, and physical well-being.

I really have to think hard about the projects’ sustainability. Some pessimistic views emerged when I asked observers in the Philippines about the future of government programs. They said that the DA was unfortunately perceived as one of the most corrupt government offices in the country. It would allegedly say that the project may run for years, and then allocate enough budget for the program. But the truth was that the people received only a little of the funds indicated in the budget. “You see the money was there, and the
program has stated as much; but can you see the garden?" an NGO activist asked me.

Looking back, I also remember what some farmers who worked on their own said— they had never received any help from government agencies. They even worried about their future since in UP, for example, a road was to be built across their place. Moreover, they had been asked to move out several times. In Marikina riverbanks, on the other hand, annual floods always destroyed the garden.

What can be learned from the Philippines experience is that many parties appear interested in urban agriculture. The government has a policy to promote it, while a university and some NGOs have promoted and supported the program. I have exercised the Philippine case and now conclude that a gap exists between the program as envisioned, and its implementation. Urban agriculture has now become an issue for debate in terms of its capability to solve the urban problem, both in written discourses and among policymakers. In Indonesia, I have observed that urban agriculture is not even talked about widely in the academic world, much less in government, such that there are no policies regulating and controlling this "illegal" activity, even as the practice of urban agriculture in Jakarta is widespread and appears to be expanding.

Ultimately, I would like to say that in the Philippines, urban agriculture is a popular topic of discourse in politics, policy and social movements, rather than in real life, at least where the urban people are concerned. In Indonesia, discourses on this issue have been very limited despite the existence of many beds of vegetables spread all over cities like Jakarta.

NOTES

1 Serbisyo muna literally means "service first". This program of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was launched in 2005. It is also called the People's Government Mobile Action (PGMA). The program includes collaboration activities participated in by local government units, non-government organizations, religious groups, the urban poor and the private sector. PAGCOR (see footnote 2) is responsible for implementing various program, among them urban agriculture.

2 PAGCOR stands for the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation, a government corporation that regulate all games of chance in the country, particularly casino gaming, to raise funds for the governments' socio-civic and national developmental efforts, and to help boost the country's tourism industry. It was built in 1977 under the Marcos era (http://www.pagcor.ph/about-pagcor.php).

3 More than thirty years ago, Bahay Kubo began to be taught in kindergarten school and has since become popular. It tells about a backyard garden of a traditional house full of various kinds of vegetables. The lyrics go:

Bahay kubo, kabahing munti,
Ang halaman doon, ay sari-sariling mani
Sitaw, batato, patani.
Kundol, patola, upo't kalabasa,
At saka mayroon pang labanos, musata,
Siuyas, kamatis, bayang at luya,
Sa paligid-liquid ay puno ng linya.

In English this translate to "Nipa hut, even though it is small, the plants it houses are varied, turnip and eggplant, bean and peanut, string bean, hyacinth bean, lima bean, wax gourd, luffa, white squash and pumpkin, and there is also radish, mustard, onion, tomato, garlic, and ginger. And all around are sesame seeds".

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Coping with Crises: The Survival Strategies of the Terengganu and the Kelantan Family Weaving Businesses (1930s - 2000s)

Suribidari

Introduction

Terengganu, Kelantan, and Pahang were well known trading ports in the eastern Malay Peninsula (Khoo Kay Kim 1974; Allen 1953). Since the twelfth century, these three states (Federal States) conducted trade with foreign lands, such as China, Indochina, and Siam.

According to literature, a number of significant features were evident in the Malay weaving industry. Past records confirm that Malay handloom weaving was almost entirely dependent on imported raw materials, such as silk, which was wholly brought from outside the country (Annual reports of Kelantan and Terengganu 1910-1941). However, these same records showed that despite these imported components, a significant volume of the textiles produced was for export, especially from Terengganu and Kelantan.

By the time the Singapore port opened in the nineteenth century, the dominance of handwoven Indian textiles was challenged by European mill-woven ones. The diminishing amount of Indian textiles created a shortfall in supply in the Southeast Asian market. The region quickly reacted, stimulating a regional production center in no time. This period of Britain’s uneven impact on the local yarn-making and textile-weaving industries can be considered the phase that stimulated the Malay textile industry. This transition period was crucial to the development of Malaysia’s handloom weaving industry, which flourished and soared in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Compared to the long history of textile trading that India enjoyed with the Malay Peninsula, the rapid influx of English textiles to Malay textile consumers who negatively perceived these European products during the early nineteenth century. At that time, only the poorer population bought the English textiles which were cheap. The disadvantage of British textiles was their inability to compete with the more valued Indian products. The long tradition and relationship between the Malay Peninsula and India had resulted to the creation of special products that suited the Malay market. And while Malay handloom products had their own identity, they also integrated many Indian influences, i.e., the kain cindai which was similar to the Indian patola, the kain pelangi or the kain limar, which showed variations of Indian weaving techniques (Grace Selvanayagam 1981; Maznah Mohamad 1996).

The shortage of Indian textiles together with the reluctance on the part of the population to take the newer European imports was believed to have encouraged the local handloom products industry (Maznah Mohammad 1996, 81-83).

In her book The Malay Handloom Weavers: A Study of the Rise and Decline of Traditional Manufacture in the eastern Malay states of Terengganu, Kelantan, and Pahang, Maznah Mohamad (1996) stated that the Malay society of the past was usually characterized by the presence of a peasantry that was tied to the land and beholden to a feudal-like ruling structure. Yet, Maznah showed that one among the many social groups of non-agriculturalists, the handloom weavers, played a decisive role in their economies. This study, which particularly focused on how this social group managed and coped with the crisis, furthermore strengthened the author’s statement that handicraft production was misconstrued to be “idle work”. The misconception was largely due to the tendency of policy planners to perceive this sector as something outside of systemic or organized “manufacture”.

Methodology

This study emphasizes its being a historical one in the sense that it combines both historical and anthropological approaches. The collection of data is based on written historical studies and oral history. Oral history fills the void or information gaps that written sources cannot themselves fill.

The use of oral history in the form of life stories and family histories seeks to reveal how household strategies make survival possible. It also manifests the resilience of the people amidst the changing nature of the economic activities over time and depicts whether the people of the region are becoming more or less vulnerable, or more or less resistance in different ways.
Through the use of family histories, the experiences, strategies, and points of view of this social group, the life story of the older and younger generations can be traced. The interviews were done individually and collectively, in order to check and clarify information obtained from two different periods/generations.

Archival Works

Some archival works were also conducted besides the oral interviews, to obtain a better picture of the rural life in Kelantan and Terengganu, especially in the 1930s during Depression was ongoing worldwide and when the pre-independence era. The archival works were undertaken in the National Archive in Kuala Lumpur, and in the State Archive in Kota Bharu and Kuala Terengganu. The combination of information derived from materials from the archives and oral interviews reveals the structural changes which “families” experienced in the last 60 to 70 years, and their response to the crises.

The Families’ Rapport

Oral history was used to gather the life histories of several large (extended) families in Kelantan and Terengganu. This stage was intended to consist of working with a family rapporteur, who was expected to fill in information not available in the written sources. In other words, information concerning the families’ fortunes and difficulties over a 60-year period (and, no doubt, over many generations) and their responses were collected through in-depth interviews. The reasons for using oral history, whether individually or collectively derived, were to check and re-check some information obtained from two different periods/generations. The first attempt to have a focus group discussion proved difficult to do. Gathering the participants was not easy, considering the fact they lived in separate and different districts/states and were also quite busy with their work/businesses.

The family rapport was obtained from two families in Kelantan and two families in Terengganu. For most of these families, the weaving business formed part of their heritage. The two families in Kelantan were the family of Hajjah Minah binti Omar and his sons, and Haji Abdul Rahman bin Haji Idris Omar and his wife Hajjah Nik Zainab. There was one other family interviewed but this family was not the researcher’s main informant: the family of Hajjah Cik Bidah binti Cik Yin. In Terengganu the researcher managed to interview the families of Wan Shamsuddin Wan Embong and Hajjah Habibah binti Haji Zikri. Besides the families of the weaving business, the researcher also interviewed some weavers (workers), most of whom were women.

Library Research

There were many works written on Kelantan and Terengganu across various years, among them articles in various journals, academic theses and dissertations. These works helped to trace back some of the documents in the archives and to formulate interviews for oral history.

The Historical Background of the Eastern Coast Malay Peninsula as the Weaving Center: Kelantan and Terengganu

Up to now, the non-agricultural economic activities in Kelantan and Terengganu Malaysia are the landmarks of the regions, i.e., weaving, blacksmithing, silversmithing, metalworking, and shipbuilding (Clifford 1897; Fisk 1959; Gullick 1952; Hill 1949; Khoo Kay Khim 1974). These two regions are well known for their maritime tradition that has resulted from their location: they lie within the strategic maritime trade routes across the Malay Archipelago. The same factor is responsible for the intercultural exchanges and cross-population movements across these coastal centers. Mapping the weaving center of the Malay region reveals that the chain starts from Champa (Cambodia), then goes through Pattani, followed by Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, and Sulawesi in the eastern part; and Riau in the western part. The route ends in Aceh, up north in Sumatra. It is not coincidental that these places were also part of the Islamic kingdoms. Those involved in the Islamic weaving centers share a common knowledge of their heritage. Some of the names of the sarongs woven in Malay Peninsula are the very same as those of sarongs produced in other areas in the Malay Archipelago. For instance, *kain songket* and *kain limar* in Kelantan and Terengganu are also woven through Sumatra. *Kain Samarinda* and *Kain Bugis*, which used to be woven in Terengganu, are also sarong names in Kalimantan and Sulawesi.

In Terengganu, around the period 1874-1876, the ruler Baginda Omar was said to have encouraged foreign artisans to settle in Terengganu and pass on their skills to the local people (Clifford 1961, 61). Around this time, this class of artisans in Terengganu...
and also in Kelantan encouraged the local weavers to produce silk sarongs. At that time silk sarongs were among the most important export items. During this period, the weavers were cashing in on the export boom in raw silk from China and cotton yarn from England. By the late nineteenth century, Terengganu and Kelantan were famous for their distinct artisan population.

In the eastern coast Peninsula, as well, the migration of the regional population induced weaving, as illustrated by the Pahang weaving industry, which the Bugis settlers started. In 1669, when the Dutch captured the port of Makassar in Sulawesi, the Bugis families fled to settle in Malaya, Borneo and the Riau Archipelago, bringing with them their cultural and economic traditions. When the Bugis immigrated into the Malay Peninsula, they were said to have brought with them their textile weaving tradition of plaids and silks (Mohamad 1996, 88-90). This explains why during the 1900s, the Pahang weavers were specialists in plaid silk sarongs, which were not then known in Kelantan and Terengganu.

The geographical location of the eastern Malay states, their proximity to Cambodia and China, also provided added stimulus to the establishment of weaving centers, especially for the supply of raw materials (Hill 1949, 78-80). The northern part of the region, which was producing this raw silk, was where Terengganu and Kelantan must have acquired this raw material for their textile industry, which specialized in kain songket (Mohamad 1996, 91). The manufacture of the kain songket was heavily dependent on the patronage of court circles as this was one of the most luxurious textiles woven in the whole of the Malay region. Kuala Terengganu's manufacture of these gold cloths was influenced by the political connections that Terengganu had with Riau since the seventeenth century (Sheppard 1949: 7-37). In 1837, this was encouraged by Baginda Omar, who supported the foreign artisans' decision to settle in Terengganu (Clifford, 1961: 59-61). The existence of such a historical tie explains the similarities of the textile traditions of these Sumatran centers and Terengganu.

Besides trade and the cultural and political links that had played important roles in influencing the weaving traditions of the east coast were the demographic and economic structures of the region, particularly its huge population and little agrarianization. These two regions were the most populous states in the Malay Peninsula during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Mohammad 1996, 91-92). The economic activities which were based on craft and commodity production could only expand in areas of high population concentration, which could meet the demand for labor and supply market needs. For instance, besides textile weaving, industries such as boat-building and silversmithing also flourished in Kelantan and Terengganu.

Weaver population

The year 1931 saw a decrease in the population of weavers relative to 1921. Kelantan registered only 834 in 1931, from 2,853 in 1921; Terengganu had 3,484 weavers in 1931, compared to 7,341 in 1921. Kelantan registered a 70 percent decrease in its weaving population in 1931 viz. 1921. A similar trend was noted in Terengganu which registered a 52 percent decrease in its weaving population during the same period (The Census of British Malaya 1921; A Report on the 1931 Census).

In 1947, Terengganu remained the major center of handloom weaving with 3,140 weavers. But before the war, particularly during the 1930s, there seemed to be a greater distribution of the weaving population across various states. For example, Singapore registered only 25 weavers in the 1931 census, but their number grew to 328 in 1947. A similar situation was noted in Melaka and Kedah (Maznah Mohamad 1996: 8-9). One possible explanation for the dispersal of these weavers was the “out migration” of east coast weavers to the more strategically located centers. Singapore certainly provided a logical base for them, as all raw materials came in through Singapore.

Generally, a rise in the weaving population of Malaysia from 4,204 in 1957 to 8,090 in 1970 was noted. Yet, the handloom weaver population remained concentrated in Kelantan and Terengganu. From the 1950s to the 1980s, when Malaya achieved independence, the population of weavers in Terengganu and Kelantan fluctuated. In 1947 in Kelantan, the number was around 309; this increased to 967 in 1957 and then gradually decreased to 646 in 1970 and to 280 in 1980. In Terengganu the population of weavers tended not to fluctuate as much. From 3140 in 1947, it went down a little to 2754 in 1957, up to 3679 in 1970 and, finally, down to 2278 in 1980 (Report on the 1947 Census of Population; Population Census of Federation of Malaya 1957; Population Census of Malaysia, 1970, 1980).
It was noted that, for centuries, handloom weavers in Terengganu had mainly been wage or piece-rate workers, working for “middlemen” who provided either supplies or wages, and marketed the finished products (EK Fisk 1959, 21). The production of these commodities was carried out at home, on a putting-out basis, although not all the weavers owned their looms and other equipment. This predominant form of production engaged a large number of people, especially women. While some of these weavers might have also been agricultural cultivators, the majority, particularly in Terengganu, were not (Annual Report of Terengganu 1923, 2). Until recently, this form of production was mostly noted in Terengganu and Kelantan.1

The Rise of the Family Weaving Business

There is a general notion that in the Malay Peninsula, the weaving business, particularly handloom weaving, existed merely as a craft. Per a survey of literature, this notion is questionable (Fisk 1959; Gullick 1952; Hill 1949) as shown by the data obtained in Terengganu and Kelantan. In these two regions, the output from handloom production since the 1930s was not but the result of mere pastime activities alongside agriculture, but was the result of a family weaving business.

In recent times, the families of Che Minah binti Omar and Hq. Abd Rahman bin Hq. Idris Omar were the famous ones, among others, in the weaving business in Kelantan, Kampung Penambang, around 50 km north Kota Bharu. The families have been in the business since the 1930s.

Che Aminah Omar started the legacy of songket as a business with her brother Idris Omar, after her mother, Hajjah Che Puteh, passed it on to the family. Unlike in the olden days when weavers worked on songket only in the courts under the patronage of the local royalty, today songket is also used by the commoners, particularly for the ceremonial occasions and weddings.

After the war some time in 1953, Hajjah Che Minah Omar and Haji Idris Omar agreed to run the business separately. The company of Che Minah and Sons focused on songket and the plain silk sarong (sarang tenun), whereas Haji Idris Omar and his family agreed to specialize in batik-making. This kind of agreement was one of the alternative survival strategies during the crisis when parties sought to help each other.

Today, among the eleven children of Che Minah Omar, two manage the business: Encik Ahmed Kamil Hussein and Hajjah Khaltoum Hussein. They registered the business with the government in 1976, and by 2004, built a workshop in Pangkalan Chepa to provide yarn for their workers (the weavers). In the recent years, other entrepreneurs from Terengganu acquired yarn from Encik Kamil. This was admitted by Encik Wan Shamsuddin from Paloh and by Hajjah Habibah from Bibah Songket from Rhu Renggeh, Terengganu.

Both Hajjah Habibah and Encik Wan Shamsuddin have started their business in the late 1980s; and both of them used to be the staff of The Institution of Kraflangan Malaysia Kuala Terengganu.

Managing the Crisis: The Impact and Response of the Weaving Business

Kuala Terengganu was one of the important ports along the eastern coast of the Malay Peninsula that pushed its involvement in the textile trade, as part of its maritime tradition. The shipping movements recorded the importance of the maritime trade (Annual Report of Trengganu/ART 1910-1941), which was considerable in size, and was also conducted by the local sailing vessels, all built by the Terengganu Malay shipbuilders (ART 1910, 7). In the first Annual Report of Terengganu in 1910, copra, dried fish, and silk and cotton sarong were listed as Terengganu’s principal exports to Singapore (ART 1910: 8).

The trade figures of Terengganu from 1910 to 1938 point to the significance of the industry in terms of its scale of production. The weaving industry was almost completely dependent on the outside for its raw materials. The annual reports of Terengganu recorded that from 1929 to 1932, the value of silk imports dropped significantly, but peaked again from 1936 to 1941. These fluctuations were related to changes in the international price of silk. The low years for silk imports into Terengganu were the years 1929-1932, when Japanese raw silk exports began to supersede Chinese exports (ART 1929-1933; Mohammad 1996, 110-111). The silk imports peaked again in Terengganu from 1936 onwards, due to imports from Japan.3

In the early 1900s cotton goods and raw silk were listed among the chief imports of Kelantan. In 1903, the import value for silk and cotton was M$18,290 or 6 percent of total imports that year (Report on the
State of Kelantan for the year August 1903 to August 1904. Throughout the century, silk weaving was one of the leading industries in Kelantan, more so than cotton.

Through the year 1930 in Kelantan, as in Terengganu, the annual report recorded that the artisan population was prominent in town, and the women were the ones who worked at the loom. The weaving industry was maintained by a small number of local Malays, although the import of raw materials for textiles was in the hands of the Chinese traders (Annual Report of Kelantan/ARK 1930: 15).

During the Japanese occupation in the 1940s, the difficulty encountered by the business was expressed by Hajjah Khaltoum Hussein, a daughter of Che Minah Omar. She said that “kuncu-kuncu Jepun” took all that they had, including the tools and all the silk yarn.

But the hard times did not last too long. The formation of the Malayan nation in 1957 altered the economic picture in each of the Malay states. The transformation of the previously decentralized and independent trade of each state slowly began as the reality of the Malayan nation was formed.

Before the war, all commodities going out of the state, for example, textiles from Terengganu, were considered as exports even if they went to Johor. Presently, official statistics classify the handloom weaving industry under the subsector, “handicraft spinning and weaving” within the textile industry category (Department of Statistic Malaysia-Census of Manufacturing Industries 1981).

Conclusion

The description of the Malays in the pre-colonial period as being but peasant-subsistence agriculturalists is hardly accurate as there was evidence that they had various occupations. Some segments of the Malay population could have been once into agriculture, but at some point entered into proto-industrial occupations, and perhaps later left again to be peasants. For most of the weavers, these shifts in occupation served as a survival strategy during the crisis. Demographic data drawn from census reports prepared every ten years show changing trends in the occupations of the Malay population. The twentieth century saw a story of decline and adjustments. In general, there was a decline in the total population of the weavers from the turn of the century to the 1990s.

The archival records also show that the handloom industry, which was categorized as a family weaving industry, was of vital importance to the economies of Kelantan and Terengganu in the pre-World War period. The importance of this industry was shown by the magnitude of textile production, as indicated by the value and volume of textile imports and exports. It was seen from the records that the industry as a whole was challenged by imports of cheap European and, later, Japanese machine-made textiles. What has been shown in this study is that the industry in Terengganu and Kelantan did not really collapse during the Depression era. Their export trade in fact survived to the late 1930s through adjustment and adaptations.

In the case of Terengganu, its concentration on silk-woven textiles saved it from total collapse. Terengganu adjusted, in particular, by shifting to more comparatively advantageous products. Unlike Terengganu, Kelantan accommodated the influx of cheap cottons by shifting to batik production that used imported cotton textiles as its base. The trade statistics of Kelantan showed that just as imports of cotton goods rose, so did Kelantan's exports of cotton also go up. The position of Kelantan's textile exports was consistently maintained by taking advantage of cheap textile imports for its batik industry, as a result of which the proportion of its textile exports in relation to that of the other commodities remained relatively constant.

In the early twentieth century, Terengganu and Kelantan's textile industry experienced crucial threats from industrializing Europe. After having experienced the momentum to flourish when India’s textile industry declined in the mid-nineteenth century, the Malay industry finally felt the effects of an industrial hit during the turn of the century. At this point, the local industry adopted its own survival strategies. In the post-war period, Malay handloom weavers adopted yet another strategy to continue surviving: it developed product differentiation as seen in the switch to songket weaving until the recent times. The increased importation of gold threads after the war indicated that the weaving of songket had become the concern of the handloom industry. Both cotton and silk were used as the woven base for songket weaving.

The Malay handloom industry survives until the present in its ‘old’ form, mainly because the putting-
out system remained most advantageous. In times of less demand that putting out workers simply were not burdened with any work for there were no formal contracts of employment between the entrepreneurs and the weavers that bound entrepreneurs to pay salaries.

NOTES


2 Interviews with Encik Kamil Hussein, Kampung Penambang Kota Bharu, 1 July 2009 and 10 September 2009.

3 PAB McKerron, British Advisers of Kelantan (BAK) 621/193, 13 May 1938.

4 Interview with Encik Kamil Hussein and Hajjah Khaltoum Hussein, Kampung Penambang, 6 May 2009. ‘Kuncu-kuncu’ refers to someone who worked as a collaborator during the Japanese period.

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INTERVIEW


Introduction

For some time now, women, especially in impoverished Asian countries where there are also active armed conflicts, have been portrayed as victims, and always as beneficiaries or receivers of the “benefits” of development assistance. Their portrayal as such have largely contributed to the popular perception that women’s capacities are limited, and that, for the most part, they are helpless and hapless individuals needing constant assistance and support.

The long history of uneven power relations between men and women has paved the way for a world where women have been made helpless and hapless. In Japan, the ideal woman has traditionally been depicted as a subservient wife and mother who is better seen than heard. Japan’s male-dominated culture is deeply entrenched in its political, educational, and bureaucratic systems (Hanami, as cited in Gelb 2003, 51).

But, in various contexts, women have, in fact, proven themselves capable of moving out of their situation of pain from oppressive patriarchal structures, to positions of power in the public sphere. However, this agency of promoting social protection toward the creation of a more inclusive and gender-fair society needs to be claimed and reclaimed, even in societies that have seemingly addressed problems of historic discrimination against women. Discriminatory attitudes and strictures toward women have a way of persisting despite the plethora of laws and policies purportedly promoting more “equal opportunities” between men and women. Prejudices and stereotypes involving women do not disappear automatically at the stroke of legislators’ pens, even if these lawmakers happen to be women themselves.

In this paper, I shall discuss and analyze government policies and legislations intended to address social protection and gender equality in Japan, Thailand, and Malaysia. I shall also take up how some prominent civil society groups in these countries have responded to similar concerns. I have chosen to use the transformative and inclusive social protection framework (see the subsequent section) as basis for my analysis. I shall also compare state policies with civil society responses in the three countries.

Research on this paper was done through the conduct of qualitative strategies for gathering data in Japan, Thailand, and Malaysia. These strategies included participant-observation, library research, key informant interviews, and small group discussions among university professors, graduate students, and the staff of four universities with which I was affiliated as an Asian Public Intellectual (API) Senior Fellow in 2008-2009. The university centers were as follows: the Center for Southeast Asian Studies in Kyoto University and the Institute of Asian Studies in Sophia University in Tokyo, Japan; the Institute of Asian Studies at the Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand; and the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.

On Social Protection

Social protection, as defined by the International Labor Organization (ILO) in the World Labor Report (2000) “encompasses a broader range of public and private measures including all non-contributory provisions such as tax-and donor-financed welfare programmes. As such, it includes not only public social security schemes, but also private and non-statutory schemes with similar objectives, whether formal or informal” (John 2002, 8-9). Mainly, these measures take on the form of cash transfers to “vulnerable” populations, or insurance policies with which to address the future vulnerabilities of a population.

In this paper, I have adopted the definition of social protection that promotes transformative processes and measures, i.e., those that foster a more inclusive and equitable environment between men and women. As such, I will use the following definition from the transformative social protection framework set forth by Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler in Transformative Social Protection (2004):

Social protection is the set of all initiatives, both formal and informal, that provide: social assistance
to extremely poor individuals and households; *social services* to groups who need special care or would otherwise be denied access to basic services; *social insurance* to protect people against the risks and consequences of livelihood shocks; and *social equity* to protect people against social risks such as discrimination or abuse (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler 2004, 9).

Because of the breadth of the above definition, I have chosen to focus only on the last element of social protection: that of initiatives that promote social equity "to protect people against social risks such as discrimination or abuse". Transformative measures promote social equity because they lead to changes in attitude and behavior toward addressing social inequities, and, therefore, forge a more inclusive, rather than an exclusive, society.

In looking at measures and initiatives that promote social equity, I will examine how women in the three countries assert the agency in promoting a transformative social protection agenda and practice. Based on the above definition, I will also examine each country’s social protection policies and critique them on the basis of the transformative-inclusive framework, as mentioned earlier.

Highlighting the women’s agency in promoting social protection paves the way for a more inclusive and gender-fair social milieu.

**Social Protection in Japan: State policies vis-à-vis civil society responses**

Japan is the second largest economy in the capitalist world. Although its affluence may have started to wane in the early 1990s, it remains a major economic force in global trade. Despite its affluence, however, Japan is also widely perceived to have rigid social structures that do not welcome diversity. Schwartz (2003, 4) notes that foreigners who know very little about the country are familiar with a Japanese proverb that captures this propensity toward homogeneity: “Dera kugii wa utareru (the nail that sticks out gets hammered down)”.

With this background, it would appear extremely difficult, even impossible, to transform rigid and unequal social relations, especially those that govern the relationships between the sexes. I was able to confirm how rigid these relationships were during my six-month stay in Japan.

In *Race for the Exits: The unraveling of Japan’s system of social protection*, Schoppa (2006) explains that during the Japanese economic boom from the 1950s to the 1980s, the Japanese government spent minimally on social protection for its citizens1 because Japan’s convoy of big capitalist firms and women were providing an elaborate system of social protection at no cost to the government. Further, at the height of the economic boom, big Japanese firms like Honda, Toyota, etc. enjoyed considerable financial liquidity such that they were able to offer lifetime employment to male workers, as well as social insurance schemes to their wives and children. The women stayed home and became full-time housewives, even if they had sufficient academic qualifications to take on a job. Hara and Sueyama (2005) in Suzuki (2007) noted that from the 1960s to the 1970s, many Japanese women aspired to become full-time housewives or go into "housewifization", a status symbol of an affluent lifestyle. In the surveys made during the same period, many Japanese prided themselves on their being part of Japan’s affluent middle class (Schoppa 2006).

The Japanese tradition of making women look after their elderly parents or parents-in-law fitted seamlessly into the social protection system institutionalized by Japanese firms. In this system, government played an indirect role, merely supporting firms through financial bailouts during the economic downturns. This arrangement virtually made private firms the main engines of growth and providers of social protection. But, according to Schoppa (2006), government policies that reinforced the traditional gender role of women as virtual partners of private firms in providing social protection did not evolve through conscious social policy development, but through "benign neglect". Gaps in the provision of both childcare and elderly care services had pushed women to take on this type of unpaid home-based work and avoid full-time, regular, and gainful employment. This is not to mention the social norm of saddling women with the responsibility of seeing their children pass entrance examinations for tertiary level education. Throughout all these, government has given passive encouragement, thus sustaining the traditional role of women.

The women’s traditional role as nurturer was first manifested in the workplace. From the 1960s to the 1970s, women employees in both government and the private sector in Japan were expected to do the "household chore" types of tasks in the office, like cleaning up the area, putting things in order, and most
especially, pouring tea. The women employees were also not given equal opportunities as their male counterparts, especially in out-of-town or out-of-country travels. Moreover, many of them were not given jobs in the front-line. In short, while the women were employed, they were doing things associated with their reproductive, nurturing roles (Midori 2008).

Despite the Japanese government’s limited role in coming up with traditional social protection measures, it was able to pass significant legislation that seemed to recognize the importance of gender parity. As cited earlier, for example, it passed the Equal Employment Opportunity Law in 1985 and the Basic Law for a Gender Equal Society in 1999. On the surface, these two important legislations are quite progressive in terms of pushing for gender equality in the workplace and in society, in general. However, as Gelb (2003) noted, these laws were passed under “external” pressure which the international feminists subjected Japanese feminists to. The latter were known to consistently campaign for rights-based claims on gender equality, especially for equal opportunities in the workplace. Meanwhile, Japan’s abortion laws are considered even more progressive and more women-friendly than those of perceptibly modern countries like the USA (Gelb, 2003).

Suzuki (2007) listed other state policies that could have immense potentials on transformative social protection, as follows:

- the Childcare Leave Law (1991)
- the Revised Equal Opportunity Employment Law (1999)
- the Child Care and Family Care Leave Law (2005)
- The law on measures supporting the development of the next generation (2005)

At the tail end of Japan’s economic boom in the late 1970s when it came to terms with the severe financial crisis, the women were again called upon to help absorb the shock. Thereafter, a marked increase in the number of women entering the workforce was noted and “housewifization” stopped. There was also a growing “attitudinal change that reflected the values of gender equality, individualism, respect for human rights” (Suzuki 2007, 4-5). Suzuki cites that these changes were largely the consequence of many international conventions, policies, and events. For instance, it was at this time that the UN declared the Decade for Women (1976 to 1985). At the end of the said period, Japan ratified the international Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and enacted the EEOL for the first time.

Again, enacting laws designed to promote more equal opportunities between men and women, and implementing them are two different things. For example, whereas all the laws passed by the Japanese government supposedly promote gender equality, they are not implemented in a social or political vacuum. Moreover, Japan’s social customs and traditions persist in an atmosphere of seeming modernity and liberal attitudes. Its social welfare mechanisms remain inadequate for the majority of Japanese women workers, who composed about 70% of the country’s informal or part-time workers or “freeters” in 2005 (Suzuki, 2007).

Academic institutions in Japan have “unwritten” policies espousing gender discrimination in the workplace, notwithstanding the outward manifestations of creating offices like the “Center for Women Researchers” at the Kyoto University, for example. In a group discussion with the staff of the Center, I learned that there is no gender balance in the composition of the Board of Regents of the university: there is only one woman in it. Besides, she was chosen not because of her gender, but because she is the representative of the Ministry of Education.

In a survey conducted from mid-2006 to early 2007 to help draft plans that would ensure “gender equality at Kyoto University”, researchers found out that gender disparity in employment and promotion are evident, as seen in the following summary of their findings, among others:

- Women comprise a mere 25% of the entire university population of 35,206.
- Of this small number, 25% are part-time staff (who do not enjoy several social protection benefits)
- The higher the rank, the lower the percentage of women among faculty, administration, and staff. To illustrate, women make up only 4% of the full professors and 3.3% of the division and section heads.
- Patterns of promotion for faculty, administration, and staff differ for men and women, depending on their age. The age of
promotion for women is higher than that of men in general. Further, the promotion process for women is rather slow and takes much longer than it does for males. This trend is more strongly felt by women faculty or staff members who are married and have children. Women administrative staff members, on the other hand, tend to remain in their positions for quite some time.

According to the results of the survey, female faculty and staff at Kyoto University, as well as university students, face serious difficulties in forming families such that many of them decide not to get married; or, if they do, postpone having children, if at all. They do this in an effort to balance family life, on the one hand, with doing research or teaching, on the other. Schoppa calls these “exit” strategies which the women resort to, amidst the demands of having a career and a meaningful family life, in the context of inadequate, state-provided social protection and rigid social structures that dictate women’s roles in the family and society. In this context, the women assert their agency by evading their reproductive roles, while aggressively pursuing their productive roles, i.e. having a financially stable career.

In popular culture, young, salaried Japanese men or young professionals (“yuppies”) also tend to follow age-old cultural strictures with regard to the roles or views of women. According to a young Filipino PhD graduate of Tokyo University, who had stayed in Japan for ten years, many of his equally young, highly educated male Japanese friends believe that marriage needs to be postponed until after they attain some financial stability. According to the Filipino, if and when a career-oriented Japanese male does decide to get married, it is to someone who will not compete with him in terms of professional or career advancement. In short, Japanese males might consider an early marriage, but only to women who are somewhat “chotto baka” (a little stupid), but with a “pleasing” personality! It must be pointed out that this is possibly the Filipino’s own opinion rather than that of his Japanese friends. Still, when I asked a group of young male PhD students at the ASAFAS department in KU, they did acknowledge it to be a common perception. Eventually, when I asked them their views on this issue, they gave me varied answers: some agreed that it is quite difficult for young and highly educated women, especially, to mix married life with a career. They also told me about a growing number of young PhD graduates who have chosen to remain single, even until their early 40s.

Throughout Japan’s history, women have invariably borne the brunt of their lower status; but many outstanding women have also worked hard to push for more women-friendly policies and their political rights. Since the Meiji period to the present, some Japanese women have been defying social strictures in their campaign to promote their rights and welfare. However, the kind of activism or feminism they articulate may be muted compared to that of the more aggressive women’s liberation movements in some other parts of Asia (like the Philippines) or in the Western world. While many Japanese have become apathetic to government because of corruption and other anomalies, however, they have not staged bloody uprisings or noisy and vociferous protest actions against it. The same is true for women’s issues.

The feminism or activism against women’s subservient roles in society is best described as “housewife feminism”. It tends to address issues like consumerism and environmental protection, rather than structural issues that downplay the role of women and belittle their contributions. A Kyoto University professor attributes such laid back and relatively “silent” types of defiance to what she considers the absence of a memory or an intellectual tradition of revolution in Japanese history (Junko, 2009).

For her part, Kanematsu (1993) describes three outstanding Japanese feminists from the 1880s up to 1981, whom she believes to have laid the foundation for Japanese feminist orientations. They are Kishida Toshiko (a lady-in-waiting to Empress Haruko, wife of the Meiji Emperor, in the 1880s), Hiratsuka Raicho (from 1900 to the early 1950s), and Ichikawa Fusae (from the early 1900s to 1981). All these three women defied the existing social and political order of their time, resisted all forms of hostility, and suffered in prison for their feminist activism. They were all far ahead of their time, asserting women’s agency in the hostile environments of dominant male chauvinism.

In 1919, Hiratsuka and Fusae started the New Women’s Organization that spearheaded the advocacy toward gaining legal recognition of women’s rights and their equal participation in the political process. Like their predecessor Toshiko, both women were undaunted in the face of public persecution, police harassments, and even arrests (Kanematsu 1993, 45).
Currently, more and more Japanese women focus on addressing social welfare issues and becoming actively involved in politics. However, their involvement in politics and their directly influencing social policy toward a more inclusive and gender-fair society, still leave much to be desired.

Despite all these changes, and the women’s assertion of agency toward promoting a more inclusive and gender-fair society, the Japanese social system still appears to be a tough nut to crack.

Educational institutions, as replicators of culture, may be the linchpin that can pave the way for a more women-friendly Japanese system. At this point, even educational institutions like Kyoto University have not yet opened their “iron ceilings” that would allow more women to assume key policy or decision making positions. The term “iron ceilings” rather than the proverbial “glass ceilings” was first used by a professor at the Department of Economics, Kyoto University in 2007.6

Social Protection in Thailand: State policies and civil society responses

In terms of this paper’s definition of social protection, the Thai government has enacted a Social Security Act that provides not only social security or social insurance benefits, social services and social assistance; but also adequate labor protection. The promotion of social equity, however, seems to be absent in the Thai system of social protection.

Aside from the Social Security Act, the Thai government also promulgated the Labor Protection Act of 1998 that stipulates wage equality between males and females doing the same kind of work. In practice, however, the wages of men are 15% to 20% higher than those of women. Ironically, this gap narrowed to 14% at the height of the financial crisis in 1997, only to widen again in 1999, when the country was recovering from the crisis. These developments imply a deeper structural problem within the country, one that is not automatically removed when economic development is on the rise.

The Labor Protection Law also offers protection from sexual harassment in the workplace, to women employees. Yet, according to Pongsapich et al., sexual harassment cases have been reported, alongside discrimination against women as women. According to an ILO report in 2000 (cited in Pongsapich et al.), Thai employers are often reluctant to provide women with additional training because the latter are “unreliable since they will resign after getting married and having children”.

Pongsapich and other women professors at the Chulalongkorn University with whom I interacted during my brief stay in Bangkok, attest to the reality that, like in Japan and the Philippines, Thailand’s laws are more often breached than observed.

In Thailand, women are quite visible in almost all forms of trade and business, but even more so in education and other services sector. However, the “glass ceiling” is still very much visible in these sectors, with only about 20% of the women occupying high-ranking positions in both government and the private sector.

Peter Bell (1997) argues that Thailand’s economic miracles are built “on the backs of women”; after all, they make up 80% of the work force in the 10 largest export-oriented industries in Thailand, where they are “super-exploited” for maximum returns on investments. Moreover, many of these women work under unfair labor contracting schemes and earn below-subsistence wages, but accept them in their quest to get out of poverty. Moreover, Bell (1997) also describes how, because of poverty, rural Thai women from the north and northeast participate in Thailand’s $10-billion tourist industry as commercial sex workers in Bangkok’s sleazy pubs.

In addition to being willful subjects of unfair labor practices, many young women in Thailand also provide unwaged or indentured labor as servants in upper middle class homes in the urban areas. The parents of these young women are thought to have already “sold” them to their masters. These women are also the main workers in the informal, “homework” type of economy, and constitute unpaid labor in the agricultural sector. Social protection for this group of women is but a dream.

Men dominate Thailand’s complicated political landscape, whereas women are but secondary players, especially at the municipal and provincial levels. In many instances, women play support roles to the men in their families when the latter run for public office. Further, women-cum-mothers employ the rhetoric of motherhood while on the campaign trail, appealing to the emotions of voters who are deeply entrenched in...
the Buddhist values of filial piety. They cut deals to ensure the victory of their sons and daughters in the local elections. They are known to have initiated the practice of vote-buying. Regardless, the male politicians remain the main players in this context such that Thai politics is considered “the last bastion of male sanctity”. In Thailand, the game of politics is closely intertwined with gendered and sexual relations. (Vichit-Vadakan 1997, 425).

In Bangkok in April 2009, I interviewed Ms. Oue, a female Thai journalist who works for the International Crisis Group (ICG) based in Australia. According to her, whenever she has to interview politicians or military officers, she adopts a rather unconventional tack in order to get sufficient information from them. She said that while she is not the femme fatale type, during these interviews she makes it a point to look “naïve” or even “a little stupid” (shades of chotto baka in the Japanese context!) in order to extract important or sensitive information. She rationalized this tack to be an effective strategy, given how female journalists exuding a strong-willed personality turn the male officials off.

As for civil society, it plays a vital role in Thai society, especially during the various economic and political crises. Consequently, government has recognized civil society’s role in helping shape public consciousness with regard to development programs, and in engaging the government on various issues. Thus, civil society groups were largely tapped to draft the Constitution by the previous administration. Currently, Thailand has more than 18,500 registered NGOs, plus many more without legal status.

With assistance from the World Bank, some of Thailand’s civil society groups have been asked to manage the Social Investment Fund (SIF), which was launched in the latter part of 1998. Its objectives were to cushion communities from the impact of the financial crisis and accelerate their empowerment. Government also allocated funds for CSOs to provide social protection at the community level. Some of the programmes that these CSOs have implemented are: HIV/AIDS prevention, care for the elderly, and environment protection (Pongsapich et al. [year], 321).

The Working Group on Justice for Peace is worth mentioning here as a special case study. It is led by Khun Angkhana Neelapaichit, the wife of Somchai Neelapaichit who was a human rights lawyer that disappeared in Bangkok five years ago. Khun Angkhana used to be a silent partner in her marriage and a typical, subservient Thai housewife, she let Somchai make the major decisions in their family. He was then involved in the defense of four young Pattani Muslims accused of rebellion in southern Thailand. In that capacity, he demanded damages for the torture and incarceration of the four accused, whom he believed to be innocent of the crime.

In 2004, at the height of Somchai’s open criticism of the Thaksin government, he suddenly disappeared without any trace. This incident paved the way for Khun Angkhana’s coming out of her comfort zone, to lead the struggle against state-sponsored violence in Southern Thailand. In so doing, Khun Angkhana used her painful experience in seeking justice for her husband, to somehow push the issues of human rights, justice, and peace in southern Thailand, in the national consciousness. And she was successful.

Her work with the women survivors of many bloody incidents in southern Thailand gained for her international recognition for her work, and the special inclusion of her husband’s case in the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights. Her work also put her in the limelight in the fight to address state violence and the oppression of the minority peoples in the south, and installed her in an informal position of power. She is regarded as “puyay” such that when she speaks, people, including government and military officials, listen. When the office of Non-violence International in Pattani was raided by the military in February 2010, Khun Angkhana immediately called the military officials in charge of southern Thailand to demand an explanation. The military officials offered their profuse apologies to Khun Angkhana for their “oversight” (Lubang 2009).

Social Protection in Malaysia: State policies and civil society responses

In its public relations spiels in various international cable television channels, Malaysia portrays itself as “truly Asia”, a tropical country that celebrates the diversity of ethnicities, cultures, and religions. It is known for its rapid modernization and for being a moderate Islamic country. Indeed, it is a diverse Federation of 13 states and the Federal Territories (Norani et al. 2005, 78.).
Of Malaysia’s population of 23 million as of 2001, 65% are bumiputera (literally, children of the soil) 26% are Chinese, and 8% are Indians.

But has Malaysia truly come to terms with its high levels of diversity and provided equitable support to all, despite their ethnic, cultural, religious orientations? Does it truly “celebrate” ethnic diversity, cultures, and religion through its various social protection policies and legislations?

A staff member of Sisters in Islam, whom I had befriended prior to my visit to Malaysia, used to tell me that Malaysia looks “okay on the surface, but scratch it, and you will see that it is not what it seems, or what it tells you...for slowly it will unravel right before your eyes, when you stay here for a visit” (Hamzah 2009).

When I arrived at the students' dorm at the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia one late evening in May 2010, I realized what my friend meant. The first thing I noticed was a signboard in the vicinity of my dorm. It read: “Notice: Women’s Dorms only”. Male students or visitors are not allowed to go inside the dorms. [I thought this to be a way of telling me that Malaysia, after all its public relations schemes on its celebration of diversity, is quite a rigid society, and does not welcome heterogeneity at all.]

But from my interactions with professors at UKM, I soon learned that it is not only the sexes that are being separated in the developmentalist state of Malaysia, but also the trade unions and civil society organizations. According to its developmentalist framework, the implementation of development plans is the sole prerogative of the government. In this relationship, social-political stability is necessary for smooth state-led development. In this context, the relationship between Malaysia’s central government and CSO groups stands on shaky ground. This is especially true when the NGOs disagree about government policy or action.8

Ragayah Haji Mat Zin et al. report that there are several social protection schemes in Malaysia, but the coverage of all three SP measures is inadequate. These are as follows:

Employers’ Liability Scheme (ELS) – has been covering employment injury compensation since 1952, and sickness and maternity benefits since 1955.

Civil Service Pension (1951) – a non-contributory pension scheme for civil servants.

Employee Provident Fund (EPF, since 1951) – for all workers not covered by the civil service pension.

Workers’ Compensation Scheme (1952) – set up to determine the terms and amounts of compensation in the case of death or accident.

Social Security Organization (SOCSO) – the main social insurance scheme for workers earning less than RM 2,000 per month.

Private savings schemes.

The list appears formidable and inclusive of low income earners. In reality, however, many of the above mechanisms are inadequate. The ELS, for example, depends solely on the magnanimity of the employer. If the employer is not concerned about his or her employees' welfare, then the coverage will decrease.

To promote a more gender-fair society, the Malaysian government formulated the National Policy for Women (NPW), which it formally adopted in 1989. The NPW had two aims:

To ensure equal access to resources, information, participation, and incentives to both men and women so women can contribute to the country’s development;

To integrate women in all sectors of development, in accordance with their ability and qualifications.

In theory, Malaysia’s Federal Constitution provides that Islam is the official religion of the Federation, but guarantees freedom of religion, which means that other religions may also be practiced (Othman et al. 2005, 78). In practice, though, it is nearly impossible for a Muslim in Malaysia to convert to another religion, although any non-Muslim can convert to Islam without too much trouble.

Islamic discourses also tend to repress women, as seen in the ongoing debates and heated discussions on the issues generated by the Family Equality Law. Early in 2009, the Sisters in Islam, one of the biggest women-NGOs, conducted a huge forum on the Family Equality Law and how this can help women extricate themselves from repressive work and family relationships. The forum drew thousands of
participants, particularly women. Several weeks after the highly successful forum, a series of articles appeared in glossy news magazines in Kuala Lumpur, condemning Sisters in Islam and their networks of NGOs and civil society organizations. During the months of May and June 2009, till July 20, Sisters in Islam members and officers were informed that the distribution of one of their books, *Muslim Women and the Challenge of Islamic Extremism*, had been banned. The Ministry in charge of examining books and other media wrote to SiS saying, among other things, that their book had caused “extreme anxiety” among its readers (Ramil and Hassan 2009).

Ironically, while Sisters in Islam advocated for women’s empowerment and the creation of an enabling environment for more meaningful women’s participation in public discourses on Islam, it was misunderstood and condemned. After the successful forum, SiS staff members received a lot of hate mail and angry telephone calls. On the other hand, their women counterparts in the university do not consider their hard work at advocacy for women’s rights as “acceptable, according to Islam”.

The New Economic Policy may be pushing for women’s empowerment; but, in practice, the women’s assertion of their agency toward gender equality, as also done by the Sisters in Islam, is seriously undermined by resorting to the rhetoric that it is an “insult to Islam”. Asserting agency is perceived by the male tradition keepers in Malaysia as antithetical to a prescribed way of life.

**Concluding Remarks**

The cases in the three countries presented here show that rigid social structures and strictures have hampered the full implementation of social protection policies and mechanisms. All three countries have also manifested yawning gaps between legislation and implementation, which are made even wider by rigid social norms that downplay women’s roles and capacities toward their own social protection, and in promoting gender equality. In both Japan and Thailand, patriarchal social structures persist, despite modernization and globalization. In Malaysia, the patriarchal infrastructure is even made more rigid by the overlay of Islamic rhetoric on the limits of what women can do or contribute toward a more equitable society.

Providing social protection is more than just a moral imperative; it represents investments in both economic and social capital toward more inclusive, harmonious, and stable societies. As such, social protection mechanisms must be more than just economic band-aid type income enhancements, or even of funds pump priming. In both cases, there is no guarantee that such financial assistance will make the chronically poor population “trampoline” out of poverty.

Many poverty alleviation donor-assisted projects in weak and crisis-laden states like the Philippines have failed to create the needed breaks for poor populations to leapfrog out of their dire poverty. Funds transfers, which constitute most social protection schemes, have done just that: transfer money from donor to beneficiary. But nothing happens, except perhaps for the poor’s having an ephemeral experience of what it is like to be affluent.

Social protection needs to be rethought in ways that would lead to more basic changes in society and allow for more social equity. Governments and civil society can work together to install mechanisms that would safeguard the human rights of women for them not to be discriminated against in terms of work and other societal privileges.

Have women transcended their pain as subordinate members of society? Women in Japan, Thailand, and Malaysia have shown how it is possible for women to create spaces for themselves to be able to initiate reforms that will hopefully transform society in the long term. However, this agency or power remains a potential that needs to be constantly claimed and reclaimed.1

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**NOTES**

1 For instance, Japan spent only 10% of its GDP on public mandatory protection/insurance programs for its citizens, in contrast to the US which dedicated 14% of its GDP on social expenditures. In contrast, European welfare states spent from 18% to 30% of their GDP on similar concerns (Schoppa 2006, 36).

2 According to Suzuki, the term refers to non-regular employees, e.g., casuals or “freeters”, a term from Japanese neologism combining the English word “free” and the German term ‘arbeiter’, meaning worker, to come up with
the Japanese expression "arubaito- jap". The term refers to young, unstable workers who neither continue their education nor obtain regular employment after graduating from school.

3 I am grateful to my good friend, Ishii Masako, PhD, for facilitating a meeting and a group discussion with the Center Staff and one professor of the Department of Asian and African Studies (ASAFAS), Kyoto University. This took place in 27 October, 2008.

4 The survey was conducted online between 7 December 2006 and 26 January 2007. It covered all full-time and part-time faculty (professors and researchers), the administration, staff, and students of Kyoto University. The complete text of the report (in Japanese) and the figures containing all the findings are available online at http://kyoto-u.ac.jp.kyodosankaku. I was given a hard copy of the abstract in English during my visit to the Center on 27 October 2008.

5 This informal discussion took place during the reception for PhD students and review panel members at ASAFAS on 2 December 2008. I was invited to be part of the panel that reviewed the students' presentations of their research proposals.

6 From December 2006 to June 2007, I had the opportunity to be a Visiting Research Fellow at CSEAS in Kyoto University. In early February, Professor Inaba of the Department of Economics invited me to give a lecture to her class on "Women economic empowerment in conflict-affected areas in Mindanao, the Philippines". She shared this insight after my lecture.

7 Details on Angkhana's remarkable struggle to seek justice for the disappearance of her husband can be read in her book, Reading between the Lines (Bangkok: Working Group on Justice for Peace, 2009). The book chronicles her almost daily struggle to seek justice for her disappeared husband from a very hostile Thai government. Her struggle and that of the Muslims in southern Thailand are also documented in a movie entitled State Violence in Southern Thailand, which a group of human rights activists from South Korea helped produce.

8 From a series of informal talks with my colleagues at IKON, UKM, as well as with some professor friends at the Universiti Sains Malaysia, in Penang. One of them, Prof. Dr. Mustafa Anwar, recounts the time they held a candlelight vigil to protest the promulgation of the Internal Security Act (ISA). Immediately after Prof. Anwar and his group started the vigil, some policemen came to demand a permit to congregate and to question their mass action.

9 From personal communication with Prof. Inaba, Department of Economics, Kyoto University, March, 2007. The writer was then a Visiting Research Fellow at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, (CSEAS) Kyoto University, Japan.

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The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows


Islamic Religious Learning Groups and Civil Society: How Do Muslims Contribute to Civil Society in Japan and the Philippines?

Andi Faisal Bakti

Introduction

Context

This research attempts to contribute towards enhancing Asian studies and helping build a network of Asian scholars. Communication studies and Islamic studies can be developed using an interdisciplinary approach, through the analysis of Islamic communication (dakwah). Dakwah activities started during the life of Muhammad (7th century), but expanded mostly in the modern times. The manner of communicating during these activities has evolved and its audiences are found in places as far as Southeast Asia and Japan. These dakwah activities are interesting to explore, particularly in the Southeast Asian Muslim community (the Dunia Islam Melayu, the Malay Islamic World), inclusive of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Southern Thailand, Southern Philippines, Cambodia, and Vietnam, where Muslims have been known to be peaceful. Recent links, however, have shown signs of radicalism. Research on dakwah in East Asia has been limited, despite the interest of several Southeast and East Asian scholars in analyzing these activities (Benda 1956, 1958; Pen 2000; Itagaki 2002; Okai 2008; Sato 2002; Tanada 2007; Usuki 2007; Majul 1978; Kadil 2002). This research attempts to strengthen the network of these scholars.

Objectives

This research will contribute to our understanding of a trend among Muslim groups to join trans-national networking based on their Muslim East Asian and Southeast Asian identities. It defines the links between Islamic learning groups and the governments of Japan and the Philippines, opinion leaders, associations, as well as the general population. It maps out the activities of these groups and religious authorities, their role and impact as agents between individuals and Muslim interest groups and administrations, in order to determine their contribution to civil society in Japan and the Philippines.

Significance

Since the 1990s, the Japanese Muslims and the Filipino Muslims, both religious minorities in their respective countries, have continued their religious practices and been rebuilding their communities and mosques. Life in a minority environment is a challenge for them, since their activities extend to non-religious domains. Members include an active core of students and youths; university alumni working in the private or public sectors; and individuals working in non-professional capacities, as well as those with less formal education. This research is of particular significance today, in view of the rapid changes among the Japanese Muslims and Moro (or Filipino Muslims), and in view of the relations between majlis taklins (religious – Islamic – learning groups) and the other components of civil society in Tokyo and Marawi City. More than ever, it is interesting to identify those actors or groups that are influential in matters of civil society in this region, in order to determine their contribution to civil society in Japan and the Philippines.

These two cities were chosen because of their disparateness. Thus, this is not a comparative research on two similar elements, but is a research on two contrasting elements. While Marawi City is 99 percent Muslim, 99 percent of the Tokyo population is Shinto-Buddhist. In addition, whereas Marawi is a developing city, Tokyo is a highly technologically advanced city. The people of Tokyo communicate mostly in Japanese, while the Marawi dwellers speak not only Maranao, but also English, Tagalog, and Bisaya, among other languages. The Tokyo Muslims are mostly immigrants or foreign workers and trainees/students, while the Marawi Muslims are permanent citizens. Marawi is part of Southern Philippines, which is struggling for self-government from a predominantly central government. Tokyo is the capital of Japan, controlling whole aspects of life of the country. From the socio-economic and cultural angles, Marawi is part of the Malay Muslim World, while Tokyo belongs to the Sino-Confucian World. In sum, this research deals with Muslim minorities, Muslims in the predominantly secular states in Asia. Thus, both
cities are seen in the context of the secular countries that govern them. Even if majority of the population of Marawi is Muslim, in the perspective of minority analysis, and, indeed, in the eyes of the Marawi people, they continue to be treated as a minority and sometimes as lesser citizens of the Philippines, in a more marked way than the Japanese Muslims. This may be so as the former have been in conflicts and at war with Manila since the early 20th century.

**Methodology**

The following means were used for data collection and analysis:

I. Non-structured, in-depth interviews with members, organizers, and opinion leaders of study and discussion group members, in both Tokyo and Marawi City. These interviews were conducted during the first two months of my research in Marawi, from early July to early September 2008. Those in Tokyo took place from January to March 2009.

II. Participant observation of the group’s ongoing activities, through attendance at meetings and surrounding activities. This was done during the four months of my stay in both countries.

III. Review of media or publications in Japan and the Philippines (newspapers, Internet discussion groups), and of supporting documents available in the local libraries and in websites.

**Theoretical Framework**

The early theoretical frameworks of civil society defined by Karl Marx and Hegel focused on a non-state sphere of influence that emerged from capitalism and industrialization. A normative conception of the terms focused on judging the behavior of the state in relation to its citizenry, and on whether nations develop an effective civil society that protects individuals and groups from human rights abuses. In addition to this, the social science definition, a combination of the early (Marx) and normative definitions, which emphasized the interaction of voluntary groups in the non-state spheres vis-a-vis the family, the market, and the state, is adopted in this research. Following the social science definition, Thomas Janoski (1998, 12) believes that “Civil society represents a sphere of dynamic and responsive public discourse between the state, the public sphere consisting of voluntary organizations, and the market sphere concerning private firms and unions”. This definition, of course, is in fact applicable to any country, which has private and public institutions or where associations between family and state exist, as in the case of non-totalitarian countries. The principles of civil society are, among others, peace, harmony, equality, solidarity, brotherhood, democracy, justice, participation, demonstration, opportunity, and respect for others—all of them topics of discourses identified from the field.

**Assessment: The Spheres of Civil Society**

This research is framed according to the functions and roles of each of the four spheres (public, state, market, and private) in discourses against each other, in order for civil society to materialize. Religious learning groups have been involved in these discourses on the market, the state, and social organizations. The contribution of these spheres to civil society will be underlined.

**Tokyo (Japan)**

The number of Muslims in Japan is small, at less than 1 percent (0.002%) of the population. One must, however, take into account that no official census data is available as the secular Japanese government does not inquire about people’s religions. Most estimates of the Muslim population in Japan place it at around 100,000, of which 90 percent are foreigners, and 10 percent are ethnic Japanese. At present, the Indonesians, Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, Iranians, and Turks make up the largest communities of foreign Muslims in Japan. Tokyo alone is home to 20,000 Muslims.

**The state sphere**

The relationship between Japan and the Muslim world remains relatively uncertain despite its actual and potential importance. Initially, the Japanese state very actively accommodated the Muslims during World War I and World War II, in order for the Chinese and the Malay World Muslims to help Japan win the war against the Allies. Linguistics also indicated a relationship between the Turks and the Japanese. Indeed, a little known fact is that the Turkish and Japanese languages are both part
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of the Mongolian family of languages. The interaction between the Muslims and the Japanese was probably initiated when Japan became part of Tang China (Maejima 1977 and Paul 1984, as quoted by Penn 2000, 2). The two worlds experienced hard times under the Mongols and the Europeans.\(^5\)

The Malay Muslims served aboard British and Dutch ships in the 19th century. In the 1870s, the story of the life of Muhammad was translated into Japanese. Contacts also occurred in 1890, when Ottoman Turkey sent a naval vessel to Japan to repay the visit of Japanese Prince Akhiito Komatsu several years earlier. Together with Muslims, particularly the Indians and the Arabs from other parts of the Muslim world, the Turks built the first mosque in Japan in 1905 at Izumi Otsu.

The Japanese state played a central role in facilitating the immigration of Muslims to Japan on four main occasions. First, several hundreds of Muslim refugees fled to Japan from Central Asia and Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution and WWI. Second, in the 1930s, the Japanese government established a number of institutes for the study of Islam and Muslims.\(^6\) During WWII, these research centers were expanded by the Japanese government and more researchers were hired (el-Maghribi 1995; Anis 1998, 331). Lastly, in the 1970s, the Japanese government-controlled mass media covered the Arab/Persian Muslim world extensively, after realizing the importance of the Middle East and its massive oil reserves to the country’s economy.\(^7\)

Several worship places were built as adjunct facilities to embassies or institutions related to the government of Muslim countries. The inauguration of the Gifu Mosque in 2006 was attended by Japanese government representatives and almost all embassies of the Muslim countries. It is also interesting to note that as a result of the frequent association made by Western leaders and media between the Muslims and terrorism, the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) has set up its own “study group” on Islam. Once again, the Japanese are showing renewed interest in Islamic studies. Indeed, it appears that they are trying to figure out appropriate and feasible policies toward the Islamic world.

In addition, we observe some impacts of the revitalized interests of the Japanese government in the Muslim community in Tokyo, including the positive images and responses presented by the Muslims to the Japanese government. The Muslims comply with the government’s rules on religion. In this country, the Muslims respect the government, which is seen as being supportive of their activities. The Muslims are apparently not feared, but are treated in the same manner as believers and followers of other religions.

The Public Sphere

According to Selim, who used to serve as imam in the Tokyo mosque, which the Turkish government administered, one of the greatest policies of the Japanese law was its granting of income tax-free status to religious organizations. This was not done by such countries as Turkey, Indonesia, the Arab and the Persian worlds.

The Great Japan Islamic Association was the first Muslim association to look after the needs of Muslim communities in Japan. It did this until 1945, after which the American occupation forces banned it, claiming that it was used as part of the propaganda of the Great East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. Thereafter, a new but smaller association was established in 1945 with the approval of the Americans. The Association for Islamic Studies, the objective of which is *dakwah*, was established in 1952, following the seeming plan of American missionaries to introduce Christianity, under the name “Japan Muslim Association” (JMA), to promote Islam and establish a network and solidarity with other Muslim countries, thus putting forward global peace (Morimoto 1975, 31; Anis 1998, 335). These civil society elements remain important to the JMA.

From 1952 to 1986, over 30 mosques were established in Japan, while in 2009 the number increased to 62. Out of the 62 Muslim associations/mosques in the country,\(^8\) only six felt the need to register in Japan, among them JMA and the following five associations in Tokyo.

The first was the Islamic Centre – Japan (ICJ) established in 1986 by a group of immigrant Muslims from the Indian sub-continent, the Middle East, and Turkey. The objective of this center was to create an institution for the peaceful social development of Muslims through the introduction of Islam (peace) in its true meaning, which is one of the elements of civil society, focusing on the social aspects as opposed to political Islam. This was done within the national context of Japan. Its activities included the publication
of Islamic books, a newsletter, and articles. Several books on Islam have been translated into Japanese by Japanese scholars.

The second was the Islamic Cultural Center (ICC) established in January 2005 in order to promote understanding of Islam in Japan. It also sought to increase exchanges and foster friendship between Japan and the Islamic world, and to contribute to the spread of peace (salaam) in international society—as an element of civil society. Unlike the ICJ, it concentrates on international issues involving the Islamic culture.

The third is the Islamic Cultural Society, which is different from the two groups mentioned earlier. Established by Abu Bakr Morimoto in 1974 to promote Islam among Muslims in Japan and abroad, it focuses on the translation and publication of books on Islam in Japanese. A magazine of the Society, the Islamic Culture Forum, significantly contributes towards the understanding of Islam/Muslims in Japan, thus truly promoting civil society.

The fourth association, the Japan Islamic Trust (JIT), manages the Otsuka mosque, which is affiliated with the Asikaga mosque, not only financially but also in terms of supplying it with teachers (Okai 2007, 189-190). It also invites imams/teachers from abroad. This is a significant point because the JIT raises funds to maintain mosques and their dakwah activities. Civil society topics are covered in the imams’ speeches, among them peace, hard work, security, safety, and education for the children. Invited foreign imams are hired to teach Muslims about Islam, instead of making do with enthusiastic but untrained teachers, drawn from the immigrant community. However, most invited imams/teachers do not stay long in Japan, as it appears that they quickly feel homesick. Immigrants, however, do not like to serve as imams on a permanent basis, as the salary offered is not sufficient to support a family in Japan.

The fifth association, the Islamic Circle of Japan (ICOJ), was set up by Pakistani volunteers. It is also active in delivering the message of Islam to the Muslim community, mostly those from the Indian subcontinent. The message usually focuses on solidarity, respect for others, taking care of one’s family and children—civil society topics. The speeches are made in Urdu, after which an English translation for the foreign audience follows, as well as a Japanese translation for the Japanese Muslims.

The market sphere

The mosques were established based on solidarity among the Muslim community members, that is, based on civil society values. Muslims who came to Japan ranged from business people, to factory workers, to work trainees, students and diplomats. Eventually, starting year 2000, the mosques could not accommodate the new influx of Muslims.

Fundraising had proven successful among some groups aspiring to build their own mosque (Okai 2007, 187-190). Thus, 42 mosques were put up after the Ichinowari mosque. In 2000 alone, 30 mosques were erected. The main sources of funding were charities or in the form of alms giving from members, in accordance with the Islamic principles of masyarakat madani (civil society), i.e., developing public places for worship and supporting the needy, especially the new immigrants.

A number of people now enjoy a more stable status. They have sufficient income to cover the rent and sponsor the education and health insurance of family members, on their way to becoming a civil society. These people include the spouses and children of Muslims of Japanese citizenships, (mainly Pakistanis), whose number, based on their immigration status (college students or trainees), has increased. These foreigners have suddenly found a way to start independent businesses (Higuchi 2005, 212). Pakistanis have secured jobs or businesses for themselves, like selling used cars abroad and establishing halal staple stores and restaurants that serve as their main source of income (Fukuda 2006, 118; 2007b, 143). In addition, their donations have made possible the construction of mosques and the mounting of Islamic activities in Japan. Both of these help create a civil society through hard work, by helping and cooperating with others, by being autonomous.

Some successful, wealthy, native, Japanese business people who have converted to Islam support the process of Islamic communication. They work in large Japanese companies with branches in other countries. According to Khalid Higuchi, “These devoted Muslim individuals support the development of native Japanese Muslims and associate themselves with the Japan Muslim Association (JMA). For many of them, we don’t know where they are. Some of them also initially were sent to the Middle East by Takushoku University in order to improve the Japanese influence.
abroad”. After their conversion to Islam, they returned home to propagate Islam, within the framework of civil society in Japan. The work of these individuals could be the object of further research.

**The private sphere**

Several foreigners and native Japanese converts have had a strong personal involvement in *dakwah*.

The first group would consist of foreigners from the Middle East, South Asia, Central Asia, North Africa, and Southeast Asia who work for the Islamic civil society in Japan. Ahmad Samarrai, for example, is an Arab who supports *dakwah* within the context of civil society in Japan. He first came to Tokyo University for a Ph. D. in agriculture, specializing in the cultivation of rice paddies. However, he also ‘planted mosques’ in a number of Japanese cities. He raised funds for the purpose in the Middle East and co-founded the Islamic Center – Japan (ICJ). Another foreigner, Omar Musa, was the ambassador of Sudan to Japan. After his retirement, he returned to Japan to engage in *dakwah*. He has now lived in Japan for 15 years and is a co-founder of the ICJ. According to him, when he first arrived, the Muslims did not have many places in which to pray, and had access to very limited information about Islam. In 1975, he was instrumental to the renovation of the Tokyo mosque which had almost collapsed following several earthquakes in the past. Eventually, the Turkish government funded its renovation. Another foreigner, Syaikh Neamatullah, of Turkish origin, became important to the community. He arrived in Japan 13 years previously, for the purpose of *dakwah*. He used a simple approach to accomplish his goal. Today, he still hands his business card to all the Japanese he meets in the Shinjuku area, a tourist destination in Tokyo.

Another significant foreigner was an imam hired as the leader Irshad Ali Hashmi, also a Pakistani. Now 22 years in Japan, he was married to a native Japanese who was a devoted Muslim. Other male Japanese Muslims were married to native Japanese who were not practicing Muslims, although initially, they had accepted the rules of Islam. Then they failed to keep their word. Muhammad Idris, an Indonesian journalist who has been residing in Tokyo for 30 years, funds the little mosque where Neamatullah lives. Idris is also active in *dakwah* and publishes a bilingual (English and Japanese) newspaper featuring Islamic information and news about Muslim activities in Japan.

The second group is made up of native Japanese converts who also support civil society values. Abdul Karim, who converted to Islam in the 1970s, mentioned Dr. Shawqi Futaki, who was active in fundraising abroad during the economic boom of the 1970s. The latter went to the Middle East, North Africa, and Southeast Asia, collecting donations for Islamization. Another convert to Islam since 2007, Saleh Kubo, is working for *dakwah*. He lives in a small mosque in Shinjuku, freelances at the Islamic Center-Japan, and, at times, attends the Jamaah Tabligh. Besides Saleh Kubo, Ibrahim Okubo, another da’i (Islamic propagator) and native Japanese, is active in *dakwah* in the Ichinowari mosque, the national center of Jamaah Tabligh. It is here where foreign visitors from Muslim countries usually stay for 3 days, 40 days, or 4 months. Another Japanese Muslim, Ahmad Maeno, preaches in the six mosques managed by the Islamic Circle of Japan. His lectures are attended mostly by the spouses, men and women alike, of migrant Muslims. They are available on YouTube, making it possible for audiences in Tokyo to listen to the lectures. Last, but not the least, is Arifin Nagai. Married to an Indonesian Muslim, this native Japanese speaks Indonesian and English. Formerly posted in Indonesia, he now gives lectures in most mosques in Tokyo.

**Marawi City (The Philippines)**

Islam was introduced to what is now called the Philippines two centuries before the arrival of the Spaniards. Muslims in this country have established a close network with the rest of the Malay-speaking people in Southeast Asia. They do not only share the same culture but also the same religion and some vocabulary. As all these countries have been regionally Islamized, most scholars, such as Majul (1978), Kadil (2002), and Alonto, Jr. (2001, 2005) refer to this region as the Malay Islamic World. There remain, however, the expected regional differences like those in wedding and funeral rituals, even after Islam became localized.

The introduction of Islam in the Philippines dates back to the early 14th century (1310 A.D.), or possibly earlier, as was the case elsewhere within the Malay World. This was so as the region was along the
maritime Silk Road, between the Arab, Indian, and Persian worlds on one side, and the Confucian world of Northeast Asia, particularly China, on the other.

This sub-section focuses on Marawi. With a population of 131,100 people, of whom 90 percent are Muslims, Marawi City dwellers are proud to call their city the Islamic City of Marawi. Family ties are strong like in the rest of the Malay World. The females wear headscarves, and many males wear Islamic caps. Calls for prayers resonate throughout the city. This demonstration of devotion is, however, probably a recent development, as the Maranao were always ranked third among the Islamic groups after the Tausug and the Maguindanao. They were, in fact, considered more business-minded, pragmatic, and less concerned with being religiously faithful. In Zamboanga, Basilan, Davao, and Tawi-Tawi, and Cotabato, most Muslim women do not wear headscarves; just as most men do not wear Islamic caps. City dwellers have maintained elements of their traditional royal-heavy system of government, as reflected by the frequent use of titles, including sultan, queen, datu (a local title commonly used in many places in the Malay World), and princess. While these titles mostly refer to social positions as opposed to administrative ones, the individuals who hold them often mediate conflicts between clans. These feudal traditions, however, contribute to the perpetuation of bloodsheds for generations. Such conflicts do not only threaten the peace, but also generate political grievances and terrorism. In Southern Philippines, a code of honor, ridó, is shared by both the Muslims and the non-Muslims. In particular they honor the vendetta system whereby personal grudges can lead to transgenerational conflicts between clans and family groups.

The private sphere

The early Muslim settlers were called makhdumín (missionaries) and had four landmarks: Sulu island in the 14th century, Tapul/Bud Agad Jolo also in the 14th century, Maguindanao in the 16th century, and Lanao/Bukidnon in the 17th century.12

The makhdumín tradition is still alive, but the actors are now called alím (ulama) or mauláma (knowledgeable in Islamic teaching). According to Salepada Tamano, the dakwah contributors in Marawi are the followers of Ahmad Alonto, Sr. (former Congressman of Manila), the followers of Dr. Mahid Mutilan (Marawi mayor [1988-1992], Lanao del Sur governor [1992-2001], and Vice-ARMM governor [2001-2004]), or have an academic background, such as Dr. Abdul Hamid Barra (professor at the King Faisal Institute of Islamic Studies, Mindanao State University), as further detailed below.

One. In Marawi, Alonto Sr. was well respected for his extensive work. He had a broad understanding of dakwah, which he acquired from his Western and Arabic education. He was considered one of the greatest dai-educators in the world (Institute of Objective Studies 2005). Ahmad Alonto, Jr., his son, continues his dakwah work through close ties to the Resale-i Nur Institute, which was specifically founded to socialize the teaching of Said Nursi. The Turkish scholar (1876-1960) called for civil society values, namely, peace, harmony, and justice among human civilizations. Alonto, Jr. also engaged in dakwah activities in the Philippines. Another of Ahmad Alonto Sr.’s son, Asnawi Alonto, is active in promoting Shi’a teaching in Marawi, which is predominantly Sunni.

Two. Dr. Mutilan was also active in dakwah, especially before his involvement in politics. He practiced dakwah in Japan for 12 years, before returning to Marawi. Some of his followers are active in dakwah today, but others are in politics. His followers, specifically those who graduated from the Al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt preach civil society values—respect for others, peace, solidarity, equality, and justice—in the Marawi mosques and among other religious learning groups that meet in homes or in conference halls. Other followers have remained in the Ompia party (founded by Mutilan in 1987) and engage in politics to promote dakwah.

Three. Dr. Abdul Hamid Barra is a well-known intellectual da’i. With a religious and secular educational background, he is now a rising star in Marawi, despite his recent defeat when he ran for Congress. Admired mostly by members of the middle class and the elite, whether he will be successful in politics remains to be seen.

The state sphere

While the makhdumín basically served the individual/private sphere of civil society, other settlers struggled to establish a kingdom (state sphere). Four kingdoms/sultanates were established: Bwansa (Jolo) in 1390 by
Raja Baguinda; Sulu in 1450 by Abu Bakr; Tawi-Tawi in the 16th century by Syarif Alawi Balpaki; Mindanao in Malabang by Sharif Aulia in the 14th century, Sharif Maraja in 1460, and Sharif Kabungsuan in 1515; and Luzon (Manila) and the nearby areas in the 16th century, by Raja Matanda.13

Thus, when the Spaniards came in the 16th century, the struggle between the Muslims and the Spaniards raged. Armed conflicts took place until the defeated Spaniards paid the victorious Americans US$20,000,000 in accordance with the Treaty of Paris. This amount gave the Americans the entire archipelago, not just Minsupala (Mindanao, Sulu, and Palawan Islands). This new imperialism began in 1898 and continued until 1946. During this period, America conquered the whole Minsupala region. As two declarations failed to fulfill the promise for the benefit of Minsupala, the Muslims felt isolated. In fact, only two islands were left: Mindanao and Sulu.14 However, this was 1925, long after the Americans had used their “military might”. In fact the Dansalan Declaration of 1935 already recognized the American suzerainty.

While the struggle continued after a declaration was signed in Zamboanga in 1924, it was only 48 years later that Nur Misuari and his followers established the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in 1972 to counter this domination. Misuari and the MNLF then revolted in 1975, a struggle which ended after 17 years when a peace agreement was signed in 1992. Nur Misuari was apparently co-opted by the central government of the Philippines as governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). He was seen by some Moro leaders as having failed to exercise real autonomy in the region, for the sake of the Moro people. Salamat Hashim, Vice Chair of the MNLF, established the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in 1978 after realizing that a large ideological and leadership gap existed between himself and Misuari. The MNLF became increasingly weak. Misuari was then ousted by the Government of the Republic of the Philippines in 2002 for his lack of leadership.

Upon the death of Salamat Hashim, Al Haj Murad Ibrahim was elected Chairman of the MILF. His contribution to dawlah was highlighted by Alim Ali Ibrahim, an MILF section chief for dawlah, officially called, “Jam’iyah al-Dawah al-Islamiyah li al-Tanmiyah” (Islamic Call for Development Institute). For Ali Ibrahim, given that the Philippines is a secular state, the State should not intervene in religious affairs—this despite the fact that the MILF wanted the Shari’ah to frame governance in this imagined Bangsamoro. Some NGOs, however, promoted dawlah advocacy in non-formal education settings called religious learning groups (al-imam). They met in mosques or in private homes, where they learned about the principles of civil society, including peace, equality, brotherhood, freedom of expression and demonstration, and fairness, without any links to the MILF.

Also important to mention with regard to the state sphere is the role of Islamic parties in Marawi. While there are five Muslim parties in Marawi, only two are really influential: the Ummah Party and the Ompia Party. The first one is led by Abdul Malik Laguindab. The second was first led by Dr. Mahid Mutilan, the first al-imam elected as Marawi mayor in 1988, who then served three consecutive terms as governor of Lanao del Sur, from 1992 to 2001. Then he was vice-governor of the ARMM (2001-2004) and, finally, regional secretary of the Department of Education (ARMM) also from 2001 to 2004. Mutilan was initially well trusted, but later allegedly became corrupt.15 He was not, however, brought to court and died in 2001 in a car accident.

The Ompia members thereafter became divided under two leaders: the first was Ilyas Abdussalam, the executive leader and spokesman, who claimed to be the successor of Mutilan; the second was Abdul Basit, secretary general, who also claimed to be Mutilan’s trusted leader. Consequently, Ompia increasingly weakened. After the death of the successor of Mutilan, then vice governor, Alim Basiyar Manalao, the so-called al-Mustaqbal, the future one, was appointed governor. He was also suspected of corruption, an accusation which isolated him. As a result, the Marawi Muslims are now believed to be experiencing a crisis of leadership because the ulamas have lost the trust of the Muslim community. Even as the secular, non-ulama leaders have taken over the leadership, there are allegations that they are also corrupt, in addition to having no concern for dawlah. The population, in general, is basically restless and frustrated, as it is asking for civil society to prevail.

The public sphere

The place of choice for the communication of Islamic teachings has traditionally been the mosque (masjid,
Indeed, as the Muslims are required to pray five times a day, preferably in mosques, then the mosques are places of choice, indeed, for *dakwah* (Islamic communication) and social activities.

In Marawi, each barangay (village) has at least one mosque, the most active one being the Masjid Abu Bakr, which can accommodate 1000 people. In this center of the *jamaah tabligh* in Mindanao, night prayers fill the mosque not only with local Muslims, but also with members of the other mosques, cities, and provinces within the Philippines. Foreigners from Malaysia, India, the Arab and the Persian Worlds, or from Europe, America, China, and Japan also go to the mosque. They listen to preachings on various topics, mostly prayers, how to be good human beings and how to be good to one’s neighbors and one’s family members. These are the most immediate targets of *dakwah*.

Another learning group worth mentioning for its role in the public sphere is the Resale-i Nur Institute which includes a dershane (Turkish word for learning center) operated by teachers from Turkey and local teacher trainees. Some of its teachers were trained in Turkish dershanes for a few months, but most were taught in local dershanes. Dershanes are found in Manila, Cagayan de Oro, Iligan, Zamboanga, Basilan, and Marawi City. In Marawi City the dershanes are in the Al-Moshiera Apartments, in a dormitory in Mindanao State University, and in the Philippines Muslim Teaching College (PMTC). In these three dershanes, the members learn about the work of Said Nursi (a 20th-century scholar), *Risale-i Nur*, which espouses tolerance, moderation, respect for civilization, peace and harmony among human beings. The Resale-i Nur Institute leader is Muhammad Riza (Ridha), who calls himself M. Rizal, after the greatest hero of the Philippines, Jose Rizal, thought by the Muslims to have been Muslim, according to Ahmad Alonto, Jr. (2008).

New converts in the Philippines established an association called “Balik Islam of the Philippines” (Blisphil) in 1973. As the Malay word *balik* means return or revert, *balik Islam* means to revert to Islam. Maulana Andam, the leader of Blisphil in Marawi City who is knowledgeable in the Bible and the Qur’an, gives lectures to new converts and the general public, many of whom are Christians. The topics of these lectures are the Islamic teachings on peace, harmony, love, and respect for others. The Gospel of Barnabas, a book not recognized by the Christian world and which announces the arrival of Muhammad, is used to convince Christians about the truth of Islam.

A third center contributes to the development of *dakwah* for civil society. The Center for Moderate Muslims (CMM) trains imams in various places: two places in MSU, and one in the Marawi City Hall. Its leaders promote a peaceful Islam. They disagree with the idea of fundamentalism, radicalism, and extremism, all of which promote *jihad* (holy war) against non-Muslims. The CMM leader has been critical of the business people in Marawi. He has also questioned the ulama leadership in Marawi, especially after the death of Dr. Mahid Mutilan, the President of the Ompia Party in 2004. The ulama were strong politically during the time of Mutilan and had control over the executive (branch of government). After Mutilan’s death, the support and loyalty of the ulama and Ompia were divided between two individuals: Ilyas Abd Salam and Abdul Basit Nur. The CMM leader also criticized the central Philippine government in Luzon for its intervention and for employing a “divide and rule” strategy as well as Machiavelli’s approach, with Gonzales, supporting Ilyas Abdus Salam. So, how could Marawi City become a civil society?

The Ulama League of the Philippines had been established by Mutilan in February 1992 and became another powerful organization for the Muslims in promoting the ideals of civil society. However, it weakened after his death. Further, Mutilan was blamed for not having prepared a succession plan, while others blamed the new Muslim leadership, which was weak and did not possess the broad knowledge of Mutilan. Others still blame Mutilan for his failure to clearly record the properties of the Ompia Party, both personal and party-owned. Consequently, Mutilan’s followers and their children/heirs are now fighting over these properties, and the “Ulama League” remains without a leader.16

Another association, the Markaz Al-Shabab, is very active in *dakwah*. Its teachers give periodic training to the preachers and send them to mosques in Marawi. It also publishes brochures, bulletins, and books that are read widely by the members and their relatives. These explain the principles of civil society such as *akhlq* (good behavior), *al-ukhuwah* (brotherhood), and *'adalah* (justice). The association’s leader, Amiruddin Sarangani, is highly respected for his knowledge of Islam. While he graduated from the Middle East
University, he only speaks Arabic, Maranao, and some Tagalog. In Arabic, he explains that Markaz al-Shabab, which was established in 1973, is divided into several interest groups: politics, development, *dakwah* and *taklim* (education), publicity and information, women, as well as the economy, itself subdivided.

Another association, Insan Islam Assembly (IIA), rallies the Marawi youths to counterbalance the creation of the Alpha Phi Omega and the Beta Sigma fraternities, popular since the 1970s. These groups are seen to be very liberal, too permissive, and secularist. Apparently, these are also related to secular fraternities whose histories can be traced back to the early years of the University of the Philippines. As not only Christians but also some Muslims joined the latter association, the IIA was supposed to offer an alternative to hedonism. It teaches Islamic brotherhood (*al-ukhuwwah*), solidarity according to the Islamic principles, and the family’s being very central to the education of the children.

Salepada Tamano, one of the IIA leaders, confirms that Yusri Latif is president of the Ranao Council, established in 1977 to train students and the youth during martial law. While political activists remained anti-Marcos, instead of engaging in jihad and using weapons, the Council “engaged in jihad through education—as a way to achieve civil society, by recruiting students who were to become future leaders”. The result was that two cadres of the IIA later became presidents of the MSU: former president Camar Umpa and current president Macapado Muslim.

**The market sphere**

The sultanates in Sulu and Mindanao were well organized when trade and commerce in the hands of the Muslim merchants flourished across the Malay region. While Spain and America failed to politically control the region, they brought about the decline of the sultanates, undermining the sultanates’ economic base through trade blockades and war.

Ishak Mastura talks in his paper about the economic aspects of the confrontation between the Moros and the rest of the Filipinos. He believes that the roots of the conflict are economic injustices that need to be addressed. Kreuzer and Werning (2007) share this opinion. However, currently, while the government seems to be ambivalent in dealing with this conflict, in Marawi City, the market sphere looks underdeveloped. But, for Ishak Mastura, justice has to be prioritized in order to achieve peace and harmony in Mindanao.

According to Alim Ibrahim, “actually, Islam has a banking system (in general) of Bait al-Mal wa al-Tamwil, supported by *zakat*, *wakaf*, and *sadaqah* systems, as introduced by Prophet Muhammad. But these have not been managed in Marawi”. Markaz al-Shabab tried to engage in the business, but it did not work for long since the organization failed to hire people knowledgeable and experienced in this field. For example, they built hospitals, used professional construction companies, and established a network of drugstores and pharmacies; but they went under for the lack of a good accountant. For him, this is not what Islamic teachings relay to Islam’s adherents; this was not the way to establish a *Madina* (civil) society.

When I asked about Green-Hills (a Muslim corporation in Manila with branches in Mindanao), Ibrahim replied, “They are Muslims but they do not engage in *dakwah*. They concentrate on business mostly, not like the Prophet Muhammad did: doing business for *dakwah* development, to establish a *Madina* (civil) society”. According to him, however, as many businessmen in Green-Hills fitook up Islamic Law in Egypt, they supported the Ompia party. However, ever since Mutilan passed away, Ompia had been handicapped.

Marawi seems to have only small entrepreneurs. According to Dr. Deron, “Maranao are business-oriented people, but they cannot seem to be able to establish a large business in Marawi. They fail to engage in corporate business. The Dimaporo family, Salic Malambet, Atty. Karim Pampang, the Sharief family, and Nurhatta M. Magomnang, for example, are into business in order to develop *dakwah* for civil society—work hard, help others, be cooperative, not dependent on others; but there is indeed no single Muslim industrialist or conglomerate in Marawi. Some have, however, opened pawn shops, but these are not Islamic”. Others have opened boutiques, stores, and money changing counters.

**Conclusions/Implications**

Based on the discourse among the four spheres of civil society, it is apparent that they support each other when the activities are congruent with the
development of the Muslims. However, when one element is corrupt or involved in malpractice, it becomes known and is criticized. Such instances of civil society discourses break the trust that the Muslims have placed on them. The public sphere of civil society is very critical in the Philippines, while in Japan, the Muslims seem to direct their criticism towards Israel and Western leaders.17

As for the state sphere of civil society in Japan, the state was very helpful in supporting Muslim immigrants in the 1930s and the 1940s and during the so-called “Islamic boom”. In the Philippines, the state was perceived as careless and co-opted by the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines), which was viewed as discriminatory.18

With regard to the market sphere of civil society, in Japan, native Japanese converts strongly support dakwah, and new Muslim immigrants start new businesses: exporting used cars, opening halal food stores and restaurants.19 In the case of the private sphere of civil society, dakwah in Japan is conducted by Muslim foreigners, students, diplomats, or workers. In the Philippines, members of this sphere are basically followers of former politicians and academia.20

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NOTES

1 I myself have done several researches in Indonesia. The first was entitled “Islam and Modernity: Nurcholish Madjid’s interpretation of civil society, pluralism, secularism and democracy”, published by the Asian Journal of Social Sciences, Brill, Leiden, 33, no. 5 (November) 486-505. A second research was “Paramadina and its Approach to Culture and Communication: An Engagement in Civil Society”, Archipel, Paris, no. 68 (December) 315-341. Both articles analyze the contribution of Paramadina learning groups to civil society and other ideas of modernism. I have also published a piece of work on Daarut Tauhid, another Islamic religious learning group in Bandung but which has spread to other cities in Indonesia. This work published by the Dakwah Journal Kajian Dakwah dan Komunikasi 8, no. 1 (June): 1-29 was entitled: “Daarut tauhid: New approach to Dakwah for peace in Indonesia”. This work analyzes the dakwah strategy, which attracts middle-class audiences in the urban areas, and its contribution to civil society and pluralism. Another dakwah activity I researched on was the one managed by Arifin Ilham in Jakarta. This was published under the title “Majelis Azzikra”, by the UIN journal, Mimbar Agama dan Budaya 23, no. 1 (June). How Ilham attracts followers using zikr (God remembrance) as a way to make followers respect God and human beings was the approach used. Judith Nagata (1986) also published a piece of work on “The impact of the Islamic revival (Dakwah) on the religious culture of Malaysia”. This was contained in Religion, Values, and Development in Southeast Asia, edited by Bruce Matthews and Judith Nagata, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asia Studies. Also, Johan H. Meuleman (1996) wrote “Reactions and Attitudes towards the Darul Arqam Movement in Southeast Asia”, contained in Studia Islamika, 3, 1 (January-March 1996): 43-78. While all these works analyzed individual dakwah institutions or personal figures, I have particularly conducted research on several Islamic learning groups in Tokyo and Marawi City. Different from the above research, this present one deals specifically with the Moro people of the Philippines, a Malay world area which is rarely researched with regard to dakwah. The same goes for dakwah in relation to the Japanese Muslims. Finally, I have done several researches on Muslims in the Malay World, such as Dunia Melayu dan Indochina, Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa and Pustaka, Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia.

2 Islamic studies cover Islamic law (Shari‘ah), Islamic theology and philosophy (Usuluddin), Islamic humanity (Adab), Islamic education (Tarbiyah), and Islamic communication (Dakwah). Many, however, translate dakwah into Islamic propagation or even conversion, which often falls under non-academic activities and truly missionary ones.

3 Religious campaigns are no more successful for other divine revelations or new religions, however. Statistics indicate that some 80 percent of the total population of Japan (120 million) adhere to either Buddhism or Shintoism, while as few as 0.7 percent are Christians. The latest results of a poll conducted showed that the Japanese do not effectively believe in any particular religion. The lack of faith is even more pronounced among the Japanese youth or those in their 20s, among whom the rate of atheism is as high as 85 percent.


5 Penn believes that Japan and the Middle East have had sporadic relations for a millennium years because of the land and maritime silk roads of Southeast Asia. There is historical evidence of interaction between the two worlds during the
time of the Abbasids Revolution (750 A.D.) in the Middle East and the Nara Period (710-794 A.D.) in Japan. This is also evident in the fact that some Middle Eastern art works are preserved in the most respected shrine in Nara’s Shosoin in Japan.

6 These published journals on Islamic issues were part of a propaganda aimed at portraying Japan as the protector of Islam (Benda 1983, 103).

7 As a result, many Japanese who did not know about Islam were able to see and learn about the Hajj, the holy pilgrimage to Mecca. They also heard the call to prayer (adzan) and Qur’anic citations. Besides numerous communications to Islam at the time, there were also mass conversions of several tens of thousands of Japanese. That’s why some call the phenomenon the “Islamic boom” (el-Maghrabi 1995, 3-4; Anis 1998, 332). Following the Iranian revolution of Khomeini, Japanese policymakers and scholars realized the importance of relying on their own research on Islam and the Middle East, instead of relying on American and European sources. This new tendency was particularly seen in the project about "urbanism in Islam 1988-1990”, affiliated with the University of Tokyo’s Institute of Oriental Culture organized by Prof. Itagaki (Sato Tsugitaka, 2002, 21). A Japanese scholarship initiated in 1973 was divided into four areas of study: Arab, Iranian, Chinese, Turkish studies. Studies about Southeast Asia in Japanese higher learning institutions came much later.

8 Other organizations include the Peace Foundation, the Muslim Students’ Association of Japan (MSAJ), the Association for Malay-speaking Immigrants (AMIR), the Islamic Mission of Japan, and 62 mosques each of whose management and activities were organized by members of the Jamaat Tabligh. Turks have also had a study group since 2002, Deribane, in three centers: one in Tokyo, just behind the Tokyo mosque, and two in Saitama. Each Muslim community has its own study group which meets in homes, while some have established mosques, including the Arab, Indonesian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi communities.

9 Among others are Omar Hayashi, who is a representative of the Mitsubishi company and is a Board member of the Arabian Oil Company; Khalid Higuchi, who was a Japan Airlines Manager; Muhammad Umar Iokibe, who owns a company selling miscellaneous household goods; Sadeq Katayama, who works in the Chiyoda Energy Company; Amin Tokosumasu, the General Secretary of the Japan-Saudi Arabia-Kuwait Friendship Association, who works at the Arabian Oil Company; Abdus Salam Arimi, a freelance in NHK; Amir Arai, who works in the Abu Dhabi Oil Company; and Yahya Endo, who works for a commercial machinery company in Japan. All these individuals have studied in the Middle East and speak Arabic.

10 Maeno lectures in Japanese using materials from the Hadith (Prophet Muhammad sayings and deeds). The so-called “forty-hadith” (Hadiths Arba’in) express the following ethic values in the Islamic tenets (akhlq): respecting others, patience, compassion, cleanliness, respect for elders, politeness, wearing proper attire, hard work, fairness, correctness, faithfulness, solidarity, etc. These values are very much related to the principles of civil society. Maeno disagrees with radicalism and terrorism, which are often associated with the Muslims. For him, Islam cannot become an adjective associated with bad actions, such as Islamic terrorism, as Islam is a religion of peace.

11 Nagai is active in many mosques where he preaches or translates the preaching of foreign scholars. He also has a regular session on every Sunday in the Tokyo mosque, where he explains the basic tenets of Islam, such as the principles of belief, the principle of Islamic rites, the call to prayer, ablution (the cleaning of part the body or of the whole body), the angels, books, the hereafter, and the prophets, particularly Prophet Muhammad. Each of his preachings is attended by 30 to 50 people of all ages. Nagai has converted many Japanese to Islam.

12 The first Muslim settler in the Philippines was Tuan Masha’ikha in Mindimbug (Sulu Island), who came in the 14th century. He was followed by Karim ul Makhdum or Sharif/Tuan Aula, whose real name was Zein ul-Abidin. He initially landed in Ilinana, now Malabang (Mindanao Island), around 1380 A.D. There he built the first mosque and was declared the first Makhdumin or missionary (Majul, 53-54). Other missionaries, Sayyid un-Nikab (Aminullah by his real name) and Abdur-Rahman, were based in Tapul and Bud Agad Jolo, respectively.

The second landmark event in the Islamic development of the region was the arrival of the Sumatran Sharif Kabungsuwak in Natubakan (Manggindanao) around 1515 A.D. As his descendants eventually formed the leading tribes, Kabungsuwak became patriarch to most of the Muslim tribes in Mindanao. The work of these makhdumin (missionaries) was continued by Sharif Alawi in Tagoloan, northern Mindanao, in the 17th century, and constitutes the third landmark.

13 First, around 1390 A.D., Raja Baguinda of Minangkabau (Sumatra), now Indonesia, settled with his followers in Bwansa (Jolo), Sulu (Majul 1978, 55-56; Salecy 1908, 42-43). Following the common practice among Malay noble immigrants, he immediately declared himself king of the western section of mainland Sulu (Kadil 2002, 106).

Second, the state sphere was enriched by the arrival in Sulu of Sayyid Abu Bakr from Johore, in the Malay Peninsula (now part of Malaysia) around 1450 AD (Salecy, 45). There he married Raja Baguinda’s daughter (Permaisuri). While Raja Baguinda was the first king, Abu Bakr became the first sultan and the founder of the Sulu sultanate, a practice eventually emulated by the other Moro rulers, including Bwayan, Maguindanao, and Ranao.

Third, around the 16th century (Majul 1978, 63-64), Sharif Alawi Balpaki arrived in Tawi-Tawi, south of Sulu, which he converted into a sultanate as well. In Mindanao, on the other
hand, Sharif Kabunguan was regarded as the first Maguindanaon ruler, after the last chief gave up power. Kabunguan did not reign as a sultan the way his fifth-generation descendant, Sultan Qudarat, and the latter’s successors did (Kadil 2002, 108).

Fourth, the Islamization of Manila (Luzon) and its surroundings in the 16th century was initiated by the members of the Muslim aristocracy in Luzon island. Originally from Brunei (Borneo), they had first been sent as emissaries (wazir) to establish an Islamic kingdom.

14 Two declarations were made by the Moro people. The first was a “declaration of rights and purposes” signed on February 1924 in Zamboanga. The second was “The Dansalan Declaration” of 18 March 1935. Both pleaded with the US Congress in Washington to exclude Minsupala from the Republic of the Philippines once it got its independence. Both also asked that the southern regions be given 50 years to decide whether or not they wanted to become part of the Philippines. However, when the Philippines independence was declared on 4 July 1946, Minsupala was also included in the jurisdiction of the Philippines.

15 Dr. Norma Sharief, the Chair of the Commission on Higher Education of the ARMM (also part of the state sphere) commented that before the election of Dr. Mutilan, spirits were high since this was the first time an alim would become a political leader. The same feeling prevailed when Mustaqbal was in power. The Muslims were happy that dakwah would be alive in Marawi and that they would be accommodated. But, eventually, they were proven wrong. Problems arose when the ulama failed to unite. When an alim became known for being sincere, he gained the support of the Muslims and could channel their aspirations via politics and through a formal process towards democracy. However when that alim had been co-opted and bribed by Malacañang, he failed to speak up. Sharief herself had been undertaking dakwah, organizing seminars, working closely with the Resal-i Nur Institute, and one Saudi Arabian prince. In addition to supplying books and CDs on Islam, the latter supported some of the seminars on Muslim education held in Marawi (2008) and Manila (February 2009), to which international speakers were invited. These were attended by the Maranao people.

16 This CMM leader told me, “We have tried to unify ourselves by empowering ulama, by promoting Dr. Abdul Hamid Bara as leader of this League. We also support him to become leader of the Philippine Utma Foundation. We have met in Manila and CDO (Cagayan de Oro) and hope this can materialize. If it doesn’t, the Muslim leadership will decline in Marawi, in particular; and in Mindanao, in general, and even more so at the national level”. This suggests that the Maranao members of this League are dispersed outside Marawi and have become part of the internal diaspora of the Maranao, who can be found all over the Philippines. This also affects their positions in Marawi politics, as they are very critical to the government, are seen to be corrupt and are too ideologically Islamic.

17 Public sphere. Muslim study and learning groups do not link up directly with other private or public social organizations in order to gain popular support from independent individuals. Members can be the same people criticizing each other if there is a malpractice in an association. They at times coexist peacefully, while at times religious learning groups have to handle official or unofficial criticism of their doctrine and orientation, based on theological, legal, and philosophical differences. In Japan, since the rules in establishing religious associations are quite open and the Japanese are open-minded towards believers of other faiths, the Muslims, who are mostly workers, have been able to establish many associations in order for them to learn about Islam, to open a center for their activities, and promote Islamic values, by translating literatures into Japanese. This type of association is not only managed by the Muslims from Muslim countries, but also by the native Japanese themselves, who realize that dakwah can only be successful if they do the dakwah themselves for linguistic reasons. In the Philippines, the rules are also open, but the conflict between the southern and the northern regions, and competition between the Muslims and the Christians have colored the dakwah activities. These activities seem positive for the Muslims, given that many Christians have converted to Islam.

18 State sphere. Muslim study and learning groups are avoiding collisions with the government. However, they sometimes criticize Japanese and Philippines authorities, if they intervene in their activities. In addition, they relate with the government public servants as individuals in order to be able to convey and exchange ideas informally. Through these groups, the government public servants sometimes write to members of the executive or legislative institutions in Tokyo and Marawi City, or use mass media to mobilize support for government objectives, or to make suggestions from a moral standpoint. In the case of the Philippines, the public sphere is very critical to the government, in particular to the ulama who were elected as part of authorities, such as vice mayor, mayor, vice governor, and governor of both the provincial (Lanao del Sur) and the regional (ARMM) governments. The ulama were also very critical to the central government where the militarization strategy against the Muslims, as well as the strong centralization of power in various aspects of life, are reinforced. In the case of Japan, the public sphere is very much satisfied with the government policies pertaining to religious organizations, which may be freely established and are tax-free. In a secular state like Japan, any religious group can engage in peaceful activities. The state was involved in the process of introducing Islam for political and policy reasons, initially to strengthen Japanese colonization. After the war however, it did so for economic reasons and to support the world’s equilibrium. In particular it wanted to maintain good relations or mutual understanding with the Muslims by serving the Muslim immigrants in Japan. The freedom of establishment of religious organizations is a state policy welcomed by the Muslims as it enables them to associate with and criticize the government and other private spheres of civil society.
Market sphere Muslim religious study and learning groups link up with potential business or wealthy people, thereby encouraging the channeling of their wealth, while encouraging piety among their employees as well as a strong work ethos to expand their new business networks. In the case of the Philippines, Islamic alms giving and the Islamic banking system, as well as micro and macro finance have not been initiated in Marawi City. The business people are very critical of the pawnshop system, which for them is usury (riba) and therefore unlawful in Islam. Large enterprises are not found in Marawi City, despite the fact that the Maranao people are business-oriented people. Only small enterprises exist in the traditional market, in the form of staple stores and restaurants. The business people are upset and believe that business is impossible in Marawi, simply because the investors are scared. Consequently, the Maranao people are putting up companies in other places, as far as Luzon and Manila. Green-Hills is the center of the Maranao Corporation. In Japan, the Muslims commonly own used car export businesses, trade Islamic food, own restaurants and staple stores. Thus, they can also provide employment to new immigrants. As Japan is a center of the automobile industry and since cars are abundant and need to be exported, the Muslims of Southern Asia, in particular, have started exporting these cars to their countries, a business which has led hundreds of car dealers, including devoted Muslims, to prosper. Consequently, they are able to sponsor the building of mosques and other activities, and can accommodate new immigrants. Many Muslims also open staple food businesses, in particular halal food and restaurants, which also employ Muslim immigrants.

Private sphere Muslim religious study and learning groups voice their needs and interests as individuals or as private, independent members of organization and as opinion leaders. As dakwah in Islam is an obligation of every single individual, each opinion leader has to support dakwah activities. Individual members, based on family relations, the neighborhood, the network of friends and acquaintances, are encouraged to join their activities. The different groups use brochures, pamphlets or leaflets, and sometimes mass media to publicize their activities, in order to gain increased support for themselves. In Japan, individuals who are active in dakwah are numerous; they are active in many places, mosques, and centers. Some initially occupied higher positions in companies, institutions, or associations, but eventually chose to become independent dais. They come from different Muslim countries, have resided in Japan for more than a decade, or are native Japanese strongly knowledgeable about Islam. The sermons in the mosques mainly address the Islamic tenets, which are related to ethics and values, similar to Shintoism. Indeed, these are also the principles of civil society. In the Philippines, the followers of former politicians and academicians seem to play more important roles in this sphere. However, individuals realize that there is a crisis of leadership in Marawi, simply because the ulama they once trusted to become members of government, were eventually proven to be corrupt. Consequently, the Muslim community members do not trust them.

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Women in the Fishery Sector in Asia

Cristina P. Lim

Introduction

Women play a crucial role in accelerating the progress of an economy. In fisheries, although sex-disaggregated data on employment is rarely available, the women are known to have long been actively engaged in fish-related activities and to be a critical part of the production process, from pre-harvest and harvest, on to post-harvest processing, mainly to sustain their families and the coastal village at large.

In Asia, the women’s substantial contributions to sustaining the fishing communities are well documented. In a 1998 survey conducted by Ahmed et al. (quoted in Kusakabe, n.d.) it was found out that out of the 162 female-household heads interviewed in Siem Reap province, 21 percent were engaged in fishing. In 2008, share of women in the total 1,640,000 capture fisheries workforce was 57% in Cambodia while it is 72% of the total 10,000,000 capture fisheries workforce in India (FAO/Worldfish/WorldBank 2008 quoted in Weeratunge and Snyder 2009). In the Lao People’s Democratic Republic (PDR), the women constituted 24 percent of the 972 persons working at the livestock and fisheries offices throughout the country (Stason et al. 2001). In China, the 1991 labor force statistics revealed that the women made up 26.3 percent of the rural force in fisheries (Kusakabe n.d.). In the Philippines, out of the total employed workers in fisheries in 2002, women consisted 6.3 percent, undertaking 50 to 70 percent of local fish processing and marketing activities (Food and Agriculture Organization n.d.). In Japan, 16.9 percent of the total labor force in the fisheries sector in 2002 were women (The present status of Japanese women, n.d.).

The above studies indicate that although female labor contributes substantially to income generation and food security, the sector’s contributions tend to be invisible, unacknowledged, and unaccounted for by society at large. Women continue to have limited access to and control over productive assets and to be discriminated against when it comes to managerial positions, productive economic activities, career development, and even politics. In fisheries, there is a blind spot where gender inequality is concerned, indicating that stakeholders are unaware of the need for parity between sexes and its benefits to the overall development of the group.

Understanding the situation of women in the fisheries sector necessitates the examination of some of the major obstacles to their participation in economic and social life. These obstacles may be in the form of social institutions or cultural norms (age, marriage, domestic violence, decision-making powers within the household and larger community, ownership rights, and others) that constrain them from pursuing their needs and interests for a better tomorrow. Knowing these constraints is important if one were to formulate the appropriate policies that promote gender equality and the overall development of the fishing communities.

Objectives of the Study. Overall, this research sought to understand the situation of women in the fisheries of Japan, Thailand, and Malaysia who have remained at the margin of the trade, generating low incomes, lacking social security, recognition, and assistance. This study explored in detail access to and control of resources, the various works engaged in, and the time allocated to these occupations on a per gender basis. It likewise studied the marital relations between women and men and the material and non-material benefits that the women and the men derived from production. It also brought out the women’s views about their work, the social institutions that defined their roles, their functions and identities, their aspirations in life, and male and female participation in the community.

Methodology. This study adopted the qualitative approach, using both primary and secondary data. The primary data came from focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews, and participant observation. The FGDs were facilitated using the tools for gender analysis, which were participatory in nature.

Participant observation was very useful in understanding the daily responsibilities of the members of the families and the community. Observing them “on the job” allowed an understanding of the constraints and opportunities for resource use at the household level, and gave additional insights on intra-household relations. Finally, key
informant interviews involved asking resource persons about issues concerning social institutions which, in turn, allowed the generation of additional insights. Fifteen women who typified the major occupations in which they were engaged were interviewed to have a glimpse of their typical daily activities, time allocation, their views of their works, the constraints they had to contend with, and their aspirations in life. These women had varying occupations.

Respondents. In Japan, the respondents for this study were the professional women divers (amasan) of the Tobu Fisheries Cooperative Association (FCA) in the Nagasaki Prefecture, Japan, who used traditional diving techniques to gather abalones, shellfish, sea urchins, and various types of seaweeds. In Malaysia, the respondents were the Muslim women in the coastal village of Melawi, Kelantan, who worked as farmers, fishers, fish processors, traders, and full-time homemakers. In Thailand, the respondents were the Thai-Buddhist women of the coastal village of Thung Maha, Chumphon Province, who worked as traders and processors, and were full-time homemakers.

The three countries—Japan, Thailand, and Malaysia—were chosen for this study because of the varying degrees of women’s rights exercised in each, and because of the three’s different appreciations of gender equality and women’s involvement in fisheries. In Japan, the Yahataura village of the Ashibe town in the Iki island of the Nagasaki Prefecture was selected. The village is known for the presence of many women divers who belong to the Tobu FCA. Majority of the populace rely on fishing, with farming only confined to a few individuals. The absence of factories in the area has forced many people, especially the women, to find employment in the nearby villages. Access to basic services, however, is not a problem as the local government provides adequate services for the people.

In Malaysia, the village of Melawi in the conservative state of Kelantan was selected. Melawi is a typical coastal village where both fishing and farming offer the residents many income opportunities. The village had an estimated population of 500 people dispersed across 200 households in 2008. The largest household size was registered at 14 members. Women dominated the population at 70 percent.

In the same year, access to water and sanitation or clean piped water was enjoyed by only 30 percent, while the rest or 70 percent got their drinking water from the open well. Only about 30 percent had access to modern, flush-type toilets with septic tanks, whereas 60 percent used latrines (tandas curah). The remaining 10 percent used the open field for their toilet needs.

Access to health services is quite difficult in the sense that the sick need to be brought to the health clinics in Bachok or Kota Bharu, which are 20 minutes and 45 minutes away, respectively. Good access roads characterize the village, but the price of public transportation is quite prohibitive.

In Thailand, Ban Thung Maha, one of the seven villages comprising Tambol Pakklong in the Pathew District, which was in Chumphon Province, was the study site. A Thai-Buddhist community, Thung Maha represents a coastal village where both fishing and farming offer many opportunities to residents, again typifying the many coastal villages found in the nearby developing countries.

In 2002, the number of total households in the village was estimated at 196. Most of the family members were employed in the fishing sector, although some were involved in farming or provided labor in the rubber or palm plantations. Those in the farming sector also seasonally engaged in processing squid and anchovy products.

Good access roads characterize the village, but because private and public transportation are almost non-existent, mobility is constrained by the high cost of either mode of transportation.

Fieldwork. Fieldwork was carried out in Japan from 28 July to 3 August 2008, in time for the harvest of abalones, turban shells, and sea urchins. The first visit to Melawi took place in 8 November 2008 and lasted three days. While the visit proved untimely because of the monsoon season that made fishing impossible, an FGD was carried out with the targeted coastal women respondents. During the second visit from 14 to 15 December, another FGD was conducted for validation purposes. In Thailand, fieldwork at Thung Maha took place from 2 to 5 February 2009.

Findings and Discussion

This section presents the results and discussion on the women’s access to and control over the fishery resources, as well as their access to political and administrative decision-making, their typical activities, and time allocation.
Access to and control over the fishery resources. In Yahataura, the ownership of farm lots and the responsibility of managing them generally fall on the men. Some women whose husbands own parcels of land engage in farming to augment their family income.

As with other FCAs, the fishery rights were given to the Tobu FCA and distributed among its members, who are mostly men. In almost all cases, the right to harvest fish using fixed gear, beach seines, and to culture fish or pearls is delegated to the men; while the fishery rights to harvest seaweeds and undertake sedentary fishery (abalones, turban shells or sazae, and sea urchins) are largely assumed by the women.

In Thung Maha, while access to fishery resources is open, the men traditionally assume the use and control of fishery resources. This is especially true for the mobile species in the coastal and off-shore areas, where fishing is considered physically strenuous and risky. For the sedentary species, the women are the ones who mostly have access and control. The official registration in the fisheries authority and membership in the fishers’ group are largely dominated by the men, attesting to this gender imbalance, however.

The women have access to farming, but relative to the men’s access, the women’s access remains quite limited. In most cases, the men assume ownership and control over farming resources.

In Melawi, access to and control over the land for the production of tobacco or vegetables are determined largely by who owns the land or has the financial capacity to rent it. By gender, access to and control over land are mainly given to men who, in the first place, either have the land titled under their names or are considered their families’ breadwinners. The responsibility of managing the land falls on both the men and the women, although the harvesting and the marketing of agricultural products are partly delegated to the women and the children.

While access to, control, and responsibility over poultry rests on the women, the men are responsible for livestock production. They also dominate quarrying.

As indicated by the official registration in the fisheries authority, the privilege to fish is officially given to the men.

Access to political and administrative decision-making. The structural organization of the Tobu FCA is used to determine the fishers’ access to political and administrative decision-making. In Thung Maha and Melawi, membership in the fisheries association appears to be exclusive. As the village’s political structure is one of the most important institutions, it serves as the basis for assessing the women’s access to the political and administrative decision-making processes.

In the Tobu FCA, access to political and administrative decision-making is largely delegated to the men as shown by the Board of Directors (BOD) and the committees within the association, all of whose members are male. The staff of the cooperative, on the other hand, consists of seven females who handle the less physically strenuous tasks of recording the daily catch and fish prices. For their part, the males take care of weighing the catch, ice-making and refrigeration, fish culture, and the transport of fish.

In Thung Maha, the headship is assumed by the men, who mediate between the villagers and the district administration, as needed. Assisting the village head is a village committee of 15 members distributed over seven sections such as public relations, sports, culture, development, protection/surveillance, and public health. Except for public health, all these positions are held by men.

As is true in all the villages in Kelantan, Melawi is enclosed within a state structure that has the sultan as the ruler of the state. The village is represented by a male village chief (the penghulu or ketua kampung) who works part-time and receives an honorarium for his work. Assisting him is the village committee (jawatan kuasa kampung) composed of appointed male leaders from the different villages.

Islam is the religion of Kelantan and the Sultan is the head of the religion of Islam in Kelantan. But for religious purposes, an imam is also considered an Islamic leader and is designated the head of the mosque. The imam leads the Friday prayers or the prayers for the Islamic gathering. Assisting him is the Tok Bilal (muezzin) who leads the call for the Friday service and the five daily prayers (adhan) from one of the mosque’s minarets. An aik masjid assists the Tok Bilal in running the mosque. All these positions are assigned to male members of the village.
The above structures show the women’s limited access to political and administrative decision-making positions. The dominance of the males in the managerial positions in the organizational structure of the Tobu FCA, and in the village structures of Melawi and Thung Maha, speaks of the women’s marginalization in leadership positions. In these sites, politics has remained the protected sphere of men, fortifying the patriarchal hierarchy in the village. Noteworthy is the case of the rural Melawi, where religion is another protected sphere of men. In the Islam context, however, this cultural barrier runs counter to the Islamic teachings, which provide that the women have the right to participate actively in society, including the assumption of critical decision-making positions such as the head of a state.

The Women’s Activities and Time Allocation. The women’s activities, which are divided into household, economic, and community, are briefly discussed below.

Household Activities. The harvest season of abalones, turban shells, and sea urchins keeps the Amasan busy. She starts her day at 5:00 a.m., washing clothes, preparing breakfast and lunch for the family, cleaning the house, and gearing up for her diving activity. All these activities take up an average of four hours. Once done, she leaves for the fishing port, gets on the fishing boat, waits for her other companions, and, with them, sets out to sea at 10:00 a.m. to dive.

When the diving and marketing of the catch are done, she hurries back to her home to wash her swim wear, buy groceries, and prepare dinner while getting the bath ready for her husband and children. Dinner is served immediately after the husband has taken his bath. In most cases, she is the last one to sit for dinner.

Rest comes after her bath, usually when almost everyone has retired. When still able, she does a little record keeping of her income and household expenses, before going to bed.

In contrast to the Amasan’s schedule, her husband’s is quite lax. He spends most of his time at sea, and just a little at the farm. He does not participate in the household chores, which is typical in Japanese society. When an Amasan lives with her daughter-in-law, the household chores are passed on to the latter.

The division of labor observed in Thung Maha is similar. But a rare case of a man or a husband’s helping in the household chores is exemplified by Dato, Darina’s husband. Dato prepares the fish balls, and fries banana and yam for sale in their local shop. A trainer, Darina, on the other hand, starts her day at 3:00 a.m., doing household chores. She then sets off to the rubber plantation to sell her homemade local sweets to the workers; while Dato stays home, watches their small shop, and takes care of his mother and the children. In the evening, Darina prepares the dinner, while Dato washes the dishes – an arrangement which is well accepted by both parties.

In Melawi, the women generally do most of the household chores with the assistance of the female children in the family. Such is the case of Mak-Noraini, a keropok processor, who usually gets up at 5 a.m., buys fish, and processes them into keropok in her small factory. She does some household work while her husband socializes with friends. In almost all cases, a full-time Muslim homemaker in Melawi takes care of all the household chores, without the assistance of either the son or the husband, even when their hands are empty.

Economic activities. When the abalones are in season, the Amasan conducts two diving trips in a day: from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm, when the harvest is plentiful; or at 2:00 pm, when it is scarce. She does it again from 2:30 or 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 pm. When it is a closed season for abalone, the Amasan takes on part-time works jobs, either in a factory outside the village or in a farm.

In Thung Maha, capture fishing is done mostly by the men, while the women undertake the post-harvest activities (sorting, weighing, vending, and record keeping). The women also take charge of fish processing—from sorting, cleaning, slicing, drying, and packing—and then sell the processed fish. In fish culture and shrimp farming, the women prepare the feeds, feed the fish, and haul and sell the catch to the fish traders. The men take on the heavier tasks such as land preparation and cleaning, and watching/guarding the ponds/cages.

Coconut farming is a year-round activity which does not really need substantive labor input once the tree has been planted. Since harvesting is done with the use of trained monkeys, the women play no substantive role in coconut farming.

In the rubber plantations, both the men and the women tap the trees. While both are involved in the milling process, the men usually handle the hand
milling since the application of the highest pressure ribbing mill has to be done by them. The women then feed and remove the sheet. There are cases, however, where, because the men have to do other work, the women take over the job. But this is less frequent and, in the main, this task is assumed by the men.

In the palm plantations, the men do the planting and harvesting. In the village center, some women run the small groceries and eateries, while the men help watch the store and load goods into the vehicle.

In Melawi, the men and the women plant the tobacco, although the men take care of the land preparation while the women take on the tasks of nurturing and harvesting. The children also help in the harvesting.

The law is silent about women’s participation in fishing, although the cultural norms dictate that fishing is not a female domain, and accordingly, for the women to be part of it is against the teaching of Islam.

While repairing nets is a man’s job, some women also engage in it. Fish vending, fish drying, and fish processing (e.g., the making of fish crackers, fish cake and curry puffs) are tasks left in the hands of the women.

Small groceries, eateries and chalets operating in the villages are usually managed and operated by the women.

Community Activities. The Amasan engage actively in community works that are mostly related to fishing. They participate in the Amasan cooperative general assembly, the Amasan meetings, the Amasan and boatmen meetings, the meetings with fellow Amasan in Iki, the stocking of red sea urchins, abalones and scorpion fish; and the cleaning of the seashore. They also participate in a special religious ceremony where they offer food to the gods for prosperity, happiness, and good harvest, to mark the opening of the season for diving for abalones, turban shells and sea urchins. This celebration coincides with another annual religious ceremony called the Mikazuki shinji where the Amasan from various places in Japan offer food to the gods. This happens on the 10th of the sixth month of the lunar calendar at the Mikazuki Beach, situated along the border between Kuzaki and Ijika of the Mie Prefecture.

In Thung Maha, two of the most celebrated community activities in the villages are the Songkran and the Loi Krathong festivals. The Songkran (Water Festival) celebrates the Thais’ traditional New Year, which runs from 13 to 15 April. People from the rural areas who work in the cities go home to be with their families. A flurry of activities take place, such as the cleaning of houses, temples, public places, and official buildings. The Loi Krathong festival, on the other hand, traditionally takes place during the full moon on the 12th lunar month (roughly in November). For the celebration, the people make banana leaf cups (Krathong) and float them to the sea to drive away ill fortune and apologize to Kongkha or Ganga, the River Goddess. For both festivals, the women take charge of preparing the food, while the men clean and prepare the venues for the celebration.

In October, the village head, with the support of the village residents, spearheads the boat competition among fishers. The women handle the food preparations, while the men attend to the logistics.

In celebrating the birthday of His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen in August, village residents, with funding support from the Department of Fisheries, engage in community cleaning, mangrove planting, and the release of juvenile sea bass, shrimps, and gravid crabs along the shoreline for conservation. Both the men and the women participate in these activities.

In January, Children’s Day is celebrated whereby gifts, usually in the form of money, are given to the children.

As done elsewhere, in Malaysia, the Melawi community celebrates the three major annual festivals, namely, Ramadhan, Hari Raya, and Hari Raya Haji. Hari Raya Haji is celebrated with the slaughtering of 7 to 10 cows in the community. Seven heads of the family “share” a cow to slaughter. Slaughtering is mainly a man’s job, while the cooking is mostly done by the women.

Two other community activities are the village clean-up (gotong royong) and the women’s cooking class. During the gotong royong, the men do most of the cleaning while the women prepare the food.

Selected Stories of Women’s Engagement in Household, Economic and Community Activities. The women’s engagement in economic and community activities is not without a struggle. The stories of four women (Pin, Mak-Fah, Kak-Farrah, and Amasan) show this.
Yusri hardened her resolve to find herself and follow his protestations. Her difficult experience with Chek-Yusri ensued, but Mak-Fah turned a deaf ear to performing her usual roles in the house. Fights with institution and started her small eatery, while had, she sought financial assistance from a lending care of her children and mustering all the courage she had settled down. Freed of the responsibility of taking care of the family, Mak-Fah began to nag her husband to provide more or allow her to open an eatery for additional income. But, every time this happened, fights would always ensue. Each time, Chek-Yusri became more adamant about not allowing her to do what she wanted to do.

Overburdened by household chores, by having to take care of the children and trying to meet the basic needs of the family, Mak-Fah began to nag her husband to provide more or allow her to open an eatery for additional income. But, every time this happened, fights would always ensue. Each time, Chek-Yusri became more adamant about not allowing her to do what she wanted to do.

But Mak-Fah realized her dream after all her children had settled down. Freed of the responsibility of taking care of her children and mustering all the courage she had, she sought financial assistance from a lending institution and started her small eatery, while performing her usual roles in the house. Fights with Chek-Yusri ensued, but Mak-Fah turned a deaf ear to his protestations. Her difficult experience with Chek-Yusri hardened her resolve to find herself and follow her dream. Now, Mak-Fah is happy, learning how to operate her eatery, while earning for herself and providing employment to her relatives. Chek-Yusri, meanwhile, continues to fish, but finds himself relying on Mak-Fah’s income during the off-fishing season.

Like Mak-Fah, Kak-Farrah who is married to a Muslim village official and is mother to eight children, also wanted to have her own eatery to supplement her husband’s income years back. But her husband, Che-Yusof, was strongly against it, always reminding her that it was his obligation to provide for his family, while it was hers to care for the house and the family. In the belief that this was part of Islamic teaching, Kak-Farrah submitted to the will of her husband. From time to time, however, she could not help but complain of her household tasks and envy those mothers who worked outside their homes. When short of money, Kak-Farrah could be heard venting her anger on her children, oftentimes, out of the earshot of her husband. Or she was heard forcing someone whom she perceived would easily acquiesce to exchange her belongings for cash, to do so. There were instances as well when she would be seen stage managing an event to raise cash, by preparing food for visitors and indirectly asking them to pay for it, even if they had not asked her to prepare food for them at all.

The case of the Amasan in Iki was different. Their engaging in economic and community activities was more a problem of time management rather than relational conflicts with their husbands. For most of the Amasan, diving had been, among others, a way of life even before they got married. This, as well as the lack of a more attractive employment opportunity in the area, plus the need for additional income, forced the husbands to accept full-time, diving wives and mothers. Such was the case of Akiko who grew up a diver and continued to dive even at the age of 61. Having a child to attend to did not stop her from diving. Like the rest of the women divers, Akiko would bring her child with her to the boat or shore, and leave the child with fellow divers, or with her mother whenever she had to dive. For the Amasan, in general, being able to provide for oneself and the family, and socializing with fellow divers proved to be a welcome relief from the burden of household chores, caring for the family, and meeting community obligations.

The stories above show that regardless of the nature of the economic activities the women engage in, the pattern of division of labor is the same or is, as socially expected: the men assume the role of breadwinner, and
the women are homemakers, in charge of the housework and childcare. But, as the stories of the Amasan, Pin, Mak-Fah, and some others show, the women can go beyond being caregivers to being breadwinners themselves, thereby disputing the myth that only the men can be breadwinners and that the women should forever be relegated to being homemakers.

The gender division of labor, as shown, underscores the deeply-rooted nature of inequality in gender roles and relationships. Such gender roles are characterized by a strong sense of patriarchy in the community, accounting for the rigid delineation of the productive and reproductive spheres. This is especially so among the Amasan in Yahataura and the coastal women in Melawi.

The relegation of the women to the households and their simultaneous assumption of multiple roles, especially in the case of the women in Thung Maha and Melawi, tend to aggravate their marginalization and economic subordination. For one, their relegation to the household keeps them financially dependent on their husbands. Still, it must be emphasized that the women’s economic subordination does not only result from their not being able to take on paid work outside their homes, but also from their taking on unpaid household chores. Although the women are also involved in community activities, the work assigned to them are but extensions of their non-remunerative reproductive roles. The lack of access to basic services, particularly in Melawi and Thung Maha, likewise contribute to the women’s marginalization. The women’s continued marginalization could be attributed to the prevailing cultural system which gives authority and value to the roles and activities of men, resulting in the latter’s becoming the focus of cultural value.

The stories further show that while there are women who just accept their role as homemakers, there are also those who have dared to resist, failed initially, only to emerge victorious eventually. Those who are able to break free and engage in economic activities later express appreciation for their new-found freedom and talents, and their ability to earn for their families.

Conclusion and Implications

The stories of the women fishers/workers in the three study sites substantiate the crucial role they play in the spheres of reproduction, production, and community activities. They show that the crisis in the fisheries sector which has resulted in low household incomes, has propelled them to the forefront, in their desire to support their husbands. Their stories, however, also affirm a long-standing social problem: the low status of women.

In all the study sites and from the stories of the women, it is evident that their limited access to and control over resources are reflective of the greater bargaining power that the men have over the women. The ability of the husbands to earn a living at the expense of the wives who have been tasked to care for the home and the children, enable them to accumulate wealth under their name, and to have their wives become dependent on and submissive to them. The preference for men in religious and political structures, in particular, or, in most administrative and decision-making positions, give them more leverage in dictating the rules on resource use, and in defining the community activities and the nature of one’s participation, to their favor. This power imbalance reflects a highly patriarchal society where positions of power and prestige are mostly vested on the men.

The prevailing cultural stereotyping of women as subordinate to men, of men professing to respect their wives and families while promoting the belief that the women should stay home to be wives, mothers, and homebuilders, is certainly a roadblock to many women who choose to opt for other challenges. The same roadblock indicates the lack of awareness of the need for parity between the sexes and of the benefits accruing to the overall development of the group if such parity existed.

Effective development strategies must be responsive to gender-inequities. The study shows that although the women are predominant in the pre- and post harvest activities, their labor is not properly valued. This implies that the design of development strategies must recognize the economic role of unpaid and paid work, and the importance of the so-called “reproductive” and “productive” economies. It also points to the need for the male labor force to share in the household tasks and in the promotion of cooperation in economic development.

Issues of cultural and social superiority have to be addressed to redress gender inequality. The challenge is to increase the women’s visibility and credibility in the formal organizations that are negotiating the future
control of the fisheries sector and the community. This implies a greater need for the community to embrace a respect for women and promote policies that increase the personal wealth, power and political influence of women. This may mean opening up opportunities for the women’s greater participation in the decision-making processes of the cooperative and the village, and the nomination of women to positions of leadership. It may also mean promoting the men’s participation in domestic chores. The latter implies encroaching into the women-dominated reproductive sphere and enjoying the privilege of nurturing the members of the family.

In general, because of the ingrained mindsets of patriarchy in the community, it is important that educational reforms to alter such traditional notions be effected. These means carrying out public information campaigns, gender sensitivity trainings and the integration of gender concerns in the school curriculum or textbooks. This will be a gargantuan task but is something that must be done for the greater good.

Empowering women also entails responding to their practical needs. This calls for increasing their access to the following: health services through the establishment of a well-equipped health center that caters to the health needs of every constituent in the village; flush-type toilets attached to septic tanks and a water system; and transport services to facilitate mobility at a reduced cost. These changes are very important for the coastal women in Melawi and Thung Maha, who are greatly burdened by limited access to basic services.

Moreover, for the men and the women in the productive sphere in Melawi and Thung Maha, access to credit, information, capability-building trainings such as bookkeeping, financial literacy, product development and marketing, and business management, have to be facilitated.

NOTES

1 The Tobu cooperative was granted Types 1 and 2 fishery rights. Under the Japanese fishery management system, Type 1 fishery rights or joint fishery rights are granted for four classes of fishery: 1) fisheries for seaweeds, shellfish, crustaceans, and sedentary fin-fish species; 2) fisheries employing fixed gear, e.g., traps and the like; 3) beach seines, non-motorized trawling (boat seine) and other fisheries which are relatively immobile or stationary on the fishing ground; and 4) inland-water fisheries. Type 2 fishery rights are granted for aquaculture within the waters governed by joint fishing rights. Type 2 fishery rights are of two types: special demarcated rights which relate to aquaculture using sea-ponds, rafts nets and long-lines, which are exclusively given to FCAs; and demarcated rights under which no special rights are granted for pearl culture and large-scale aquaculture projects involving the partition of sea inlets by dykes or nets, to FCAs, individuals and private companies with the technical capability and required investment capital. The Tobu FCA uses the rights for seaweeds and sedentary fishery (abalones, turban shells, and sea urchins), long line fishery, small-scale squid jigging, gillnet, and set net fishery. The right is also being used for the culture of sea urchins, abalones, and kelp.

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The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows
Food for the Ethnic Minority: Maintaining Food Security for the Ifugao Community, in Northern Luzon, in the Philippines

Ekoningtyas Margu Wardani

1. The Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Indigenous peoples who live in remote regions are often subject to marginalization. Today they number around 250 million, spread across some 70 countries. Their communities generally uphold the principles of equality and communality, backed by strong social organizations that share a long and common history, and experiences. In today’s world, however, the indigenous peoples confront a myriad of challenges daily that expose, among other things, their physical and economic limitations. For one, their strong dependency on nature makes their livelihood very much vulnerable to environmental degradation. And while environmental degradation is often seen as one unfortunate consequence of economic development in many societies, it is a phenomenon that has profoundly victimized indigenous peoples whose reliance on production methods passed from one generation to another does not enable them to make major adjustments to economic and environmental changes. Consequently, they are perpetual victims of environmental degradation and their lives are a continuous daily struggle to preserve their individual and group security, as well as their food security. Food security is thus a strategic issue for indigenous people whose marginalized lives are also characterized by poverty, daily injustices, and the lack of access to food. The degradation of natural habitats only serves to make their lives even more difficult. As a result, food security has also become a strategic worldwide issue over the past few decades because it is now viewed as a basic human right.

Yet, food-related problems involve much more than just eating; they constitute basic problems for everyone. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), more than 800 million people in Africa, Asia, and Latin America still live in hunger. This widespread situation is a stark negation of one of the eight Millennium Development Goals: to halve extreme poverty and hunger in the planet by 2015.

FAO (2005) estimates that from 2000 to 2002, the total number of undernourished people reached around 852 million worldwide. Of this number, developing countries accounted for 815 million, while countries in transition and industrialized countries accounted for 28 million and 9 million, respectively. Based on the data, it can be inferred that Africa and Asia are the most vulnerable continents, with Africa accounting for 40.95 percent of the undernourished worldwide and Asia, 33.33 percent. If we were to take a closer look at the data set from 1969 to 2002, it becomes evident that Asia recorded the most consistent performance in reducing the number of undernourished people—evidence that Asian countries have indeed made some major progress in this regard. This success story in the area of food security development became possible because of the high economic growth and agricultural outputs, increased public investment in nutrition, higher education for the people, and a relatively smooth transition to democracy in many parts of East Asia, particularly in North-East Asia (FAQ, 2001).

However, these successes do not mean that the continent has not had its share of bad experiences. The number of chronically hungry people in East and South Asia remains greater than in any other region. Cambodia, China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam in East Asia, and India and Nepal in South Asia, still have huge and even increasing numbers of undernourished people, estimated at the turn of the century to have reached 35 million (Zeigler 2002).

1.2. Research Approach

This research focuses on the food security of the Ifugao ethnic minority groups that mainly stay in the northern end of Luzon Island in the Philippines. It asks the question “What challenges does the Ifugao community face in resolving the food security problem without altering lifestyles and culture?” while simultaneously seeking to do the following:
a. Identify and understand the perspective of the Ifugao community about food security.

b. Understand the relationship between food security, local wisdom, and natural resource from the perspective of the Ifugao community.

c. Identify the main problems the Ifugao community faces in relation to food security and the solutions thereto, from their own perspectives.

d. Determine the extent to which migration and the search for work across regional borders is used as a coping strategy to mitigate food (in)security by ethnic communities, in general, and the Ifugao community in particular.

e. Draw the best practices and propose policy recommendations to the regional and the central governments on tackling food (in)security problems for the ethnic minority, based on the experiences of the Ifugao community. This ought to be done without causing any adverse effects on the community’s pride in their ethnic identity.

This project was conducted in the Philippines because the country’s cultural pluralism provides a certain degree of internal control that allows for some meaningful comparisons. My approaches included participatory observation in the Ifugao communities, focus group discussions, involvement in cultural activities, and discussions with local scholars keenly interested in the Ifugao communities, particularly in the issues of culture, development, and food security. This research also employed an ethnographic approach in exploring local experiences, in order to help the participants reflect on themselves. A field survey was conducted to collect primary data through observations and direct in-depth interviews with the informants. Secondary data were obtained from government institutions and relevant publications such as books, journals, newspapers, and magazines.

1.3. Conceptual Framework

Individuals and organizations continue to differ in their definition of food security and the best approaches in attaining it. In light of this diversity of views on food security, a review of some basic definitions and approaches adopted by organizations and/or individuals with a keen interest in the vital role of food security is called for. In 1996, the World Bank defined food security as, “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life”. The Food and Agriculture Organization’s (FAO) World Food Summit held in Rome in November 1996 broadened this definition by stating that “Food security exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (Wardani et al. 2009).

Food security took center stage as a result of the 1972-1974 world food crises (Wardani et al. 2009). At the time, the concept of food security focused on the availability of food, particularly cereals at the national and international levels. In the 1980s, a paradigmatic shift from simply stressing food availability to food access at both the household and individual levels became popular. There was equally a shift to the graduated forms of food security, using individual, household, and regional food security as the more reliable measures, rather than just a generalized notion. Under this new paradigm, regional food security automatically meant household food security, which in turn ensured and implied individual food security. Achieving food security ensures/guarantees that all levels of food security are addressed.

This research follows the paradigm closely, looking at food security among the Ifugao from the angles of availability, access, vulnerability, and sustainability.

II. The Philippine Context

2.1. The Philippines at a Glance

In 2008, the National Statistic Office estimated the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Philippines to be Php1,035,303 in constant pesos, with the average annual family income based on the 2006 Family Income and Expenditure Survey (FIES) at Php173,000. Economic growth in the period 2007-2008 was 4.6 percent, lower than the 7.2 percent recorded in the 2006-2007 fiscal year. This is understandable considering the slowdown in the global economy. The services sector proved to be the backbone of the economy, contributing 49.09 percent in 2007 (compared to 48.66 percent in 2006). The industrial sector came next, contributing about 32.55 percent (lower than the previous year’s 32.58 percent),
while agriculture was third, contributing 18.36 percent to the economy in 2007 (a decrease from 18.76 percent in 2006).

Figure 1. Share of Economic Contribution by Sector in the Philippines 2004-2007, Compared (%).
Source: Philippine National Statistical Coordina tor Board (NSCB), various years, estimated.

In terms of growth, the services sector registered the highest among all sectors. It registered its highest growth of 8.13 percent in 2007 and its lowest at 6.47 percent in 2006. The manufacturing sector recorded an average growth of 5.22 percent in the period 2004-2007, growing highest in 2007 at 7.09 percent. The agricultural sector posted 4.92 percent growth in 2007, which was higher than the previous year’s 3.70 percent. On average, agriculture grew by 3.95 percent during the 2004-2007 period.

Figure 2. Growth of Manufacturing, Services, Agricultural Sectors, 2004-2007, Compared (%).
Source: Philippine National Statistical Coordinator Board (NSCB), various years, estimated.

Per data in the years 2000, 2003, and 2006, the poverty incidence in the Philippines was fluctuating. With respect to families, the highest poverty incidence was 27.5 percent, registered in 2000. Meanwhile, poverty incidence across the population registered at 32.9 percent in 2006, which was higher than the 30 percent registered in 2003. The implication is that 33 out of 100 Filipinos were poor in 2006.
The Philippine government adopted the FAO’s concept of food security which was based on the above-cited criteria. But, according to Guzman (2003), the Philippine government did not have a coherent national food program, partly because politics played a key role in determining the food policy.

In 1997, the government under President Joseph Estrada launched the Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization Act (AFMA), which signified the government’s commitment to modernize agriculture through investments and import liberalization, and allowed the participation of the private sector in the marketing of rice. The government planned to separate and partly privatize the National Food Authority (NFA) and focus on market-oriented land reform and corporate schemes in land ownership and control, rehashed as the food program that would address food security (Guzman, 2003).

The administration of President Gloria Arroyo continued the program, adding to the privatization and liberalization programs a formal commitment to the Agreement on Agriculture made under the World Trade Organization (WTO). The government also implemented the World Bank poverty alleviation program and a more specific program of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), to extend support to the Grains Sector Program (referred to as Ginintuang Masaganang Ani or GMA) that emphasized the modernization of production and trade liberalization. The program was a transitional blueprint aimed at implementing the AFMA framework. The infrastructure program covered irrigation and the application of productivity enhancing mechanisms. GMA also focused on the food security program, emphasizing the availability and accessibility of food to Filipinos. In short, the government’s aim was to attain food self-sufficiency and food security.

The Philippines is the only country in Asia that officially uses the term indigenous people and recognizes their rights as such (ADB 2002). The National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP) uses the term to refer to more than 12 million descendants of the original inhabitants of the archipelago, who have somehow managed to resist centuries of colonization and, in the process, retained their customs, traditions and lifestyle. Before the term indigenous cultural community or indigenous people was used, these communities were called cultural minorities or tribal Filipinos. Their stories were always about their being peaceful and loving communities, bound to Mother Nature and the Father Spirit of the Universe. The reality, however, was that indigenous peoples in the Philippines faced and continue to confront oppression, exploitation, discrimination, and poverty. They are the poorest of the poor in the Philippines.

The total number of indigenous people in the Philippines has not yet been accurately reported, mainly because they live in remote and geographically isolated areas. Moreover, they are spread across seven ethnographic regions and comprise 110 ethnic groups. Using 1997 census data, Royo (2001) estimated the number of indigenous people in the Philippines to be about 12 million, or approximately 16 percent of the total population of 73 million at the time.
2. 2. The Ifugao at a Glance

The term Ifugao refers to an ethno-linguistic group, a province, and a language. Dulawan (1980) states that the term is from the word ipugo, which means “people of the earth, mortals, or human beings”. Ipugo is derived from the word “pugo” which means “hill”, while the word “i” means “from”. Spanish conquistadores and missionaries simply referred to the Ipugo as Ygolote, Igolot, or Igorotte in their writings about the mountain peoples of the Cordillera Region. Most of the latter accepted the label, but not the Ifugaos, who insisted on being called Ifugaos (Sumegang 2003).

The Spaniards tried to occupy Ifugao from 1752 to 1898, but failed to establish effective control as the Ifugao warriors launched a series of counter-attacks against them. In 1898, the American military replaced the Spaniards and won over the hearts and minds of the Ifugaos within a relatively short time. The military order was gradually replaced by a civilian government in 1902, and lasted until 1935. Lumauig (2008) vividly captures the differences between these two colonial regimes:

The Spaniards were more for the conversion of the natives to the Catholic faith; the Americans were more for the introduction of the primitives to the wonders of civilization. The Spanish conquistadores brought with them friars and holy images to achieve their primary objective; the American colonizers brought with them teachers and books to achieve theirs.

Symbolic of the difference in aims and style of the two colonizers were the basic infrastructures that they built all over the country, some of which are still standing today. The Spaniards built churches; the Americans built schoolhouses (Lumauig 2008: 5).

The Ifugaos live in a landlocked province in the heart of Cordillera Region with 120° and 40' and 121° and 35' in longitude and between 16° and 35° 17' and 5° in latitude. The Province consists of rugged mountains, forest, rivers, and beautiful rice terraces and its highest point is about 1,000-1,500 m covering about 1,942.5 sq. km in area. In the east, Ifugao province borders Siffu and Magat Rivers, to the south by Nueva Viscaya Province, to the west by Benguet Province, and to the north by Mountain Province.

Lagawe is the capital town of Ifugao. Based on the 2007 population census, the total number of Ifugaos number about 180,711 persons. The Alonso Vista Municipality has the largest population at 25,323, which constitutes about 14.01 percent of the total population; while the Municipality of Hungduan has the lowest population at 9,601, making up 5.31 percent of the total population of Ifugao. Lagawe, the capital city of the province is home to 9.61 percent of the total population of Ifugao. It has a population of 7,373.

Home to the rice terraces that were declared a World Heritage site by the UNESCO, Ifugao’s main economy relies on agriculture, a micro industry (handicrafts), and tourism, which serves as the backbone of the household economy. Tourists, who mostly come from Europe, visit the villages and go trekking and hiking. They also view the rice terraces, and observe and appreciate the traditional Ifugao lifestyle. Unfortunately, the rapid growth of Ifugao has seriously strained its resources. Tourism has declined over the past few years, with the replacement of traditional houses with modern ones, thereby diminishing the attraction Ifugao holds for tourists.
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Panel 2

The increase in the size of households has meant that native houses are no longer large enough to take on more new members of the next generation. The Ifugao are therefore left with no other option but to build modern houses to accommodate their increasingly larger families. The larger the number of modern houses built, however, the smaller the number of tourists who come because they have fewer and less traditional architecture to appreciate. This has translated to a further diminution in the Ifugao's household incomes and food security.

Infrastructure also plays an important role in the lives of the Ifugao. Their landlocked location requires good transportation to facilitate economic activities. The state of infrastructure, however, has deteriorated over the years, because of the increasing frequency of landslides during the rainy season. The increase in the cost of transportation has also aggravated matters.

Some experts have expressed concern about the fate of the rice terraces. Landslides arising from earthquakes, rains, and worm infestation have endangered the existence of the beautifully manmade rice paddies. In fact, an earthquake that jolted the region in 1990 caused the collapse of some of the rice terraces. Unfortunately, the government has done very little to restore them to their original condition. Farmers, in turn, have been hampered by their day-to-day efforts to earn a living, especially since the rice terraces take time to be reconstructed.

In terms of the transformation of their social life, the Ifugao have made some major adjustments to adapt to modern religions. During the Spanish colonial era, the Spaniards tried all they could to subdue and convert the Ifugao to Catholicism. However, the Ifugao resisted their overtures and continued to struggle to preserve the social and spiritual independence of their community. Still, the Spanish were unrelenting in their efforts to build churches and use other channels such as the government to assimilate and convert the Ifugao. Thereafter, slowly, but surely, many Ifugao converted to Catholicism although a number have retained their traditional beliefs and practices, and carry them out simultaneously with their Catholic beliefs and practices.

2.3. The Food Security of the Ifugao

2.3.1. Their Perspective of Food Security

When asked about food security, an Ifugao's first answer was "I don't really understand what food security is all about". For the people of the province, the concept simply means the ability to provide enough food for the family, day after day, without worrying about where to get it the next day. They also understand it to mean having a farming system that can support their daily food needs. Some examples of their reactions during the interviews are as follows:

I know nothing about food security but it's natural that we just cook our food and we are happy to have food for today and tomorrow; then we go to find food again for the next day. God will provide for the other days. But the ideal situation is when we have enough rice fields and a good home; then we are satisfied.

- Virginia, Bangaan Village -

What we mean by food security here is having food everyday and a farm to support our daily food needs, so that we can manage to have enough food for our whole family. And during a difficult season,
we consume rice that we buy from the market at an affordable price. I always hope and pray that the next day we will still have enough food and will be blessed. I pray too for the next month, the next year. As long as we still have food and are alive, as long as our children are healthy and we have enough for our needs every day, I am okay.

- Concita, Bangaan Village -

We have no other source of income aside from our rice terraces, unless we get a job; then, that’s another opportunity. But if we have no job, we can depend on our rice terraces. That’s why it is very important to maintain our rice terraces and tradition, so we can survive.

- Laurance, Banaue -

Based on the above answers, we can conclude that food security for the Ifugao relates to three aspects:

- The household has sufficient food within a certain time frame.

- Close compliance with cultural norms and a harmonious relationship with the environment are maintained.

- Food security is very much related to the capacity of the household to extricate itself from poverty as it gives household members access to nutritious and healthy foodstuffs within a certain time frame.

Rice is the main staple food of the Ifugao. It is supplemented by root crops like potatoes, sweet potatoes (yam or kamote), and the occasional meat and vegetables. In a rice farming year, the Ifugao only harvest once, in the belief that the land needs time to recuperate and must not be overexploited. In the recent past, however, the Ifugao have become increasingly dependent on food supplies from outside the country, consuming rice imported from Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, and other countries, as these are now widely available in the market. In short, food availability among the Ifugao has become a combination of that provided by nature and traditional farming, and that available in the market. The Ifugao have adapted to the market system.

2.3.3. Access

The Ifugao employ various ways to access food. In general, those living in rural areas and till the land, cultivate food they eat, while those in the relatively “modern” sector, such as office employees, craftsmen, public servants, entrepreneurs, and professional workers, buy food they eat in markets, supermarkets and restaurants. As such, the modern lifestyle has gradually become a familiar feature in Ifugao households, depending on their capacity to earn
money. Household incomes have also become a vital element in their food security and not just in the production process any longer.

Just like it is for other indigenous peoples, land is important to the Ifugaos. Among them, the same conditions also apply, with some minor adjustments. It is very interesting to note, for example, that the Ifugaos have in place a land ownership and use structure. Traditionally, the Ifugao customs stipulate that the eldest child has the right to inherit at least half of the household property. The household property usually includes, among others, a house and half of the rice terraces plot (puyo). The implication of this arrangement is that the younger children do not have opportunities as big as the older ones.

From this point, we can gauge the degree of food security at the household level. With an average population of eight to ten people in the household, access to food for the whole year cannot solely depend on the rice terraces. The Ifugaos have to look for other sources of income such as tourism sector, blue collar and white jobs in the public and private sectors, and even opting to go overseas. However, this search creates problems of its own for Ifugao community.

I conducted a simple survey on the food shortage among the Ifugaos. Table 1 reveals the following: first, 80 percent of informants said that they had never reduced the frequency of their meals in a day. Second, none of the respondents had ever gone without eating food in a day, and third, all of the informants said that they had never slept on an empty stomach. 

2.3.4. Vulnerability

Food vulnerability, in my view, cannot be meaningfully understood without taking socio-cultural changes into consideration. The Ifugaos have experienced various changes in many aspects of their lives, including religion, education, customs and practices, the cash economy, and the increasingly important role of the market. All the above changes have had significant impacts on their lives as these necessitated adapting to new horizons and more modern lifestyles. Many circles (experts in many fields of study, local society, the local and the national governments, and other international organizations) would argue that today’s rice terracing in Ifugao is facing serious danger, and if its extinction comes to pass, there is no doubt that Ifugao society will face the full wrath of food vulnerability.

Based on the table above, it seems that the Ifugaos do not have any food security problems. However, if one probes deeper, the real picture begins to emerge. I conducted another simple survey on the measurement of carbohydrate consumption and production. The result appears in Table 2 below.

Based on all the carbohydrate indicators for the Ifugaos, it is apparent that there exists a big gap between production and consumption. All of the indicators show a deficit: 1,375 kg for rice, 85 kg for potatoes, and 185 kg for kamote in one year, per household. The problem has worsened due to the limited sources of income available and falling incomes over time.
In general, the Ifugao perceive their food security level to be adequate. They neglect to put any consideration on the time dimension of food security. Conceptually, “food security only exists when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO 1996). This definition presupposes that food security has several dimensions, including time. The meaning of food security should be explained to society in order for it to arrive at an appreciation of its perspectives vis-à-vis what true food security is. Although from their own perspective the Ifugao may feel that their level of food security is sufficient, it is worth reflecting upon the possibility that their increasing dependency on markets to meet their daily food needs may be another indication of food insecurity, making it likely for this to undermine the Ifugao’s food security status.

### 2.3.5. Sustainability

There are times when the Ifugao face hard times, when life becomes really difficult. Economic hardships become even more severe when the number of tourists paying visits to the region decrease significantly. Under such conditions, the Ifugao are more concerned over the quantity of food than its quality, with children given higher priority, followed by the men, and lastly, the women. Such arrangement is based on the consideration that the men work harder than the women. Some exchanges may also occur under such conditions to alleviate food shortfall: it is a common practice for households with sufficient food to share this with those households that are in need.

### III. Discussion, Conclusions, and Reflections

Based on my observations, I would say that the status of the food security of the Ifugao depends on a combination of nature and the modern economy. The two factors are interdependent in many ways. On the one hand, local and international migrations have aggravated food insecurity, due to the increasing scarcity of human resources in the agricultural sector. On the other hand, traditional beliefs in many ways still provide the justifications for the Ifugao to preserve their land, as well as their agricultural system, through the management of their rice terraces and agricultural system. There is no doubt that traditional practices have proved their worth in maintaining the Ifugao’s agricultural system and preserving the rice terraces. Granting that these were so, the debate would then revolve around the adverse effects of attempting to achieve food sufficiency. However, the facts also show that it is difficult for the Ifugao to discard their traditional practices, which have been tried and proven, in maintaining their agricultural systems. The preservation of their traditional beliefs influences their daily lives, even though it is that very hard to be implemented. An example was provided by one informant whom I asked about how they preserved their traditional beliefs and the influence of these on their lives, including the agricultural system. That informant declared:

*In recent days, almost everybody has become a Christian/a Catholic, leaving just a few Ifugao still following traditional beliefs. However, we also still nurse fears that our traditions, left untended, will become extinct, which is somehow unimaginable as our lives have strong links with the traditional system. We have fears that one day, evil will come to our community, for though we have become Christians, that will not prevent the spirit of our ancestors to commit visitations on our community, especially during the harvest season. Sometimes we are surprised whenever we make poor harvests, which are attributed to bad luck. It would be better if bad luck and punishment were meted out on our food, harvest, or livestock; and not on our children. It would be better still if they did not harm our family.*

- *Leticia*

The following reflection is in order, too:

*Although we already believe in Christianity, sometimes we still observe our traditions. For example, if we have a sick person in the family and take him to the hospital but the sickness does not heal, then we bring the sick back home again and attend to him according to our traditions, by calling the Mumbaki (traditional priest) to minister to him. So*
it is important for us to keep our tradition alive. Even though this is very expensive to do, we have to still keep our traditions alive.

-Adela-

Those expressions should serve as answers to the question of Masaaki Okamoto-san, who was a reviewer during my presentation at the API Regional Workshop in Osaka (November 2009), particularly during the “Panel II: Live in the Margins” portion. The question for me was “How are the diverse views or perspectives and discourses of the dominant group such as the Christian Filipino to indigenous people in the Philippines”?

I conducted my research on the Ifugaos Community with focus on food security but unfortunately did not give much attention to the perception of the mainstream community to the indigenous community in the Philippines. However in the discussion on the mainstream community versus minority, based on my observation in the Philippines as well as in Indonesia, in general I can conclude that the mainstream community endeavor to pursue their way of thinking toward other communities especially for the minority. My experiences in Indonesia and the Philippines enlightened me in this regard. The minority groups, represented by the ethnic minorities, always face difficulties in the course of improving their social and economic wellbeing, while at the same time preserving their identity. Mainstream society often perceives the existence of minority groups as a problem, simply because they run counter to the concept of homogeneity. My previous experiences in Indonesia showed me that the majority often succumb to the wishes of the majority communities, turning themselves into foreigners in their own land. This was very evident in the spirit that underpinned transmigration, which in some respects was bent on civilizing indigenous minorities in almost all the regions in Indonesia. Fortunately, this situation did not affect the Ifugao community. However, as a minority, they face many problems related to globalization. Such problems include their vulnerability to global price changes, limited land, the lack of human resource capacity, environmental degradation attributable to the deteriorating quality of the rice terraces, and migration-related problems.

This research reinforces the relationship between actually achieving food security and the indigenous community’s perception of it. The perspective of the local community is rather unique compared to that held by the mainstream majority. In this regard I can say that the way the Ifugao preserve their traditions and customs enables them to survive from one generation to another. Moreover, such methods have, for many centuries and generations, proved sustainable. It shows that food security is integrated into cultural security. It shows that there can be synergy between food adequacy and environmental preservation. A case in point is the way the Ifugao treat land. They harvest only once per year in order to allow land to fallow so it will stay fertile or in good condition. In so doing they foster regeneration and sustainability.

It is true that the Ifugao cannot avoid the wave of modernization. The modern market is yet another crucial source of influence on society, including the Ifugao society. Thus far, the Ifugao have shown their capacity to adjust to any changes in their life, particularly in their environment. Such changes have led to their interaction with other communities. As a community, the Ifugao have been able to combine modern ways with their traditional lifestyles, without forsaking their cultural identity.

Overall, I can say that the status of food security of the Ifugao remains very far from ideal. For one, their food security status depends on their ability to access food. This argument is based on the fact that their food production is not enough for daily consumption. In any case, the Ifugao continue to face high vulnerability to food insecurity due to changes in the prices of basic necessities, given that the market is increasingly playing an important role in their lives, in general, and as a source of food, in particular. Although many of them work in the informal sector as jeepney/tricycle drivers, tourist guides, and small businessmen/businesswomen, such jobs are seasonal in nature as they are strongly dependent on the influx of tourists in the region. Over the years, the number of tourists has been falling due to the diminishing uniqueness of the Ifugao’s traditional houses. Rapid population growth has also contributed, in no small way, to higher food insecurity in the region.

The environment has also become an increasingly important concern because food insecurity problem can be resolved in a sustainable way, through good environmental preservation that creates multiplier effects (like an increase in the number of tourists). Another important finding is the concern that the
Ifugaoos have for food security, based on their own perspective.

With regard to the impact of government policies on food security in the Philippines, what I can say here is that all government programs/policies on food security are driven by political motives, rather than by sincere efforts to resolve the problem on a permanent basis. During my observations and interviews in the course of my fieldwork, I failed to see any food security program under way in the Ifugao region.

In the Philippine context, the debate is on whether to implement food security or food sovereignty for the indigenous groups. I prefer the orientation of food security to be the basis for analysis.

This is not only because the focus of my study is on food security but also because of the reality that it is hard to implement indicators of food sovereignty in any society. So I prefer not to prolong the debate on food security versus food sovereignty.

The wave of globalization is unavoidable for all societies in this world including indigenous communities, which means that the role the modern market plays in society through export-imports is largely unstoppable. The fact that the Ifugao community produces insufficient quantities of rice and is therefore becoming increasingly dependent on the global market is a good example of this situation.

For some reflection, we can refer to Lassa’s finding on the status of food security in Southeast Asia. According to Lassa (2006), Indonesia, the Philippines, Myanmar and Laos have been able to achieve food self-sufficiency but not food security. Singapore cannot achieve food self-sufficiency due to its extremely limited farmlands; still it has been able to achieve food security thanks to its ability to provide its population access to food. By emphasizing food imports, Singapore has been able to ensure sufficient food stocks as well as access to them for its population. Countries like Brunei, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam, on the other hand, have been successful in achieving self-sufficiency as well as food access for their populations. In other words, the four countries have been able to reach the desirable balance between self-sufficiency and food security. Cambodia, on the contrary, has neither been able to achieve self-sufficiency nor ensure access to food for its population.

In the Philippine context, intervention from the government, through international food aid, is necessary for vulnerable communities, such as the Ifugao community, to provide its population with sufficient food supplies as well as increasing access. As I mentioned during my presentation in Osaka on November 2009, there is urgent need for the government to implement consistent policies and realistic programs for the benefit of indigenous communities such as the Ifugao. The policies should not only be politically motivated, hence short-term in their focus, score and reach; but should be characterized by concrete projects in many areas, especially in those fields that enhance human development, such as education. Alternatively, another option is to help farmers in a concrete way such as scaling up funding tailored toward farming, repairing the irrigation system, and improving infrastructure. By doing so, there will hopefully be more job opportunities in the area, which will prevent the young generation from migrating to urban destinations or overseas, in search of better living conditions.

Equipped with an improved understanding of the underlying issues, I now believe that government can be in a better position to resolve food insecurity problems. Furthermore, based on my findings herein, the government (central or local) can be equipped to design and implement the right programs for the Ifugao.

**Box. 1. The Children of Bangaan**

During one harvest period, I interviewed some people in Bangaan Village, which is located in the center of the rice terracing area. It takes about one hour from Banaue to Bangaan by jeepney or tricycle. Many stories came out of our conversations. The one that impressed me the most was my conversation with Concita Biyo.

Concita was born in Batad Village, which is about two hours from Banaue Village. She married to Biyo who hails from Bangaan Village with whom she now has five children. As they only have four puyo of rice fields, Concita said, their production is not enough for their whole year’s consumption. She estimates that they consume around 1,200 kg of rice a year because of the large number of relatives in the household. Therefore, besides working on the rice fields, Concita also set up a small souvenir shop in front of her house.
Unfortunately, not too many tourists had been coming to their village in recent days. If some tourists did come, they rarely bought any of the souvenirs because the villagers’ souvenirs were no different from those sold more cheaply in Banaue and elsewhere. To support the family, Concita’s husband also accepted whatever job was offered him so that they would have more cash for the family’s needs. More often that not, he worked on road development projects around Bangaan Village up to Lagawe (the capital town of Ifugao).

It is important to point out that the construction sector offered seasonal jobs that could barely provide a means of livelihood for a year, which meant that the workers could not always get everything they needed, when they needed it. When things grew worse, they sometimes mortgaged their limited land to generate funds to support their basic needs.

The story of Concita is a very much similar to that of the other villagers in Bangaan. In some cases, their children sold their services to supplement the family income. For example, they sang for tourists, for a piece of candy or a biscuit. They were often told not to ask for money from tourists. Singing and receiving some candies, biscuits, or even books from the “generous” foreigners was more than enough for the kids of Bangaan, therefore.

In another case, a young mother of two young children left for abroad to earn more money. She went to Singapore to be a domestic worker, leaving her children with their jobless father, and this worried her. To make things more bearable for herself, she often called from Singapore, just to hear the voices of her family who inspired her to carry on. The problem was that both the husband and the wife were the youngest children in their respective families so that they could not get the rice field and house per the Ifugao tradition. The only option then was for the wife to endure life and work in a foreign country, in the hope that her sacrifice would lead to her family’s happiness in the future. No matter how hard her life was abroad, she did not have the heart to return to her village as being apart from her family was the only way she could hope to improve their life.

Apparently, besides what the villagers have been undertaking, there are no other options available to them that combine the traditional agricultural system and modern sector. All these they do in order to ensure the sustainability of their sources of income, which makes it possible for them to meet all their daily expenses. Jobs in the modern sector, even though they are hard to come by, offer new hope for most of the villagers.

NOTES

1 In 1997 the Agricultural Credit Policy Council (ACPC) launched the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act through Republic Act No. 8435. The policy provided for the phasing out of Directed Credit Programs (DCPs) and the setting up of the Agro-Industry Modernization Credit and Financing Program (AMCFP) as the umbrella credit framework of the ACPC and other credit-related agencies.

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Who Should Safeguard Illegal Organ Selling in the Philippines?  
~ The Informed Consent of Medical Professionals to Kidney Selling and the Brokerage Systems ~

Hiroko Aihara

Introduction

Organ transplantation is expanding year-by-year and day-by-day in the world. The transplant operations are improving because of the technical trials and studies carried out by many surgeons and researchers. Now, many patients’ lives can be saved with organ transplant operations, which are effective and carried out by many hospitals in the world. But these improvements in transplantation techniques and their effectiveness have so increased the demand for organs among end-stage patients that they have created a very serious problem: the “lack of organs” for transplantation. The situation of organ donation and transplantation has is getting complicated. Globalization has contributed to the phenomenon.

Around 1980 to 1990, in some medically advanced and developed countries like Japan and the U.S., many doctors and patients became aware of the significant outcomes of organ transplantations. But in these countries, particularly in Japan, the lack of organs was a very serious problem. The number of organs provided could never meet demand. Therefore, some affluent patients went to foreign countries to have their organ transplantation operations done. In developing countries, especially those in Asia, such as China, the Philippines and India, there were people willing to sell their organs for economic reasons.

In Japan, the organ transplantation law was enacted in 1997, prior to which there was a transplantation law for kidneys and corneas only, allowing their transplantation exclusively. The transplantation of other organs such as the heart, lungs, liver, and intestines was not allowed back then.

Through the years, as the “lack of organs” remained a serious problem in Japan, many of its patients went abroad to the U.S., Australia, Germany, or the Philippines for the procedure to be done. Then, in July 2009, the Japan Organ Transplantation Law was revised, making it possible, with the parents’ consent, for their infants and children to be organ donors, the same as adults.

In the Philippines, from the 1980s up till now, many newspapers and other forms of media filed reports on organ selling and buying, and its expanded market due to globalization. Recently, the media also reported about the economic situation, legal aspects, and political conflicts regarding organ donation and/or selling, and their transplantation.

This study shows some of the true aspects of organ buying and selling in the Philippines.

Methodology

1. Review literature on the topic found in the archives, the Internet, etc. Read books and other resources containing information on the matter.

2. Interview key persons from medical associations and organ transplant centers. Interview government officers, Catholic bishops, researchers, and the staff of NGOs.

3. Interview organ donors, sellers, and brokers using questionnaires. Describe their life history based on the interviews.

Findings of the study

1. Historical situation and legal background in the Philippines

In 1981, the National Kidney Foundation of the Philippines was established. It promoted and facilitated kidney transplantation in the Philippines. Not too long after, the first kidney transplantation was done. It was a not a family-related kidney transplantation (1983), with the first alleged commercial donor coming from the Bataan Shipyard and Engineering Company (BASECO 1985). As time passed, kidney transplantation in the hospital
improved, but the transplantation of other organs, such as the lungs, the liver, and the heart did not.

In 1991, the government enacted Republic Act 7170 or the Organ Donation Act, which authorized the legacy or donation of all or part of a person's human organs and tissues. This donor program allowed the organs of the deceased (cadaver) to be donated for transplantation, legally. It also promoted and legalized organ donation and transplantation in the country. In 1995, the law was amended to cover cornea donations.

By the 1990s, many members of media reported on organ buying/selling in the Philippines. By 1994, the 1,000th kidney transplant operation was performed in the country.

In 2000, the United Nations set a protocol to suppress and punish organ trafficking, mainly to protect the human rights of women and children. In 2007, the situation of organ selling and buying in Asia had become so serious that the Philippine Government and the Department of Health (DOH) banned organ transplantations with foreign recipients.

In 2008, an international association, The Transplantation Society (TTS), announced the Istanbul Declaration, which demanded that each country provide for the transplantation of kidneys and other organs in their respective countries. Still, in the Philippines, there was a case involving an Israeli girl, who had a kidney transplantation with the approval of the DOH. The reason the DOH permitted the transplant operation was that the girl had traveled to the Philippines some time before the ban on foreign organ recipients was in effect.

In 2009, the DOH in the Philippines realized that the Human Trafficking Law was not being implemented as intended in the country, prompting the Department to enact a new law: the Organ Trafficking Law. The Organ Trafficking Law provided that only organs from a deceased donor may be transplanted (refer to the section “Interview with opinion leaders in the Philippines”).

2. The Medical Situation of Organ Transplantation and Donation in the Philippines

Compared with Japan, the medical situation and resources in the Philippines, especially its hospitals, human resources, the number of hospital beds, doctors, and transplant coordinators were insufficient. Such conditions were responsible for the higher mortality rate in the country.

2008/2009 API Fellows

The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows
Quezon Province, and Metro Manila for this qualitative research. I used 40-item questionnaires for the purpose. The said questionnaires were but part of the preliminary study, which will be supplemented by the qualitative interviews of donors and brokers in other areas of the Philippines, now ongoing.

Interview Areas:

[BASECO, Metro Manila]
BASECO is an island of garbage and waste that measures approximately 52 hectares. The residential circumstances are so tough due to a lack of basic government services. Many NGOs are helping the people in BASECO change their circumstances, that count among them flooding, poor sanitation, and poor health conditions.

In 2001, it had a population of about 45,017. Majority of the BASECO residents were scavengers (garbage collectors), construction movers, tricycle drivers, and owners of sari-sari stores (local convenience and variety stores found in the Philippines), but there were also those who landed jobs as casuals or for short durations. The daily wage ran between Php300 and Php400 (US$6 and US$8).

[Lopez City, Quezon Province]
Lopez City in Quezon Province, which was located east of Metro Manila had a population of 86,660 in 2007. The major sources of livelihood in the province were coconuts and fishing. Most residents worked as fishermen, farmers, or tricycle drivers. Their average daily wage was about Php200 to Php400 (US$4 to US$8). The spoken languages of the people were Tagalog, English, and/or Bicol.

[Siargao Island, Surigao del Norte]
The tropical and coral reef island was located 800 kilometers southeast of Manila. In it was the world-famous surfing site called “Cloud 9”, where the Siargao Cup, the annual international competition, was held. It had a population of 150,000 whose language was English, even as other dialects were spoken in the place, among them, Surigaonan, Bisaya, Cebuano, and Boholano. The major industries in the province were fishing and coconut farming. Other sources of income were sari-sari stores and the driving of tricycles for customers for a fee. Around 1992, many foreign surfers started going to the island, prompting foreign companies and investors of developed countries to mount tourist businesses in the province, such as cottages and lodges for rent.

Answers to the Survey Questions:

Q. How did you hear about organ selling?

Ninety organ sellers (78.3 percent of the respondents) learned about it from conversations with their neighbors, acquaintances, friends, and other family members.

Q. Did you as an organ seller receive informed consent?

A total of 91 sellers (79.1 percent) said, “Yes, I issued an informed consent”. However, some interviewees did not understand the concept of “informed consent”, so I explained that it meant “medical explanation”, “medical orientation”, or “educational transplant explanation” which doctors and/or some medical professionals provided.

Q. Who gave you the informed consent?

Seventy organ sellers (60.9 percent) received informed consents and medical explanations from doctors, 16 sellers (13.9 percent) got it from nurses, and 23 sellers (20 percent) had no informed consents. As an informed consent was a very important phase for organ sellers, the doctors and nurses needed to communicate more with the organ sellers.

Q. Do you remember your doctor’s name?

To confirm the quality of the answers, I asked them for their doctor’s name. Ninety-eight organ sellers (85.2 percent) gave their doctor’s exact names. When I checked the doctors’ names against various sources such as the transplant doctors’ list, the Office of the Department of Social Welfare, and the Philippine Medical Association, I found most of them. However, I could not interview each doctor to confirm whether the organ procurement operation was conducted or not.

Q. Did you receive educational and/or medical materials?

There were 106 donors (92.2 percent) who did not receive any medical materials, such as brochures, documents, books, videos, infomercials, or educational materials.
Q. Did you give your consent or sign an agreement?

A total of 83 donors (what percent? 81 percent?) gave their consent or signed some documents, but most of the interviewees did not understand the contents of the papers that they signed.

Q. Did you receive a copy of the signed consent form?

A total of 106 interviewees (92.2 percent) did not receive a copy of the document they signed. Some donors said that the names on their medical records were fictitious so that even if the donors wanted a copy of their medical records, the document would have been useless since the patients’ names were not the donors’ own.

Q. Do you have any information about your kidney recipient?

There were 83 donors (81 percent) who received information about their recipients, such as the recipient’s name, age, nationality, gender, address and/or telephone number.

Q. Did you contact your transplant recipient?

A total of 58 donors (50.4 percent) did not meet their recipients nor their recipients’ family members directly. There were 20 donors (24 percent) who received information about their recipients from their doctor, nurse, or broker. It could be a problem if the doctor or nurse revealed the recipient’s personal information to the organ seller, however. Among the sellers in this case study, an organ seller actually visited the organ recipient to ask for more money.

Q. Kidney prices: The kidney sellers received the following amounts for their kidneys:

In the Lopez area, the average price was Php110,000 (about US$2,200), with the most expensive costing Php140,000 (about US$2,800) and the cheapest, Php90,000 (US$1,800).

In the Baseco area, the average price was Php117,000 (about US$2,340). The most expensive was Php260,000 (US$5,200) and the cheapest was Php50,000 (US$1,000).

Case Study

Case Study 1: “Patient Autonomy” - Eduardo (pseudonym), tricycle driver, age 23

At first, the seller, Eduardo, was very anxious. In the hospital, Dr. S. and a priest were in the room and gave him a form. He signed the paper, which had the price of his kidney written on it. The price on the paper was Php180,000 (about US$3,600). He first received Php120,000 (US$2,400). After some time, he received an additional Php65,000 (US$1,300).

Case Study 2: “Respect for Privacy” - Alberto (pseudonym), habal-habal (a motorcycle taxi modified to seat more than two persons) driver, age 29

In the operating room (OR), while waiting for the operation, Alberto met his male recipient, who appeared to be from the Middle East. After the donation, a man came into his room. Although no one introduced the recipient to Alberto, the man took a video of him and afterwards, just waved his hand to signal goodbye. Alberto suspected that the man was an American and may have been a member of the media.

Case Study 3: “Value for the Donation” - Joseph (pseudonym), farmer, age 25

Joseph donated a kidney for the purpose of “helping others”. He received Php110,000 (US$2,200). In the contract, the total payment indicated was Php180,000, but the agent got Php70,000. After some time, Joseph needed money, so he wanted to meet his recipient to ask for more money. After the agent gave him the address of the Filipino recipient, Joseph approached him to ask for more money. A year later, Joseph did get money from his recipient: Php300.
Case Study 4: “Value for Donation” - Jose (pseudonym), tricycle driver, age 23
After Jose donated his kidney, his doctor told him to visit the recipient’s room. His recipient was a 27-year-old, Filipino-Japanese woman. She asked Jose, “Are you okay?” and he answered, “Yes, I’m okay”. He got her name. The woman promised to give him money to buy a tricycle. He had agreed to sell his kidney for Php180,000 (US$3,600), but he received only Php120,000 (US$2,400).

Case Study 5: “Donor-Recipient Relationship, Privacy of Donor Information” - Raul (pseudonym), tricycle driver, age 30
Raul donated his organ because of family problems. After the donation, his recipient wanted to keep in contact with him, but the broker did not want Raul to maintain a relationship with the recipient. The broker took photos of Raul receiving the money. Raul felt guilty doing so because the picture seemed to portray him as a person who happily sold his kidney for money.

Case Study 6: “Communication Problem” - Gilbert (pseudonym), tricycle driver, age 25
After the donation, Gilbert’s kidney recipient came to his room. The recipient was an Arab woman, who said something; but he could not understand what it was. She started crying and hugged him. Gilbert also cried when he realized that the recipient was trying to express her gratitude for the kidney and for the second lease on life that he had given her.

Case Study 7: “Medically Suitable” - Romaldez (pseudonym), unemployed, age 24
In June 2005, when Romaldez was 19 years old, he donated his kidney to a baby boy who was just two years old. The boy’s relative had been looking for a donor in the BASECO area. Before the operation, the recipient’s family and he discussed the price. Romaldez said, “It’s up to you” (Bahala na kayo). After the donation, he received Php150,000 (US$3,000).

An analysis of the illegal organ buying/selling market and the brokerage systems
I chose to conduct narrative interviews and issue questionnaires in order to understand the organ seller and the broker’s real-life situations. I analyzed the organ selling systems with the help of Mr. Francis Aguilar, a translator and researcher. During the interviews with the donors and brokers for the case studies, I analyzed the kidney brokerage system, the money flow from the recipient to the organ seller, and the consultations that took place among the recipient, the broker, and the doctor.

[Brokerage System]
Each of the poverty-stricken areas in the Philippines was targeted in the search for organ providers. The poor people were seen as prospective organ sellers. There were brokers in each of the different levels of the areas, like the community, the barangay (the Filipino term for a village, district, the smallest administrative division), the city and the province. The boundaries were determined by the respective area where the broker worked.

At the barangay level, especially in the poverty-stricken areas like BASECO and Lopez, there are many people who want to sell their kidneys. These potential donors will likely have contact with “Broker 3a”, a non-medical professional who gives a quick physical check-up of the prospective donor: the broker checks the potential donor’s eyes and skin color; he also checks for any visible scars, the donor’s height and weight. He likewise checks for drug and/or alcohol abuse, and so on. That a non-medical professional such as “Broker 3a” conducts the initial medical check-up seems questionable and may lead to serious problems later.

The broker’s work is categorized as “scouting” and “testimony”, and brokers at this level are referred to as Broker 3a, Broker 3b, or Broker 3c. The scouting broker strolls around the barangay in search of potential donors. He usually finds potential sellers in such places as the barangay hall, in meeting areas, in front of sari-sari stores, or in the basketball court. On the other hand, the most serious “problem” in the kidney selling market is the testimonial broker, who will already have sold a kidney and has now turned into a broker, giving testimonials about his organ-selling experience. After selling a kidney, a testimonial broker finds himself still poor, with no business or means of making a living. So he goes back to the black market for kidneys, selling other people’s kidneys as a broker rather than his own. This broker will talk about the price of the kidney, and the pain before and after the kidney operation in the hospital.

As soon as Broker 3A finds a potential donor who passes the first step, the other brokers take over. The potential donor goes to Broker 2a, at the provincial or regional level. Some brokers at this level bring the potential donor to some clinic to have some medical
check-ups, for example, blood tests. The broker at this level pays for the medical check-ups of the potential donor. After passing the exam, the potential seller becomes a donor candidate. The broker at this level is known as the “Screener”.

In this level there is another kind of broker called the “Transporter”. The transporter will stand by for 24 hours, and if there is a surgical operation in the hospital, he/she will bring the donor candidate to the hospital. During the few months’ waiting period, another broker “Broker 1a”, named the “Contractor”, will make a contract with the donor candidate. The very short, informed consent form will have been prepared by the transplant surgeon or some hospital staff.

The contractor has direct contact with the key personnel, for example, a transplant surgeon or some hospital staff in the hospital. Some contractors may introduce the donor candidate to a recipient, the recipient’s family or the recipient’s side broker. Some donor candidates will also meet them before the operation to negotiate the price of the kidney.

**Chart 1: There are various kinds of the brokers in each area.**

**Case Study**

Who become organ sellers? The answer is the “very ordinary people”. They become organ sellers after being recruited by brokers/agents or doctors; or after they themselves volunteer due to the lack of accurate or sufficient information and/or for financial reasons.

**Chart 2: The steps on how potential sellers become sellers through contacts with brokers across the different levels.**
The money flow from the recipients, brokers, and doctors is not complicated. A patient pays money to the hospital, the doctors, or the Kidney Foundation for the kidney transplant operation. The Kidney Foundation is an NGO in the National Kidney Transplant Institute, the biggest transplant center in the Philippines.

After the money is received, the doctor gives a portion of the money to the broker “Contractor” called “Broker 1”. The “Contractor” Broker then gives part of the money to “Broker 2”, who works at the provincial level. Broker 2 then pays Broker 3, who’s working at the barangay level. During the interview, I tried to analyze how much money each broker received. Some brokers, however, concealed information due to the fact that kidney selling and buying are illegal.

A Japanese broker, Mr. K., has been working in the Philippines for about 18 years with Japanese patients. He said that from 1986 to around 2004, Japanese patients paid about US$150,000 to US$200,000 (about JPY15 million to JPY20 million). But in 2007, the price jumped to about US$300,000 (about JPY30 million) or by about 50 to 100 percent.

In June 2008, the Philippine government prohibited kidney transplantation for foreign patients. Currently, organ transplantations for foreign recipients are banned. The Japanese broker, Mr. K., has not given up working as a broker, because some Japanese patients are still in need of kidney transplant operations and contact him.

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**Chart 3: Monetary Flow Chart; Case Study**

[Consultation among the recipient patient, broker and doctor]

Two brokers working in the Lopez area explained the consultation process. A patient comes from a foreign country, e.g., Japan, to consult with the doctor in a hospital in the Philippines. The doctor asks the patient if there is a donor available. In the Philippines, brain-dead donors are very rare. Most of the kidney transplantation cases are from living donations and transplantations. If the patient has no living donor, such as his/her parents, brother, sister, husband, or wife, the doctor advises that he/she find a kidney donor by himself. But if a donor is not found, the doctor calls and asks the kidney broker to find a donor. The person who calls the kidney broker is usually the secretary or wife of the doctor.

The organ broker gets information about the patient, such as blood type, height and weight, and then contacts another broker to find a donor. During consultations for kidney transplantation, the doctor gives advice about the medical procedure and also about finding a kidney donor. The doctor himself may also work as a broker.

3. Organ Trade and Doctors

Some transplant doctors conduct illegal organ trades. First, a patient consults a doctor about his/her disease. The doctor advises him/her about the need for organ transplantation and gives information about living organ transplantation. In the Philippines, there are very few organ donations from cadaver donors, so the patients should find their organ donor by themselves. There was once a patient who directly contacted organ brokers/agents. In another case, a doctor or doctor’s secretary contacted the broker/agent, who recruits organ sellers in the poverty-stricken areas. Most organ
brokers/agents are former organ sellers. They contact the patients and the doctors. They share some private information, after which some brokers give the patients’ information to the organ sellers.

Chart 4: Consultation between the patient, the broker, and the doctor; Case Study

4. The price of kidney selling and buying

How much money will a foreign patient pay for a kidney? The Japanese broker, Mr. K., said that from the 1980s to the 1990s, the average price a Japanese patient paid was between JPY30 million and JPY40 million (US$150,000 and US$200,000). Presently the price has doubled to about Php60 million (US$300,000).

A Catholic priest, Father Ignacio, explained that a foreign patient usually paid the doctor Php1.5 to Php8.0 million (US$30,000 to US$160,000) for the operation, which was why these doctors were willing to do the operation. Moreover, the doctors keep secret their financial transactions.

The transplant doctor receives money from the patients, while he sells or buys the organs. The broker would offer Php50,000 to Php100,000 (US$1,000 to US$2,000) to the organ seller. Sometimes, he or she offered Php75,000 (US$1,500). In such a case, how much money went to the organ sellers? This depended on the area, the case, and the situation. Refer to the “Case Study” section of this paper for details. It must be pointed out that The National Kidney Transplant Institute (NKTI) itself had a fixed rate for kidney transplant operations.

Throughout this research, data collection and information gathering about child donors, kidnappings, and homicide cases launched to take organs from children under 18 years old were carried out; however, cases such as these could not be found.

I met a Japanese NGO SALT staff based in the Payatas area who told me that after a heavy storm, a child’s body without internal organs was found. But this information is mere hearsay; there was no substantiated evidence proving its veracity.

5. Gender situation

A total of 115 organ sellers were interviewed. Of the total, only one was female. The reason why most donors are male may be socio-economic. Philippine society is family-oriented. The men assume the roles of father and husband, and are expected to be the families’ breadwinners. Also, although it was not possible to get data and evidence from the transplant hospital, it has been said that the difference in kidney size affected which organs were bought and sold. Generally speaking, males have bigger kidneys than females; and as most patients are male, the patients and the doctors prefer to get the bigger-sized kidneys.

Interviews with opinion leaders in the Philippines

1. Undersecretary Alexander A. Padilla, Department of Health (DOH), Philippines

During the interview with Undersecretary Padilla, I focused on how he, who was a lawyer, understood the situation of organ buying/selling and why it was continuing. He stated, “It’s serious concerns about organ selling/buying issues in the Philippines”. The Organ Trafficking Law was almost “surely” related to
the Human Trafficking Law. However, the former law wasn’t not functioning nor being implemented. Now the Philippine Board of Organ Transplantation is still having on track of organ donors and (foreign) transplant patients.

In 2008, eight Israeli recipients came to the Philippines to get kidney transplants, after some Filipinos sold their kidneys to them. Some NGOs were opposed to this because the organ buying/selling process infringed on the sellers’ human rights and health conditions. When the Undersecretary was asked about this incident, he responded that the Philippine government and the DOH allowed kidney transplant operations for the Israeli recipients because the Filipino people donated their organs to them out of compassion. After the operation, the matter became a political issue because the Saudi Embassy demanded, “Why did you allow the transplantation for the Israeli people, but not for the Arabs from Saudi Arabia?”. The embassy’s questioning showed that if the Philippines were willing to accept some foreign patients, some countries and places that faced a lack of organs would become more demanding of the Philippine government.

Questions about some doctors’ buying or selling organs were raised. The Undersecretary understood the situation and responded, “The surgery for kidney transplants costs Php3 million (US$60,000 USD), but since we only have 25 or 26 transplant surgeons in this country, and they are all guilty of not fulfilling the ethical aspects of their profession. But we have no law at this time, and so we only have 12 or 14 hospitals equipped for kidney transplantation”. The number of transplant surgeons, facilities, and some medical resources was limited and concentrated in certain areas, which explains why most organ selling brokers, doctors, and the organ seller will conduct or support organ selling/buying.

2. Msgr. Pedro C. Quitorio III, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)

Msgr. Quitorio was interviewed regarding the situation of organ selling and buying in the Philippines and about how the CBCP perceived the situation. Msgr. Quitorio stated: “We admit that organ donation and medical tourism involve sacrifice to save lives; but we object to organ selling”. He said that poverty was the reason behind organ selling. “In the Philippines, organ selling is the exploitation of people who suffer from poverty. In the United States, they also allow organ donations from non-related people. The difference between the Philippines and the U.S. in terms of non-related, living donations stems from the exploitation of poor people in the Philippines vis-à-vis the situation in the US. In the Philippines, agents and rich people exploit the poor”.

He showed the key points of the legislative system and maintained that the role of the government in the Philippines should be revised and made stronger. Msgr. Quitorio said, “It’s a very simple way of getting rid of organ selling criminals. The police and government should work together. Our government is so bad”.

3. Hon. Esperanza I. Cabral, M.D., Secretary, Department of Social Welfare and Development

The Secretary was asked if some doctors conducted organ buying/selling. She answered, “Yes, it’s a very serious problem. Some doctors sell kidneys in the Philippines”. Then, she also pointed out the importance of revising the law. She said, “We are now revising Sec. 4 of Republic Act “No. 9208”. RA 9208 is the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003, was confirmed by the Secretary of Department of Social Welfare and Development, Department of Justice, Department of Health in April 2009”.

The penalties were stricter for those who trafficking children, medical professionals, hospitals, syndicates, and organizations that exploited, abused, or/and kidnapped children for organ selling.

4. Kuya Roger, Housing Officer in BASECO

Kuya Roger was interviewed about organ selling in BASECO. He revealed that there were more than 500 kidney sellers in the area. The number of kidney sellers could not be more accurately determined because most of the sellers were afraid that the authorities would find out that they had sold their kidneys. As all of the transactions were made in the black market, the sellers had to keep their organ selling a secret. Although no public records could be found in BASECO, it was common knowledge in the area that most of the people in the neighborhood were kidney sellers. That one of the major contributors to the increasing population of sellers came from BASECO was found out through information given by the sellers’ neighbors.

The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows
5. Father Elmer Ignacio, Ethical Committee Member of the CBCP, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish

Fr. Ignacio was interviewed about how he viewed “organ donation”, “organ selling”, and “organ trafficking”. He was asked about his philosophical viewpoints on organ selling and trafficking.

He said, “the organ donation is good and nothing wrong. Organ donation is good, an act of charity, act of love, and more than altruism without expecting anything in return. Organ selling is a kind of business and transaction; there is communication or deal between two people”.

I showed him the case study, a prisoner would donate his kidney and his family would receive money from the recipient.

He showed his opinion, “it depends, and there is a thin line between that. If recipients show their gratitude in own their parts, they would give something to their donors”.

He also explains the concept of organ trafficking. “Agents, brokers convinced donors’ organ selling. It involves convincing. It is kind of crime”.

I asked the possibilities to set up the ethical and medical education program and campaign for poor people to understand how to be safe by CBCP. He answered, “The CBCP has no money. The DOH focuses their program on basic reproductive health. There are NGO and other group willing to finance the basic reproductive health. The DOH have least concern on organ selling and trafficking”.

6. Dr. Anna York Bondoc, M.D., Congresswoman

Congresswoman Bondoc had studied experiences of studying organ transplant surgery in the U.S.A. She was interviewed about the new House Bill that she was proposing on cadaver organ donation in the Philippines. “In the Philippines, there are only a few cadaver organ donors. Organ buyers are rampant because cadaver organ donations are not available for the kidneys to be harvested (recovered) and transplanted into recipients”.

“The living donors are usually being exploited, so exploiting the poor people is rampant and that is terrible”.

But she pointed out that as the budget of the Philippine government was insufficient, there could be no organ donor card program nor authorities to manage the deceased kidney donors. Only two hospitals had the deceased kidney donation system, and the number of transplants operations was limited. The congresswoman had with her the survey results on the attitude of organ donation systems and these revealed that 58 percent of the respondents, when asked to become organ donors, responded positively to the question. They were interested in becoming organ donors.

Conclusion

The human rights and choices, health, lives, and human rights of organ sellers were initially exploited through the insufficiency of information provided. After selling their organs, the sellers remained in a pitiful state with regard to the information in their possession, their health, and economic situation.

The organ-selling price was so low compared to the price paid for by the organ buying patients. Under revisions in the law effected in 2009 and 2010, the organ sellers were considered criminals, although, in reality, they were the poor, exploited victims of affluent organ buyers and their own society. In Philippine society, the social security system cannot support livelihood adequately. The organ donors choose to sell their organs instead, invoking two main reasons: to help the patients and to get money in order to survive. The donors feel ashamed to their sell organs, but society helps them make that choice because they are never arrested by the police officers. In the Philippines, data and statistics are being systematized. Still, I had difficulty obtaining data about organ transplantations and donations. Information on organ transplantation was not disclosed. Had the Philippine government and hospitals disclosed such information, then its sense of fairness would be respected. People would appreciate and discuss illegal organ buying/selling transactions. Many countries would also understand the situation and be supportive of the Philippines.

The NGO staff, the staff of religious organizations, university professors, and some key persons were interviewed and answered the research aspects. Some people, including government officials and congresspersons, mentioned how some medical professionals were directly involved in the illegal
kidney trade themselves. These medical professionals set up and gave nutrition and food to the underground organ sales network. It’s unfair situation that medical professionals have strong initiatives about organ transplantation surgery in some hospitals. The medical professionals have rich information and can determine and allow on-demand transplantation in the hospitals.

Above all, the medical professionals got money from the organ selling-buying that would endanger the lives of many poor people. Poor people might become potential organ seller, have insufficient literacy and information about organ donation and transplantation, it was lack of the patient’s autonomies, and there is a huge barrier and unfair situation. The economic crisis, many poor people wanted to sell their organs to the rich people in the Philippines. International watchdog organizations needed to be set up some international/domestic programs as soon as possible to save their lives. Simultaneously, government should provide the poor people strong financial and livelihood support.

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Fertility Decline and the Transformation of Intimacy in Malaysia and Japan: A Comparative Study

Shanthi Thambiah

Introduction

Fertility in Japan dropped below the replacement level in the middle of the 1970s and declined further since the middle of the 1980s, to reach a total fertility rate of 1.42 in 1995 (M. Atoh 2001). In 2008, the total fertility rate declined further to 1.37 (Statistics Bureau 2010). It has often been argued in Japan that the declining fertility rate is closely associated with the increase in women with higher education (Osawa 1998). M. Atoh (1997) showed that the growth in higher education after the 1970s did result in increased opportunities for women to work outside the home, a phenomenon accompanied by changes in social values that contributed to the increase in the number of unmarried singles. Raymo’s (2003) findings also indicate that the higher educational attainment of women is a key factor in Japan’s declining fertility and that the trend towards later and fewer marriages is occurring across all levels of educational attainment. His findings are consistent with the argument that higher education is negatively associated with marriage, but only in those countries where gender relations make it particularly difficult for women to balance work and family (Raymo 2003).

On the other hand, the fertility transition in Malaysia began in 1966. The total fertility rate in peninsular Malaysia declined to about 2.4 per woman in 2006 from about 6.0 in 1960 (DOS 2001, 2006, cited in Tey Nai Peng 2009). The pace of the fertility transition varies significantly across the various ethnic groups. The Chinese and Indians started with higher fertility rates in the early 1960s, but underwent a more rapid decline than the Malays, so that Malay fertility has been higher than those of the other two ethnic groups since the late 1960s. For all ethnic groups, fertility decline accelerated following the launch of the National Family Planning Programme. The decline in Malay fertility was stalled in the mid-1970s, however, owing to the revival of Islamic fundamentalism; only to resume after the economic recession in 1985 (Leete and Tan 1993; Thambiah, Yong, and Wong 2006; Tey 2009, 294). Subsequently, the ethnic fertility differential has become less pronounced as the total fertility rate of the Malays declined from 4.8 in 1985 to 3.5 in 2000. The total fertility rate of the Chinese, on the other hand, fluctuated between the replacement level and 2.7, in the period 1983-2000. In contrast, the Indian total fertility rate showed a more consistent decline from 2.9 in 1993 to 2.4 in 2000. Between 2001 and 2006, the total fertility rate for the Malays fell from 3.4 to 2.8, while that of the Chinese fell from 2.2 to 1.8, and the Indians’ from 2.4 to 1.9. It is clear that the non-Malays have already achieved replacement level fertility, while Malay fertility is moving towards the replacement level and may reach it in the not too distant future (Tey 2009). Just like in Japan, the rise in the marrying age as a result of the rapid increase in educational opportunities, especially for girls, is seen as contributing to lower fertility rates, given that the women now marry later than before. Data from the 1994 MPFS show that the higher the educational level, the higher the age upon first marriage. Education has indeed changed women’s attitudes and aspirations towards marriage (Abdul Rahman 2000; Thambiah, Yong, Wong 2006) within the context of very little changes in traditional gender relations.

Looking at the scenario in both Japan and Malaysia, this study attempts to shift discourses on fertility decline from demographic reasoning to more human-centered analysis by focusing on gender equality, the transformation of intimacy, and the value of children as important factors to be considered to understand this trend. There is a need to move away from mere demographic reasoning to a more nuanced explanation of fertility decline. Three scales were used for this purpose and they are the value of children, gender role egalitarianism, and fear of intimacy. The objective of this study is to see whether there is a link between fear of intimacy, gender role egalitarianism, and the value of children; and the future fertility motivation of young university/college students. By combining these three scales, I tried to achieve the objectives of the proposed study.

Method

A survey was conducted in Japan and Malaysia using a questionnaire that was translated into Japanese and...
Malay. In constructing the questionnaire, several criteria were considered:

(1) The search for existing scales was guided by the degree to which the scales were relevant to the project and culturally appropriate for use in Japan and Malaysia;

(2) The research drew upon several valid and reliable scales that had been used internationally to facilitate international comparisons;

(3) Potential scales were assessed to ensure that they addressed fear of intimacy, the value of children, and gender role egalitarianism to assess reasons for wanting or not wanting children.

(4) The final questionnaire was then evaluated in terms of its scope and ease of administration.

The instruments employed for this study are listed as they apply to the study’s objectives, as follows:

**Measures/ Instruments**

*A. Fear of Intimacy Scale* (Descutner and Thelen 1991)

The Fear of Intimacy Scale was used to assess a specific variable that influences intimacy in a close relationship or at the prospect of a close relationship. This scale was designed by the authors to take into account three defining features:

a. content, the communication of personal information

b. emotional valence, strong feelings about the personal information exchanged

c. vulnerability, high regard for the intimate other.

*B. The Value of Children (VOC) Scale* (Trommsdorff, Uichol and Bernhard 2005)

To measure the reasons for the decline in fertility, the Value of Children Scale was used. This scale was selected to understand why young people (university students) want or do not want to have children. It meant to draw out what they perceived to be the positive and negative values of children. Through the use of this scale, the study was not limited to the question of fertility but was able to ask important questions pertaining to childbearing. This was done so that the study would not purely be an economic or demographic explanation of the fertility decline. The VOC studies proposed that, on the individual level, three main motivations for having children (Arnold and Fawcett 1975) could be distinguished. These included the economic/utilitarian motive, the psychological/emotional motive, and, finally, the social/normative motive.

i. The Economic/Utilitarian motive—
Reproduction rests on the assumption that children represent labor and social security for parents, particularly in their old age.

ii. The Psychological/Emotional motive—
Procreation refers to the happiness, joy, and companionship that parents may experience from having a child.

iii. The Social/Normative motive—This refers to the social expectation that one should reproduce, and to the social advantages that one may enjoy from having children.

These three reasons or motivations, which are attitudinal in nature, are collectively referred to as the values of children. Employing these motives for having children offer a multidimensional explanation on fertility.

*C. The Gender Role Egalitarianism Scale*

Egalitarian attitudes toward women and gender issues were adapted by Sevelius and Stake (2003) from the Attitude toward Women Scale (Spence and Helmrich 1972). The 10-item measure includes 6 positive and 4 negative statements on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A sample positive item is “Women should assume an equal place in business and all the professions along with men”. A sample negative item is “There are some jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted”.

**Fieldwork**

Fieldwork in Japan was conducted from October to November 2008, while fieldwork in Malaysia was conducted from July to September 2009. The questionnaire was administered to students from Kyoto University, Hosei University, Waseda University, and Ochanomizu University in Japan. In Malaysia, the survey covered students from the
University of Malaya, Taylors College, Monash University, Sunway College, Inti College, and Stamford College.

**Respondents**

The survey consisted of a combined total sample of 429 participants, of which 202 participants were from the Japanese sample, and 227 from the Malaysian sample.

Within the Japanese sample, 46.5 percent of the respondents were male (n=94) whereas 53.5 percent were female (n=108). In the Malaysian sample, 44.9 percent were male participants (n=102) and 55.1 percent were female (n=125).

The Japanese sample consisted of 100 percent Japanese participants (n=202). The majority of the Malaysian sample, on the other hand, was made up of 48 percent Malay participants (n=109), 33.9 percent Chinese (n=77), and 17.2 percent Indian (n=39). Another 0.9 percent of the participants were reported to be of other ethnicities (n=2).

**Results**

**Fear of Intimacy**

There were no significant differences between the Japanese and Malaysian samples in their fear of intimacy (FOI) scores. As for gender, no significant main effects were observed, implying that both the male and the female participants did not differ significantly in their responses to the FOI questions.

The total scores of each participant were analyzed using an independent, two-way ANOVA at the 5 percent significance level. The sample of participants (Japanese vs. Malaysian) and their gender were treated as subject variables.

The ANOVA table above shows no significant main effects for the sample of participants (p=0.322), implying that there were no significant differences between the Japanese and the Malaysian samples in their FOI scores. As for gender, no significant main effects were observed (p=0.398), implying that the male and the female participants did not differ significantly in their responses to the FOI.

**Gender Role Egalitarianism**

Japanese participants reported significantly higher scores on gender role egalitarianism compared to the Malaysian sample. Also, the scores of the female participants were significantly higher than those of the male participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Female</td>
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<td>5.09</td>
<td>108</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4.70</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>429</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above displays the mean scores for the Gender Role Egalitarianism Scale (GRE), shown according to sample location and gender. Scores range from 10 to 50.

 Significant differences were observed for the main effects of the sample of participants, as follows: F (1,425) = 80.599, p=0.001 and gender F (1,425) = 55.758, p=0.001. This implies that Japanese participants reported significantly higher scores on the GRE compared to the Malaysians. Also, the scores of the female participants were significantly higher than those of their male counterparts.

**Thinking about a Future Partnership**

Malaysian participants reported significantly higher scores corresponding to feelings of hope compared to
the Japanese participants, when thinking about future partnerships or marriage. What is interesting to note here is that there were no gender differences in terms of their feelings of hope, when the participants thought about marriage and a future partnership.

The table above displays the mean responses of participants to the question on feelings evoked when thinking of a future partnership or marriage. One (1) corresponds to feelings of fear and 5 to feelings of hope. Significant differences were observed for the main effects of samples of participants at $F(1,425) = 8.380$ and $p=0.004$. This implies that the Malaysian participants registered significantly higher scores in terms of feelings of hope compared to the Japanese participants.

**Wanting to Have Children Some Day**

Majority of the participants (85.3 percent) in the study indicated that they would want, or probably want to have children some day, whereas 5.6 percent indicated that they did not want, or probably would not want to have children. Another 9.1 percent indicated that they did not know if they wanted children. When a comparison between genders was done, more women than men indicated that they would want to have children at 89.3 percent and 80.6 percent, respectively. Also, more males indicated that they did not want to have children (6.6 percent compared to 4.7 percent for females) or did not know if they would want to (12.8 percent compared to 6.0 percent for females). In comparing the samples of participants, Malaysians were more likely to desire children (87.2 percent) compared to their Japanese counterparts (83.2 percent), whereas a higher percentage of Japanese indicated not wanting children (7.4 percent) or not knowing if they would want to (9.4 percent), compared to the Malaysian sample (4.0 percent and 8.8 percent, respectively).

A comparison between ethnicities showed that 96.3 percent of the Malays said 'Yes', they wanted to have children, followed by 84.6 percent of the Indians, and 75.3 percent of the Chinese. On the other hand, 7.8 percent of the Chinese did not want to have children, followed by 2.6 percent of the Indians, and 1.5 percent of the Malays. Some 16.9 percent of the Chinese, 12.9 percent of the Indians, and 1.5 percent of the Malays indicated that they did not know if they wanted to have children.

**Number of Children Desired**

The average number of children desired was significantly higher among the Malaysian participants (males, 3.4 and females, 3.1) compared to their Japanese counterparts (males, 2.14 and females, 2.19). No significant differences were found in terms of gender ($p=0.256$).

The table above displays the mean responses of participants with regard to the number of children that they would want. Only participants who indicated that they wanted or probably would want children were included in this analysis. Further, of those 366 participants, 7 participants did not indicate a response to this question.

The analysis indicates a significant difference between the sample of participants, $F(1,355) = 78.507$ and $p = 0.001$, implying that the average number of children desired was significantly higher among the Malaysian participants than among their Japanese counterparts.

**Reasons for Wanting to Have Children**

This question was examined through factor analysis to determine the participants’ underlying reasons for wanting to have children.
From the analysis, the determinant of the correlation matrix was found to be 0.001. This indicates that there was no multi-co-linearity and the variables were not highly correlated. Furthermore, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling was reported to be 0.897, which indicates that the sample was adequate to yield distinct and reliable factors for factor analysis. Bartlett’s test of sphericity was found to be significant with chi square (153) = 3786.867 and p = 0.001. This indicates that the correlation matrix was not an identity matrix, so that running a factor analysis was appropriate.

The results on the reasons for wanting to have children show a difference between the Japanese and Malaysian samples. The Malaysian participants reported higher average scores for Factor 1 (Traditional VOC) and Factor 2 (Familial VOC), compared to their Japanese counterparts. Meanwhile, the Japanese students reported higher average scores for Factor 3 (Emotional VOC) compared to Malaysians. The male and the female participants were significantly different in their responses, with the females reporting higher mean scores for Factors 1, 2, and 3 compared to the male participants. When the responses of all participants were compared, the average scores for each factor were significantly different, with participants scoring highest in Factor 3 (Emotional VOC) followed by Factor 2 (Familial VOC), and Factor 1 (Traditional VOC). The Japanese rated highest in Factor 3, followed by Factor 2, and then Factor 1, whereas the Malaysians scored slightly higher in Factor 2, followed by Factor 3, and, finally, by Factor 1.

Using factor analysis, the mean scores of the participants for Factors 1, 2, and 3 were determined. These are shown according to sample and gender in the table below. Scores range from 1 to 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1.9606</td>
<td>.66482</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.9693</td>
<td>.59387</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3.1451</td>
<td>.90451</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3.1768</td>
<td>.84196</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.1626</td>
<td>.86881</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.5770</td>
<td>.99322</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.6206</td>
<td>.93103</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.6007</td>
<td>.95906</td>
<td>429</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Levene’s test of equality of variances was not assumed for Factor 1 (p = 0.001) and Factor 2 (p = 0.014), implying that the sample was not homogeneous for these factors. It was, however, assumed for Factor 3 (p = 0.230), implying a homogeneous sample.

Mauchly’s assumption of sphericity was not assumed for Factors (p = 0.001).

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>15480.559</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15480.559</td>
<td>12441.062</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>73.776</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>73.776</td>
<td>59.290</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>5.219</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.219</td>
<td>4.194</td>
<td>.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant *</td>
<td>1.011</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.011</td>
<td>.812</td>
<td>.368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>528.832</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>1.244</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Significant differences were observed for the main effect of sample of participants as follows: F (1,425) = 80.599 and p=0.001. This implies that the Japanese and the Malaysian participants were significantly different in their average scores on the questionnaire. The Malaysian participants reported higher average scores for Factor 1 and Factor 2, compared to their Japanese counterparts. Japanese students, on the other hand, reported higher average scores for Factor 3, compared to the Malaysians.

Significant differences were also observed for the main effect of sample of participants by gender as follows: F (1,425) = 55.758 and p=0.001. This implies that the male and the female participants were significantly different in their responses, with the females reporting higher mean scores for Factor 1, Factor 2 and Factor 3, compared to the male participants.

Significant differences were observed for the main effect of factors as follows: F (2,425) = 730.611 and p = 0.001. A post hoc analysis revealed that these comparisons were significant for both the comparisons of Factor 1 and Factor 2 (p=0.001), and of Factor 2 and Factor 3 (p = 0.001). This implies that when comparing the responses of all participants, the average scores for each factor were significantly different, with participants scoring highest for Factor 3, followed by Factor 2, and then by Factor 1.

For the interaction effects of the factors and the samples of participants, significant differences were reported, F (2,425) = 124.527 and p = 0.001. A post hoc analysis revealed that these comparisons were significant for both the comparisons of Factor 1 and Factor 2 (p=0.001), and of Factor 2 and Factor 3 (p = 0.001). This implies that significant differences were observed between the Japanese and Malaysian samples when compared across factors. The Japanese rated higher for Factor 3, followed by Factor 2 and Factor 1.

The Malaysians scored slightly higher for Factor 2, followed by Factor 3, and, finally, by Factor 1.

**Reasons for Not Wanting to Have Children**

From the analysis, the determinant of the correlation matrix was found to be 0.003. This indicates that there was no multi-co-linearity and the variables were not highly correlated. Furthermore, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling was reported as 0.893, which indicated that the sample was adequate to yield distinct and reliable factors in factor analysis. Bartlett’s test of sphericity was found to be significant, with chi square (78) = 2463.551 and p = 0.001. This indicated that the correlation matrix was not an identity matrix, so that running a factor analysis was appropriate. After factor extraction with the sum of squares loadings, there were two factors left based on the Kaiser rule. Therefore, two factors should remain in the analysis.

The Japanese participants reported higher average scores for Factor 1 (traditional VOC) compared to their Malaysian counterparts, whereas the Malaysian students reported higher average scores for Factor 2 (Familial VOC) than the Japanese, for not wanting to have children. As for gender, no significant main effects were observed (p = 0.544), implying that the male and the female participants did not differ significantly in their responses. Traditional factors as reasons for not wanting to have children were also found amongst the male and the female respondents, and were higher amongst the Japanese than the Malaysians.

From the factor analysis, the mean scores of participants for Factor 1, Factor 2 were determined. These are shown according to sample and gender in the table below. Scores range from 1 to 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Dev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.9532</td>
<td>.98372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3.1120</td>
<td>.92175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3.0381</td>
<td>.95202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.3853</td>
<td>.87287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.5122</td>
<td>.96971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.4552</td>
<td>.92760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2.6577</td>
<td>.96802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2.7903</td>
<td>.99212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.7297</td>
<td>.98227</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The mean scores of Factor 1 and Factor 2 for each participant were analyzed using a mixed factorial ANOVA at the 5 percent significance level. The sample of participants and gender were treated as subject variables, and factors from the analysis were treated as repeated measure variables.

Levene’s test of equality of variances was assumed for Factor 1 (p = 0.702), implying a homogeneous sample; but it was not assumed for Factor 2 (p = 0.001), implying that the sample was not homogeneous.

Mauchly’s assumption of sphericity was not found to be conclusive (p = no value).

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2589.234</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2589.234</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant</td>
<td>4.558</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.558</td>
<td>7.331</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>0.368</td>
<td>.544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant * Gender</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>0.280</td>
<td>.597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>264.234</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>0.622</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant differences were observed for the main effect of sample of participants, F (1,425) = 7.331 and p=0.007. This implies that the Japanese and the Malaysian participants were significantly different in their average scores on the questionnaire. The Japanese participants reported higher average scores for Factor 1 compared to their Malaysian counterparts, whereas the Malaysian students reported higher average scores for Factor 2 compared to the Japanese.

For gender, no significant main effects were observed (p=0.544), implying that the male and the female participants did not differ significantly in their responses.

The interaction effects between the samples of participants and gender were also found to be not significant (p=0.597), implying that the Japanese males and females did not significantly differ in their average scores for the factors, when compared with their Malaysian counterparts.

Significant differences were observed for the main effect of factors, F (1,425) = 248.430 and p = 0.001. This implies that when the responses of all participants were compared, the average scores for each factor were significantly different, with the participants scoring higher for Factor 1 than for Factor 2.

For the interaction effects of the factors and the samples of participants, significant differences were reported, F (1,425) = 120.241, p = 0.001. This implies that significant differences were observed between the Japanese and the Malaysian samples, when compared across factors. Both the Japanese and the Malaysian samples rated Factor 1 higher compared to Factor 2, but the Japanese sample reported a greater difference between the factors compared to the Malaysian sample.

The interaction effects of factors and gender were also found to be significantly different, F (1,425) = 7.886 and p = 0.005. This implies that significant differences were observed between the males and the females when compared across factors. Both the male and the female participants rated Factor 1 higher compared to Factor 2, but the Malaysian sample reported a greater difference between the factors compared to the Japanese sample.

Regression Analysis - Affect of the Predictors: Fear of Intimacy, Gender Role Egalitarianism and the Value of Children on Fertility.

A standard regression analysis was performed, where all independent variables were entered into the regression equation at once, to examine the relationship between the whole set of predictors, namely, fear of intimacy, gender role egalitarianism, and the value of children (VOC); and the dependent variable, fertility; where:

VOC1: Traditional VOC (Reason for wanting children)
VOC2: Familial VOC (Reason for wanting children)
VOC3: Emotional VOC (Reason for wanting children)
VOC4: Traditional VOC (Reason for not wanting children)
VOC5: Familial VOC (Reason for not wanting children)
Overall Malaysian Sample

Test statement:

H0 = No linear relationship (fear of intimacy = gender role egalitarianism = value of children = 0) affect on fertility

H1: at least one independent variable affects fertility

Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (Constant)</td>
<td>.841</td>
<td>1.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOI</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRE</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOC1</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOC2</td>
<td>.086</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOC3</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOC4</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOC5</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent variable: FERTILITY

From the ANOVA table, at 0.05 level of significance (alpha level) and the p value of the F statistics at less than 0.05, we can conclude that there exists enough evidence to say that at least one of the predictors is useful for predicting fertility. Therefore, the model is fit for the analysis that at least one independent variable affects fertility.

However, an examination of the variables in the coefficient table indicates that at alpha = 0.05 level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that VOC1, VOC2, and VOC5 are not equal to H0, and, therefore, are useful as predictors of fertility. Fear of intimacy, gender role egalitarianism, VOC3, and VOC4 are not significant predictors of fertility as p > 0.05.

In interpreting the above, holding all the other variables constant, when we increase VOC1 by 1 unit, fertility increases by 0.163. When we increase VOC2 by 1 unit, fertility increases by 0.267. However, when we increase VOC5 by 1 unit, fertility declines by 0.194 for the Malaysian sample.

The Malay Sample

From the ANOVA test, at 0.05 level of significance (alpha level), the p value of the F statistics is greater than 0.05; therefore, we can say that there is not enough evidence to conclude that at least one of the predictors is useful for predicting fertility. As such, the model is not fit for the Malay sample.

Fear of intimacy (0.801), gender role egalitarianism (0.084), VOC1 (0.461), VOC2 (0.113), VOC3 (0.742), VOC4 (0.295), and VOC5 (0.865) are not significant predictors of fertility as p > 0.05.

The Chinese Sample

From the ANOVA test at 0.05 level of significance (alpha level), the p value of the F statistics is less than 0.05; therefore, we can say that there exists enough evidence to conclude that at least one of the predictors is useful for predicting fertility. As such, the model is fit for the Chinese sample.
However, an examination of the variables in the coefficient table indicates that at 0.05 level of significance (alpha level), there exists only enough evidence to conclude that VOC2 (0.013) is not equal to H0, and is therefore useful as a predictor of fertility.

Fear of intimacy (0.122), gender role egalitarianism (0.756), VOC1 (0.782), VOC3 (0.506), VOC4 (0.476), and VOC5 (0.696) are not significant predictors of fertility as the p > 0.05.

In interpreting the above, holding all other variables constant, when we increase VOC2 by 1 unit, fertility increases by 0.119.

The Indian Sample

From the Anova test, at alpha or the level of significance at 0.05, the p value of the F statistics is > 0.05. Therefore, we can say that there is not enough evidence to conclude that at least one of the predictors is useful for predicting fertility. As such, the model is not fit for the Indian sample.

An examination of the variables in the coefficient table indicates that at alpha = 0.05 (level of significance), there is not enough evidence to conclude that the variables entered are useful as predictors of fertility for the Indian sample.

Fear of intimacy (0.541), gender role egalitarianism (0.869), VOC1 (0.958), VOC2 (0.805), VOC3 (0.241), VOC4 (0.497), and VOC5 (0.134) are not significant predictors of fertility as p > 0.05.

Japanese Sample

From the ANOVA table, at alpha = 0.05 level of significance, the p value of the F statistics (0.017) is less than 0.05; therefore, we can say that there exists enough evidence to conclude that at least one of the predictors is useful for predicting fertility. As such, the model is fit for the Japanese sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>2.511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FOI</td>
<td>-.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GRE</td>
<td>-.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VOC1</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VOC2</td>
<td>-.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VOC3</td>
<td>.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VOC4</td>
<td>-.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VOC5</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), VOC5, VOC3, GRE, VOC1, FOI, VOC4, VOC2
b. Dependent variable: fertility
An examination of the variables in the coefficient table indicates that at alpha = 0.05 level of significance, there exists enough evidence to conclude that VOC3 (0.031) and VOC4 (0.041) are not equal to H0; and are therefore useful as predictors of fertility.

Fear of intimacy (0.055), gender role egalitarianism (0.745), VOC1 (0.930), VOC2 (0.624) and VOC5 (0.578) are not significant predictors of fertility as p > 0.05.

Therefore the equation is: Fertility = 2.511 + 0.059VOC3 - 0.024VOC4.

In interpreting the above equation, with all the other variables constant, when we increase VOC3 by 1 unit for the Japanese sample, fertility increases by 0.059. However, when we increase VOC4 by 1 unit, fertility declines by 0.024.

Conclusion

The main interest of this study was to investigate the conditions for the young adults' future fertility motivation. From the findings, it is clear that emotional reasons will motivate their wanting children. This is a clearer motivation for the Japanese respondents than the Malaysian respondents, irrespective of gender. This could also be a reflection of the value parents transmit to their children. Moreover, we also see a transformation of intimacy in terms of the young adults' capacity to form affectionate bonds, which was equally observed for the male and female respondents in both the Japanese and the Malaysian samples. Higher gender role egalitarianism was observed in the Japanese sample compared to the Malaysian sample, which shows that the young Japanese adults are more open to value change than their Malaysian counterparts.

When comparing between ethnicities in the Malaysian sample, more Malays indicated ‘Yes’ to wanting to have children, followed by the Indians and then, the Chinese. On the other hand, more Chinese did not want to have children, followed by the Indians and then the Malays. It is clear that among the Malay participants, the role of norms in future fertility motivation is strong because the Muslims, following their religion, see it as a duty to have children. Meanwhile, the Chinese participants are influenced by rational choice and familial reasons.

Historically, having children was viewed as a natural outcome of marriage, family, and life. However, people now decide whether they will have children or not. Having a child has become more of a personal choice. What is also interesting to note is that more women than men want to have children, while more men than women do not want to have children. These are measures of desire (wants rather than needs), but whether they will be actualized is another matter all together. So the public discourse about educated women not wanting children can actually be countered by these findings from the Japanese and the Malaysian samples. What is happening is that they desire children but might not have them because of other reasons like the lack of gender role egalitarianism.

It is important to note that the emotional reasons for wanting to have children outweigh the traditional or the familial reasons. This finding points to the fact that young people in Japan will make a choice to have children because they want to have children and not because tradition or society expects them to have children, or because of the economic value of children. Among the Malaysians, the young people want to have children, first and foremost, because of familial reasons, followed by emotional reasons. The traditional reasons were rated low by both the Japanese and the Malaysian samples.

The results from the regression analysis linking all three scales to fertility did not fit for the Malay and the Indian samples, but showed a link between the familial value of children and fertility in the Chinese sample. For the Japanese sample, the emotional value of children was the independent variable that was positively linked to fertility, while the traditional value of children was negatively linked to fertility.

The effects of these factors on fertility choices in the future will be interesting to observe for both Japan and Malaysia. We might be seeing more human and emotional reasons for wanting to have children prevail over the traditional reasons.

ENDNOTES

1 Acknowledgements – This research was made possible by the Asian Public Intellectual Fellowship, the Nippon Foundation. I wish to thank Prof. Yoko Hayami and Prof. Junko Koizumi of Kyoto University; Prof. Mako Yoshimura
and Prof. Okanouchi Tadashi of Hosei University; and Dr. Akiko Kamogawa of Waseda University for their help and support during my stay in Japan. I also wish to thank Mayumi Suzuki for translating the questionnaire to Japanese and Sharifah Shazana for translating it into Malay. I am also most grateful to Ms. Hannah Lim for the data entry work and analysis.

I am also most grateful to Prof Gisela Trommsdorff who sent me the scale she designed to measure the value of children.

REFERENCES


Using Literary Works as Teaching Material for Sex Education in Indonesia

Mohd. Zariat Abdul Rani

Introduction

This study is based on field research carried out in Indonesia under The Nippon Foundation Fellowships Program for Asian Public Intellectuals. The field research executed over a period of nine months enabled me to gain a clear understanding of the current situation in Indonesia. It also helped me identify a social problem being faced by Indonesian public society, namely, the lack of sexual knowledge within it, especially among teenagers. The problem has led, and will continue to lead, to a marked increase in the number of sexually transmitted disease (STD), HIV/AIDS and illegal abortion cases. To successfully combat this problem, sex education in Indonesia has to be substantiated and generated in a comprehensive and effective manner. In this context, this study will touch upon the obstacles facing sex education in Indonesia today. It will also propose a solution to overcome these obstacles. This refers to the usage of select contemporary literary texts, which are readily available in the market, as will be discussed further below. I would like to add that this study is dedicated to all those involved in education, especially those who draft education policies and curricula, as well as to the teachers who carry them out.

Research Background

The choice of Indonesia as a case study is based on certain developments that have taken place in the country of late. Sexually-related issues involving Indonesian adolescents, such as their engagement in premarital sex, have been steadily on the rise. A study carried out by Yayasan Kusuma Buana (an Indonesian non-profit organization concerned with family planning and reproductive health) in 2004 found that as many as 10.3 percent of 3,594 Indonesian adolescents in 12 major cities admitted to having engaged in premarital sex by the age of 15 (Bening 2004). According to the renowned Indonesian expert on midwifery, Boyke Dian Nugraha, these numbers have increased twofold in the last five years (in Selamihardja and Yudana 1997).

Nugraha also states that what is more worrisome than the numbers themselves is the lack of sexual information and knowledge amongst the target population, especially regarding safe sex. A study of 227 adolescents in select towns across Indonesia carried out by the Perkumpulan Keluarga Berencana Indonesia (Indonesian Planned Parenthood Association), in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF) and Badan Koordinasi Keluarga Berencana Indonesia (Indonesian State Ministry of Population), found that 59.91 percent of the respondents did not use condoms or any other form of contraception, while engaging in premarital sexual intercourse (Creagh 2004, 10). This wanton refusal of contraceptive use increases the risk of unwanted pregnancies among adolescents, as highlighted in the 1997 Demografi dan Kesehatan Indonesia (Indonesian Demographics and Health) survey. The survey found that 9 percent of adolescents between the ages of 15 and 19 have been impregnated as a result of premarital sex, with some of the respondents carrying their babies to term (in Fauzan and Sirait 2002). Those who did not carry their babies to term contributed to the increasing number of illegal abortions. The World Health Organization (1998) estimates that an average of 750 thousand to 1.5 million illegal abortions are carried out each year in Indonesia, and of those figures, as many as 2,500 cases ended in maternal deaths. In addition, the growing inclination for premarital sexual intercourse also increases the risk of sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS, being spread among adolescents. As of 2005, approximately 1,239 Indonesians have died because of AIDS, while at least 170,000 people, including adolescents, have been confirmed to be HIV carriers (“Indonesian Minister Warns of HIV/AIDS Cases Threat” 2003). Stephanie Creagh’s (2004) study on sex education in Yogyakarta—a city in Indonesia which is said to still hold fast to traditional values—reported that a large portion of teens remains ignorant of the methods by which HIV/AIDS is transmitted, while premarital sexual intercourse is becoming the norm.

The above observation, which clearly points to the lack of sexual knowledge among Indonesian adolescents, especially with regard to the potential risks of engaging in unprotected sex, in itself underscores the importance of sex education as a means to channel...
vital and accurate knowledge of human sexuality to adolescents. ‘Sex education’ here refers to the formal and systematic teaching and acquisition of knowledge on human sexuality. And ‘human sexuality’ in this context not only refers to knowledge of the male and female bodies and their functions, but also to the implications of sex outside the body—whether those implications be psychological, customary, religious, cultural, social, or environmental. A definition of ‘human sexuality’ that transcends biology, such as the one being proffered here, is not an entirely new concept. The relationship between sexuality and other psychological, social, economic, and political concerns is usually collectively termed as ‘gender’. In this article, issues that are framed as gender issues are amalgamated with biological sexuality (pertaining to the body) under the term ‘sex education’. This amalgamation is considered appropriate in line with the effort to impart comprehensive knowledge and education to achieve social harmony. Seeing sex education as being merely an understanding of the characteristics of sexual organs and biological functions would be insufficient. Moreover, this knowledge of sexual organs and biological functions is already covered in the syllabus, in the subject Biology. Thus, to achieve the goal of creating social harmony, it is imperative that sex education is understood within the context of a definition of human sexuality which is not merely limited to the biological features of sexuality, such as the function of sexual and reproductive organs; but also encompasses psychological elements, such as love and sexual orientation, and socio-cultural factors such as gender status and its role in social institutions. The transmission of this knowledge on human sexuality is highly significant because it enables students to maintain a measure of peace and harmony in their own lives, as well as in the communities that they inhabit. In relation to that, the introduction of formal sex education in schools can be a viable solution to the aforementioned social problems involving Indonesian adolescents. Given that as of 1997, more than 87 percent of Indonesian adolescents were part of the formal education system (Murdijana 1997, 2), the implementation of sex education in schools can potentially affect a large number of Indonesian adolescents. As the basis of a formal teaching and learning activity, a sex education curriculum must be accurate, substantial and clear in its content, and reinforced with appropriate, creative, and interesting teaching materials so that it would impart knowledge to the target population in an effective manner.

**Literature Review and Research Objectives**

At the time of this writing, sex education had not been implemented as a standardized subject in the Indonesian school curriculum. This situation stemmed from certain obstacles that could be considered as inaccurate or as having resulted from misinformation. As is generally known, the issue of sex is considered taboo by most Eastern societies, thus making any open discussion on the issue difficult (Meyer 1930, 1-10; Van Gulik 1961, 13-15). Indonesia is no exception, as is evident in the controversy that always arises when the idea of sex education is mooted. For instance, certain sections of Indonesian society assume that sex education will only encourage adolescents to be involved in sexual activities (“Pendidikan Seks: Perlu atau Tidak” 2004). Creagh (2004, 34) identifies two problems that stand in the way of sex education’s being implemented in Indonesian schools: (i) the prevalent social attitudes, especially those of religious leaders and parents; and (ii) the attitude of the teachers themselves, all of whom are found to bear inaccurate perceptions of sex education. Although Creagh (2004) states that sex education in Indonesia has a grim future (56), it is nevertheless important to note that based on information obtained from respondents in the study (adolescents), she finds that the need for sex education in Indonesia is indeed critical.

As mentioned earlier, sex education has not been comprehensively implemented as an individual subject in the Indonesian school curricula. Exposure to issues related to sex is currently incorporated into existing religious subjects such as Islamic, Christian and Buddhist studies, and in scientific subjects such as Health Science and Biology. This implementation exposes sex education in Indonesia to the problem of ‘rigidity’ in teaching approaches. What I mean by ‘rigidity’ in this instance is the inability of existing teaching approaches to comprehensively address the whole scope of human sexuality—which, as I explained earlier, encompasses not only the biological, but also psychological and socio-cultural aspects. This problem was clearly highlighted in Siti Malikah Towaf’s (2007) examination of teaching materials in pesantren (a traditional Islamic teaching institution in Indonesia). In her study, she found that the use of feqab (Islamic law) texts as teaching material has imbued this exposure with moralistic tones in that it touches Islamic law, and the concepts of pahala.
This study utilizes the qualitative research method, focusing on the analysis of the selected texts rather than obtaining research findings per se. The research activities are divided into three levels, i.e., Stage 1: Selection of Study Texts; Stage 2: Analysis of Study Texts; and Stage 3: Writing Up of the Report, in which recommendations will be put forth. Research at Stage 1 begins with the observation of local literature, ranging from traditional to contemporary literature. This is carried out so that the researcher can familiarize himself and understand the corpus of data effectively. To that end, this researcher has undertaken a study of the history of literary development in Indonesia through past studies of the canon as well as interviewed local scholars and men of letters. The results at this stage underscore the rich treasury of Indonesian literature, with works spanning a variety of genres, such as novels, short stories, poetry, dramas, etc.

To further emphasize the aim of the study and in line with its positioning as a preliminary study, the researcher has decided to devote sole focus to the novel genre. Novels were chosen based on their inherent advantage over other genres like short stories and poetry, in terms of the novels’ wider narrative latitude. The wider narrative latitude of a novel allows it to contain more saturated messages, which is one of the aspects that the research will explore. This early observation finds that classic Indonesian novels narrate stories relevant to the aim of the research, encompassing as they do themes such as love, youth relationships, and domestic conflicts, e.g., *Azab dan Sengsara* by Merari Serigar (1920), *Siti Nurbaya* by Marah Rusli (1922), *Salah Asuhan* by Abdul Muis (1928), and *Pada Sebuah Kapal* by N.H. Dini (1973). However, the stories featured in these novels are mostly set against a background of traditional society, with issues that are not found to be entirely suited to the lifestyle of adolescents today. This does not mean that these classic works cannot be utilized as teaching materials in schools; rather, it would be effective and more interesting if recommended materials at this early stage were more contemporary and more contextually relevant to the issues affecting the lives of adolescents today.

In that respect, observation shifts to the more current developments in Indonesian literature, to explore a few insights into Indonesian society and its relation to literature. One of these is the remarkable fact that the
It is interesting to note that in all three literary phenomena, issues related to sex and sexuality are at the forefront of the writers’ minds. This is immediately apparent in the proliferation of sastra wangi or the torrent of novels in the market written by young women; they are very much inclined towards sex and sexuality (Arnez 2005, 2). Among the novels that can be grouped in this category are Sanman (‘Sanction’) by Ayu Utami (1998), Jangan Main-main (‘Don’t Fool Around’ by Djenar Maesa Ayu (2004), Dadaisme (‘Dadaism’) by Dewi Sartika (2004), Mahadewa Mahadewi (‘Gods and Goddesses’) by Nova Rianti Yusuf (2002), Supernova (‘Supernova’) by Dewi Lestari (2001), and Garis Tepi Seorang Lesbian (‘The Margins of a Lesbian’) by Herlinatien (2003). But these sastra wangi novels are not suitable as teaching materials for sex education in schools, primarily because of their sexually explicit and crude narration, as well as the vulgar language contained within, which are inappropriate for teenage audiences. It is no surprise, therefore, that the publication of these books has often been met with controversy by the public—a controversy that invariably helped to sell more copies of these books. What is clear is that the staggering sales of sastra wangi novels have been driven by sensationalist factors that had to do with the contents of the text or the personal life of their authors. This sensationalism is what makes these novels suspect, in terms of their appropriateness as substantive and educational teaching material.

The same inclination can also be seen in the phenomenon of sastra Islami or Islamic literature that is gaining popularity in the local market. Certain literary researchers believe that besides the factor of freedom of speech, the phenomenon of sastra Islami arose as a direct reaction to the phenomenon of sastra wangi. As opposed to sastra wangi, sex and sexuality in sastra Islami are usually dealt with in a more implicit manner, with focus given to issues and conflicts in male-female relationships. These novels are also rife with religious elements. The heavy inclination towards themes of love and religion has caused works of sastra Islami to become too stereotyped. This was especially apparent after the successful publication of Ayat-ayat Cinta (‘Holy Verses of Love’) by Habiburrahman El-Shirazy (2004), which got an extraordinary reception from the public (“Ayat-ayat Cinta Survives Heavy-handed Treatment” 2008). This then catalyzed the production of many novels in the same genre, such as Deskir-dzikir Cinta (‘Sacred Songs of Love’) by Anam Khoirul Anam (2006), Munajat Cinta (‘Prayer Song of Love’) by Taufiqurrahman al-Azizy (2008), Tasawuf Cinta (‘Mystical Knowledge of Love’) by M. Hilmi As’ad (2008), Tahajjud Cinta (‘Night Prayers of Love’ by Muhammad El Natsir (2008), Cinta di Ujung Sajadah (‘Love at the Edge of the Prayer Mat’) by Asma Nadia (2008), and many more. Like Ayat-ayat Cinta, these novels also meshed the same two ingredients together, namely, love and religion. It is because of the stereotyped theme that the researcher finds the messages proffered in works of sastra Islami to be quite limited and inadequate, in terms of the level of knowledge of human sexuality required for comprehensive sex education.

Next, the observation shifts to the rapid growth of the sastra remaja (teen lit) phenomenon, of which adolescents are the target audience. Currently, bookstore shelves in Indonesia are stacked with these works of teen lit, and continue to receive an overwhelming response from the public, especially from teenagers. While it cannot be denied that teen lit is not a new genre in Indonesian literature, its recent widespread publication, with its own trademarks, is a new development (Mochtar 2008, 2-8). For instance, these texts are labeled ‘teen lit’ on the front cover, and carry the slogan “Speak Your World”. This phenomenon has also seen the rise to prominence of
authors such as Agnes Jessica and Dewi Sartika. Among the teen lit novels that have garnered widespread attention is Dealova (roughly, ‘Love Triangle’) by Dyan Nuranindya (2004). This novel is still being reprinted and has sold no less than 50,000 copies (Dewojati 2006, 90-100). The researcher has also observed that teen lit novels deal with issues of sexuality, especially issues that concern adolescents.

Besides the inclination towards using English titles, teen lit novels are also found to offer stories that revolve around the life, sexual experience, and psychology of an adolescent. Without denying the fact that a few older teen lit novels which were published before this phenomenon arose also explored questions of sexuality, contemporary teen lit novels are nevertheless more suited to the purposes of this study, since they also address current issues. For instance, certain teen lit novels contain messages that are immediately relevant to sex education, such as teens’ reaching puberty, falling in love, determining their sexual inclination, entering the world of marriage, and learning their roles as men/women in modern society. These issues are in line with the definition of human sexuality as discussed above, and are integral parts of sex education. By foregrounding the works that carry the above themes, this study finds that sex education can offer a wider and more comprehensive knowledge of human sexuality, because it is not limited to biological and reproductive matters alone. Stories having to do with teenage love, married life, and the role of men/women in society can provide exposure and insight into issues (besides biological/reproductive issues) such as psychology, customs, religion, culture, society, the environment and so forth, in the context of its relationship with the status and role of the individual, whether male or female. Exposure and insight into these issues are important, seeing as they can prepare teenagers to face the complexities of life maturely and harmoniously. Besides the appropriate themes, the language used in these novels is conversational (not too flowery), and is thus more suited to the teenage level of comprehension. This is important, seeing that it enables the messages contained within to be delivered clearly and effectively. This study finds these teen lit novels more suitable to be used as sex education material for teens, as opposed to sastra wangi and sastra Islami texts. From the large number of teen lit titles on the market, the study has identified ten of the most suitable texts for the study.

The Selected Texts

The first text analyzed is the novel Jerawatan (‘Getting Pimples’) by Zaenal Radar T., first published by Mizan Media Utama in 2005. Jerawatan is divided into a few stories that generally take place in an adolescent world. One of the most interesting aspects of this novel is the first chapter, which deals with the anxieties faced by the protagonist Devi, because her face has not been beset by pimples. The story begins with the complaints of Devi’s peers, who are obsessed with curing their pimpled faces. Their obsession makes the blemish-free Devi feel ostracized. The feeling of isolation becomes even more apparent when her friends make fun of her for being ‘abnormal,’ simply because of her smooth skin. To avoid being made fun of, she takes the peculiar step of trying to make herself grow pimples. She is described as doing things that are believed to cause pimples, such as depriving herself of sleep, eating nuts to excess, and not washing her face, all with the intent of making pimples grow on her face. Nevertheless, all her efforts come to naught. After struggling with this conflict for a period of time, Devi is relieved when the all-awaited pimple finally grows on her face. The reason why this story is chosen is because it lingers on an issue that is commonly seen as being an indicator of puberty or sexual maturation—getting pimples—since it arises from a torrent of hormonal changes. With the presentation of such a story, the novel delivers a message almost directly related to puberty: the story explains how Devi is called ‘abnormal’ because of her lack of pimples, with ‘abnormal’ referring to, according to Devi’s friends, the condition of not having reached puberty. This is made all the more apparent when the teenage female characters in the novel discuss having periods and undergoing physical changes. Although Jerawatan does not proffer detailed scientific facts about puberty, it is still descriptive enough to spark a discussion of the issue.

Jerawatan may lack a scientific discussion of puberty, but this is more than made up for by Eni Martini’s Haid Pertama (First Menstruation), published by 1st Publishing in 2007. Haid Pertama concerns the 14-year-old Diena’s anxiety over not getting her first period. Her anxiety arises after she overhears her friends’ assumptions that a girl who has not menstruated is not normal. Diena is even encouraged by her friend to read pornography, or to engage in heavy petting with boys in an effort to menstruate. To allay this anxiety, the story then introduces scientific
fights about menstruation and the maturation of human reproductive organs. With the help of her biology teacher and her mother, Diena is given accurate information about puberty and its different manifestations in girls and boys. Furthermore, the novel also discusses at length the occurrence of sexually transmitted diseases, its method of infection, and the best way to protect oneself from it. The novel also speaks of how this newfound knowledge calms Diena’s nerves, in that she no longer accepts wholesale confusing myths about puberty. With messages such as these, there is no question that Haid Pertama is suitable for use as a teaching material for teenage sexual education. And in the context of its usage as a sexual education tool, Haid Pertama should follow and complement the reading of the first text, Jerawatan. This is because the latter centers only on teenage anxiety about puberty, which, as described above, is useful for sparking discussion on the subject. After a fruitful discussion is initiated amongst students, teaching should continue with an exposure to scientific facts, which is quite comprehensively provided by the second text, Haid Pertama.

The next selected text is First Love Memories by Leonita Easter Patricia, first published by Katakita in 2006. The text is chosen because it is a story of puppy love, an experience invariably linked to teenage life. When we are first introduced to the protagonist, a 10-year-old named Reina, we are told that she is falling in love for the first time with a boy named Matthew. Nevertheless, the Reina-Matthew love affair is then ended when the boy moves to another city. Before they break up, they both promise to stay loyal and to revive their love for one another when they reach adulthood. Reina holds tight to this promise because she assumes her love for Matthew is indeed true love. After seven years, Reina finally meets Matthew again. Nevertheless, she is disappointed when she finds out that Matthew was not entirely serious about their relationship all those years ago. Gradually, Reina comes to realize that her love for Matthew was just puppy love, an experience nearly everybody goes through. With this realization, Reina finally accepts Matthew as a friend, and begins to open her heart to new loves. This story offers a valuable message to teenagers, especially in coping with the early stages of love in its many incarnations. Puppy love, a part of this experience, is shown to be mostly driven by a sense of curiosity, which need not necessarily end in marriage. This message is clear in Reina’s disappointment at the fact that her love for Matthew was unreciprocated.

Reina finally realizes that her love for Matthew is puppy love, because neither was mature enough seven years prior. Another important message conveyed in the text is the openness towards facing puppy love: teens are warned not to be too obsessive about the phenomenon. This is most evident when the novel describes the fruitlessness of Reina’s obsession towards Mathew. And more importantly, Reina is shown to embrace a rational attitude towards the obsession eventually, and to accept the fact as a valuable experience. With these messages, First Love Memories can be considered appropriate teaching material for teenage sexual education.

Dewi Sartika’s My Silly Engagement, published by Puspawara in 2006, is the next chosen text. This novel concerns the conflicts arising in the life of Puput, an orphan girl, after she finds out about a legally binding agreement made between her late father and his wealthy friend, Mr. Wijaya. A clause in the agreement states that Puput must marry Mr. Wijaya’s eldest son, Andra, when she comes of age. She is hesitant, initially, but because she is not ready to be faced with legal consequences, Puput agrees to abide by the agreement. It is only after meeting Mr. Wijaya that Puput finds out that the deal was made at the request of her father, who was worried about her future in case of his death. The conflict arises because Andra despises Puput. Instead, it is Mr. Wijaya’s stepson, Erlangga, who receives Puput, and they both fall in love. But Andra’s feelings for Puput then change when Puput saves the Wijaya family from disaster. This change in Andra’s feelings, however, does not affect Puput’s feeling for Erlangga. In deference to his stepfather, Erlangga decides to pursue his studies overseas, and nobly requests that Puput marry Andra willingly. Disappointed as she is, Puput finally accepts, and marries Andra. Such a story conveys a number of important messages, not least of which is the message that true love arises from nobility and not appearances. Such can be seen in Puput’s love for Erlangga, which arose because of the goodness of his heart, even as Andra was described as being the better-looking one. The message is also reiterated in Andra’s change of heart in his feelings for Puput, which is similarly due to her altruism in saving the Wijaya family. Quite unconventionally, the ending of the story does not work out in favor of the protagonist: Puput is disappointed because she cannot marry Erlangga, but she then becomes optimistic about her future and receives Andra’s love willingly. This is interesting because it puts forth a useful message, namely, that in
reality, things do not work out in accordance to human desire. Through the utilization of My Silly Engagement as a study text, teenagers can be exposed to this reality, and learn of the importance of maintaining an optimistic outlook in life, in spite of disappointments.

Next, the analysis shifts to Agnes Jessica’s Jangan Ngomong Cinta, Deh! (’Don’t Say Love!’), which was published by Elex Media Komputindo in 2006. The novel is about the respective teenage romances of two good friends, Janice and Verina. Janice is described as being disappointed when she breaks up with Andrew, the son of a rich man. The breakup makes Janice resent the rich because she believes that they are incapable of being sincere in love. For that reason, Janice falls in love with Albert because of his honesty; but unbeknownst to her, Albert is the son of a rich man as well. When she does eventually find out, she is so disappointed because she thinks Albert has been lying to her. Their love affair ends with tragedy when Albert is killed in a fight due to a misunderstanding. Verina, on the other hand, is the polar opposite of Janice, being shy and plain in appearance. Verina is asked by her twin Olivia to pose as her, and to go out on a date with Mario, whom neither has met. After the meeting, Mario begins to love the company of ‘Olive’, without knowing that she is actually Verina. Even after finding out the truth, Mario still chooses Verina because of her personality. Jangan Ngomong Cinta, Deh! is one of the chosen texts because it is seen to offer a message of love and humanity, an aspect that is considered important in sex education for teens, simply because it is the foundation of human sexual harmony. In this novel, true love is based on the sincerity of the human heart, and not on material wealth. This is evident in Albert-Janice’s short-lived romance that is founded upon sincerity. In a similar fashion, the romance between Mario and Verina is not due to external appearances, but to a good personality. What also shines through in the novel are the values of honesty and friendship, which are clearly depicted in Janice-Verina’s friendship. Both are described as being sincere in their friendship, and as attracted to each other’s nobility. Values such as these are appropriate, in the sense that they complement the delivery of knowledge of human sexuality.

The next chosen text is a novel entitled Love At First Fall by Primadona Angela, published by PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama in 2006. The novel concerns the teenage girl Wulandiri’s struggle with her feelings because she is forced to accept the hand of someone of her parents’ choosing. To ease her mind, Wulandiri takes a vacation in Holland and it is there that she meets a young American man named Steve. With time, they both confess to have fallen in love at first sight with each other. However, they then realize the dissimilarities in their respective ways of life and cultures, which would limit and hinder their relationship. After serious contemplation, they declare that their profound love will surmount their cultural differences. Stories such as the one narrated in Love At First Fall imparts useful messages about love and relationships. Firstly, it shows that love arises naturally and should not be forced upon someone: Wulandiri’s parents’ wish for her to marry their choice of a groom turned out to be futile, as she did not love him. Secondly, it shows that a relationship should be based on deep, mutual love, and nothing less. Only with love will each partner be able to handle the problems that inevitably come with marriage. This is shown clearly by the willingness of Wulandiri and Steve to mutually accept and transcend their cultural differences. The story also relays the message that in an interracial relationship, aspects such as wisdom, maturity, and tolerance are of great importance. Exposure to messages such as these is especially relevant in the context of modern day society, which is rife with multiracial marriages. This story of interracial love is the reason Love At First Fall is chosen as a study text, as it offers a wider universal horizon with regard to love and human relationships. This aspect is important because it is a foundational idea of human relations, including, of course, relations between the sexes.

Pengantin Baru (Bride and Bridegroom) by Ari Nur, published by Frenari in 2008, is also appropriate for classroom study. It tells the tale of a girl named Indrani, who is facing the world of marriage. Indrani is looking for an appropriate candidate to be her husband, which search is then followed by wedding plans with the man of her choice, Bagaskara. As opposed to the authors of the other texts, the writer of Pengantin Baru clearly identifies her ethnicity and religious beliefs. The story was written by a Muslim author, who has quite clearly used Islamic values as a framework within which the inherent messages are conveyed. This scheme is relevant because the target readership comprises adolescent Indonesians, the majority of whom are Muslim. In accordance with the scheme, the messages revolve around the various relationships between male and female adolescents, such as kufu (the match between the groom and bride), tat’aruf (acquaintance) and dowry. With regard to the
message on kufu, *Pengantin Baru* highlights the importance of a match between the partners, with special attention paid to knowledge. This is clearly evident as the novel recounts how Indrani is searching for the perfect candidate to marry, and how she chooses Bagaskara due to the knowledge that he possesses. With ta’aruf, the novel explains the teachings of Islam, which recommends that each couple that wishes to get married must undergo a meeting session in an orderly fashion, without causing *fitna* (slander). This is present in the story since Indrani, who is accompanied by her sister, agrees to undergo a ta’aruf with Bagaskara. It is only after acquainting themselves with each other for three months that they feel confident enough of their compatibility, and decide to get engaged. As for the message on dowry, the novel expresses the need for it to be handled practically and progressively, without the need to be bound to traditional and conservative practices. This means that the wedding gift from the husband can be an object of immediate importance, and need not necessarily refer to money or jewelry. This is evident in the novel, when Indrani secretly wishes to receive a laptop as a dowry, given that it is of immediate importance. One of the more interesting aspects of *Pengantin Baru* is how the novel handles the intimate questions regarding the ‘first night’ between newly wed couples.

The next chosen novel is entitled *Ketika Remaja Bertingkah Kok Di Lampu Merah?* (‘When Teenagers Behave Like They’re at a Red Light’) by Nagiga and Dian Ibung. Published by Elex Media Komputindo in 2009, this novel narrates tales of teenagers behaving badly. The most interesting part of this novel is when Indrani is searching for the perfect candidate to marry, and how she chooses Bagaskara due to the knowledge that he possesses. With ta’aruf, the novel explains the teachings of Islam, which recommends that each couple that wishes to get married must undergo a meeting session in an orderly fashion, without causing *fitna* (slander). This is present in the story since Indrani, who is accompanied by her sister, agrees to undergo a ta’aruf with Bagaskara. It is only after acquainting themselves with each other for three months that they feel confident enough of their compatibility, and decide to get engaged. As for the message on dowry, the novel expresses the need for it to be handled practically and progressively, without the need to be bound to traditional and conservative practices. This means that the wedding gift from the husband can be an object of immediate importance, and need not necessarily refer to money or jewelry. This is evident in the novel, when Indrani secretly wishes to receive a laptop as a dowry, given that it is of immediate importance. One of the more interesting aspects of *Pengantin Baru* is how the novel handles the intimate questions regarding the ‘first night’ between newly wed couples.

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The final text that this researcher has selected is a novel entitled *My Cousin Is Gay* by Lia Indra Andrian, published by Puspa Swara in 2006. Eva, the protagonist of the novel, is a teenage girl who has just moved in with her male cousin, Viggo. In Eve’s eyes, Viggo is the perfect example of a man, and she adores him because of it. But Eva begins to become curious about Viggo’s sexual orientation. That curiosity arises
after Eva reads Viggo’s diary, and after she stumbles upon Viggo, being intimate with his good friend Sandro. The novel then expands the story by describing Eve’s efforts to satiate her curiosity. *My Cousin Is Gay* is found suitable to be made into a teaching material for teenagers because it contains messages that address human sexuality, especially homosexuality. Eva, in an effort to satisfy her curiosity about Viggo’s sexual inclination, seeks the counsel of her best friend, Yonita. Yonita, assuming the role of an intelligent, mature, wise, kind, and open-minded teenager, first tells Eva that her reading of Viggo’s personal thoughts in his diary is tantamount to an invasion of privacy. Secondly, Yonita believes that homosexuality is an issue that should be dealt with openly, and not swept under the rug. Thirdly, Yonita tells Eva that even if Viggo is gay, she should not look at her cousin with disgust. Moreover, Yonita also adds that if Eva truly believes that Viggo’s sexual orientation is a deviation, it is Eva’s responsibility to bring him back to the true path. The novel then speaks of how this discussion opens Eva’s mind to accept Viggo for what he is, without any diminished sense of respect. What is important to note here is the novel’s initiative in dealing with the issue of sexual orientations besides heterosexuality which, in this day and age, is nothing new to teenagers. Besides homosexuality, the novel, through the discussion between Yonita and Eva, also brings up bisexuality and transgenders, addressing the different sexual orientations and inclinations, which are conventionally considered to be perversions. In this context, *My Cousin Is Gay* is an interesting addition to the selected body of literature because it offers a more comprehensive view of human sexuality, which leads to the possibility of more critical discussions in sex education for teenagers.

Implications

This study has selected ten texts that are considered to have the potential to be made into teaching materials for sex education. The study has also analyzed the texts and outlined the messages about human sexuality, which are contained within. Where the utilization of these works is concerned, a few points must be considered in detail. First and, as stated earlier, the selection of these texts is a preliminary initiative in the larger effort to construct a specific curriculum on sex education in Indonesia. At the very least, the texts that are recommended above can proffer certain criteria for choosing teaching materials for sex education. Secondly and, in relation to the above, the selection of literary texts for the purpose of sex education in Indonesia must take into account two main criteria: the message contained within and the means with which that message is conveyed. As mentioned above, the messages and the means of their delivery have to be appropriate to the teenage level of understanding, since sex education in schools is primarily intended for teenagers. Thirdly and, also in relation to the above, is the question of the function that these literary texts will play as teaching material. It is important to understand that any literary texts which are used as materials for sex education must not be made into ‘compulsory’ study texts, as is usually done with academic literature for other subjects, since by nature, these literary texts invite a whole cavalcade of readings and interpretations. With the nature of literary texts being thus, it would be more appropriate if the texts were used as stimuli to initiate serious and mature guided discussions on sex and sexuality. In this context, the story in a given text, such as a novel, will be discussed by bringing up questions that revolve around the messages and values presented within a text. For instance, questions such as “What is the message on sexuality that is conveyed through the story under discussion?” followed by “Are these messages at odds or are they in accordance with known scientific fact?”. With questions such as these, it is not so much the story that is taught to the students but, rather, the messages and values contained within the story, identified by means of discussion, that will encourage the students to think for themselves and will enable them to make informed decisions in their own lives. And it is for the purpose of nurturing these abilities that the complexity of the selected texts will be most beneficial. It is hoped that the results of this research will lead to future studies that can offer solutions to the existing problem—that of implementing a comprehensive sex education curriculum in Indonesia.

NOTES

1 It must be noted that this goal of sex education to create social harmony is outlined by the World Health Organization. *See School Health Education to Prevent AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Diseases* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 1992).

2 See Chayaningrum Dewojati, “Penulis Perempuan dan Trend Karya Sastra Mutakhir Indonesia: Sebuah Refleksi” (paper presented at Persidangan Antarabangsa Pengajian Melayu, Kuala Lumpur, 2006), 93-4; as well as Jakob
This rapid pace is most apparent in common bookstore practices: books that have only been in the market for a few years (unless they turn out to be extraordinary bestsellers) are usually hard to find in major Indonesian bookstores, such as Gramedia dan Toko Gunung Agung, because they are returned to the publishers to make way for even newer books.

Historians and political analysts are of the opinion that during the 31-year reign (1967–1998) of President Soeharto, Indonesia was under a cloud of political and social repression. Soeharto’s regime is generally taken to have ruled with an iron fist; and the public’s freedom of speech clamped down. In the world of literary publishing, for instance, there were certain restrictions in place that were thought to limit the freedom to write among authors and the literati. For more information, see Lukas Luwarso, “Sejarah Pers Indonesia”, Indonews, August 27, 2000, http://www.mail-archive.com/indonews-indo-news.com/msg07768.html. See also Janet Steele, Wars Within: The Story of Tempo, an Independent Magazine in Soeharto’s Indonesia (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2005).


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Food Consumption Patterns and Nutrition Transition in Southeast Asia

Nur Indrawaty Lipoeto

Many countries in developing countries are experiencing rapid nutrition transition, characterized by the double burden of disease whereby chronic diseases become more prevalent, while infectious diseases remain undefeated. This is a universal trend dominating the health profile of increasingly large numbers of people in developing countries. The epidemiologic transition and concurrent shift in diet, physical activity and body composition in many developing countries have been rapid, unlike the gradual transition in the United States and most European countries (Popkin, 1998). Reports from Asian countries such as Korea, India, and Japan, and from countries in South America indicated that the rapid change in the dietary habits and body composition occurred after their countries achieved dietary sufficiency at the national level (Lohman et al. 1988; Romieu et al. 1997; Vorster et al. 1999; Worsley 1998). In India, the rapid socioeconomic transition resulted in rapid changes in dietary patterns (Singh et al. 1999).

Globalization has been cited as one reason for the rapid nutrition transition in developing countries. These processes certainly have been expanded as indicated by enhanced free trade, a push toward a reduction in trade barriers in the developing world, and the increasing penetration of international corporations into the commerce in each country (measured by the MNCs’ share of gross national products or manufacturing). Equally, the increasing access to Western media, the removal of communication barriers enhanced further by the World Wide Web, cable TV, mobile telephone systems, etc. have been crucial. The accelerated introduction of western technology into manufacturing and the basic sectors of agriculture, mining, and services is also a key element.

During the 1970s, food supply concerns still existed; there was no television; bus and mass transportation; food trade was minimal as was processed food; and most rural and urban occupations were very labor intensive. Today, work and life activities have changed: small gas-powered tractors are available; modern industrial techniques are multiplying; offices are quite automated; soft drinks and many processed foods are found everywhere. Television sets are found in about 89 percent of the households; younger children do not ride bicycles; and mass transit is more heavily used. Multiply such changes by similar ones occurring in much of Asia, North Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and many areas (particularly cities) in sub-Saharan Africa, and it is evident that the shift from a subsistence economy to a modern, industrialized one occurred within a span of 10 to 20 years; whereas, in Europe and other industrialized high income societies, this occurred over many decades or centuries.

Globalization increases accessibility to western supermarket and fast food franchises (McDonaldization). Cheap vegetable fat and sugar have flooded the market in developing countries, thereby increasing the consumption of sweet soda pops, biscuits, and snacks produced by multinational companies. Popkin BM (2004) and Monteiro et al. (2004) have shown that current diets in many developing countries have increasing proportions of calories derived from fat (primarily vegetable oils) and also from refined carbohydrates. Kato (1987) suggested an association between the increase in Western style, fat-rich foods such as butter and margarine, cheese, bread and ham and sausage; and higher mortality rates from degenerative diseases such as heart disease and cancer.

The change in food consumption patterns is apparent in Malaysia. As in other rapidly emerging markets in Asia, food consumption in Malaysia has shifted away from starchy staples, toward wheat-based and livestock products. As well as rapid growth in income per person (at the rate of around 5 percent a year), aggregate food consumption in Malaysia has been supported by the relatively high population growth (around 2.5 percent a year) and changing food preferences toward more Western styles (Warr et al. 2008).

How far will the increasing preference for more western food pattern styles change food consumption patterns? This study was conducted to confirm whether the changing food patterns correspond to the nutrition transition in the Southeast Asian region. In Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei Darussalam and the Philippines, for
example, coconut played an important role in the food culture of the people. For people in this region, coconuts are used in most traditional recipes. Naturally, coconut is the only fat source available in tropical countries. However, ever since the "diet-heart" hypothesis of Keys et al. (1958) was advanced, coconuts have been systematically removed from the daily dietary habit of people in these countries. In Indonesia up until 1996, coconut was the first major source of vegetable oil. The consumption of coconut oil in 1993 was 12 mL/day; it went down to only 8 mL/day in 2004 (Simatupang and Purwoto 1996; Suherman, 2005). Since coconuts consist mostly of saturated fat, they have come to be regarded as the major culprit in the increasing incidence of heart disease. However, a series of studies on some traditional populations who consume coconut food found that stroke and heart disease were nearly absent among the populations, and that they had significantly lower serum cholesterol, lower diastolic blood pressure, and were lean (Lindeberg et al. 1994; 1996). In Indonesia, Lipoeto (2004) showed a correlation between decreasing coconut consumption and elevated lipid levels.

This study also aimed to answer how far the people in the three countries have moved away from their coconut-based foods (traditional foods), toward the modern style of food consumption.

Methods

The study was conducted in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia. In each country, one rural area and one urban setting were selected. Presumably, the rural area still maintains the traditional food pattern, while the urban area has presumably changed considerably. In the Philippines, Manila was chosen for the urban area, while Calabanga in the province of Camarines Sur was chosen for the rural area. In Malaysia, the study was done only among the Malay population. Bandar Baru Bangi – Selangor was chosen for the urban area, and Tanjong Karang – Kuala Selangor was the rural area selected. In Indonesia, the study was done in West Sumatra. Padang was chosen for the urban area and three villages from three different districts were chosen for the rural areas.

Three methods were used in this study. The first was the focus group discussion (FGD), which was used to obtain an in-depth understanding of the people's food culture. Discussions were conducted to get information on food habits, food preparation, and changes. The participants were asked for their opinion on the role of coconut in their food culture. The FGD was widely used as one of the basic anthropological methods, especially in research, to determine health-seeking behavior (Scrimshaw and Hurtado 1987). The focus group approach is a qualitative research methodology used to provide insight and understanding of a target group's perceptions and beliefs regarding a particular topic or program (Ramirez and Shepperd 1988). In this study, the FGD was intended to document food culture and to determine any changes in dietary patterns among the people.

The second method, the interview, was used to determine health status, lifestyles and food consumption patterns; and to differentiate between the people in the rural areas and those in the urban areas in terms of health status, lifestyles and food consumption patterns. A questionnaire on the demography, health status, lifestyle, and general food habits and practices was developed and administered. Information on the intake of individual foods and dishes was obtained using the Food Frequency Questionnaire. This method was intended to document the different kinds of traditional foods using coconut, the amount of coconut food consumption, and the difference between rural and urban participants in terms of food variations.

The third method involved analyzing government reports and the national survey on socio-economic changes. These reports were used to determine the nutrition transition in the two countries.

All data gathered using the three methods were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively to determine the relationship between traditional food consumption and nutrition transition in Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia. The project was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM/FPSK/PADS/T7-MJKEtikaPer/F01).

Results

1. Characteristics of the Respondents

The focus group discussion was the major source of information of this study. In the Philippines, one FGD each was done in the urban and rural areas. The
discussions were conducted among 10 to 12 participants aged 18 to 60 years old. In Malaysia, there were three focus group discussions done. In the urban area, two discussions were conducted in Bandar Baru Bangi among females only, and then among male participants only. In the rural area, the focus group discussion was done in Tanjong Karang among male participants aged 35 to 64 years old. In Indonesia, the FGDs were conducted in Padang, the capital city of West Sumatra, where Kalumbuk was situated. The second village was Nareh, situated in the coastal region south of the Padang Pariaman municipalities. Nareh was about 45 km from Padang. The other two villages, Pincuran Panjang and Kubang, lay in the mountainous region in the municipalities of Tanah Datar and Limapuluh Koto, respectively. These two villages are in the heartland of West Sumatra. Pincuran Panjang is about 60 km from Padang, while Kubang is about 110 km from Padang. Invitations to participate in the FGD were disseminated through the village mayor, and also through doctors and midwives. These invitations were intended for the adult women in the villages. Each session was tape-recorded and lasted up to one-and-a-half hours. Thirteen women, aged 46 to 67 years, participated in the FGD in Naras. In Kalumbuk, nine women aged 30 to 67 years joined in the discussion; while in Pincuran Panjang, 7 women aged 46 to 81 years old did. In Kubang, 13 women from 33 to 77 years old joined the FGD. Some other complementary methods were used to obtain data about the food culture, including informal interviews and observations.

Meanwhile, the major source of information to determine food patterns was the interview. Ninety subjects in the Philippines, 95 subjects in Malaysia and 189 subjects in Indonesia were interviewed. On the average, the subjects in the urban areas were younger and had higher education levels (87 percent, 72 percent and 62 percent in the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia, respectively), compared to those in the rural areas. The interviews were done mostly with women. Government reports provided data on food consumption patterns.

2. Food Patterns

Most of the subjects in the Philippines used coconut oil as their source of fat. As it was, only 22 percent in the urban areas and 7 percent in the rural areas did not use coconut oil. However, butter was used even more widely. In the urban areas, 40 percent used butter as their source of fat, while in the rural areas, 47 percent did the same. In Malaysia, none of the subjects used coconut oil or butter. All of the subjects used only palm oil as their source of fat. In Indonesia, since 1995, coconut oil had been replaced by palm oil due to the increasing price of coconut oil. According to the participants, an average of 250 g of cooking palm oil was used in a day in a household with three or four children.

The food variation score was determined by giving the frequency of consumption of 50 traditional foods. Table 1 shows that subjects in the urban areas had significantly higher scores in terms of food variation compared to those in the rural areas (P=0.02). Twenty-six percent of the respondents in the urban areas compared to only 9 percent in the rural areas regularly consumed snacks after dinner. Filipino respondents reported that they consume food more frequently now than before.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>112.92</td>
<td>63.09</td>
<td>30 – 332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>55.96</td>
<td>25.46</td>
<td>7 – 114</td>
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Table 1
Food Variation Scores*

*Significance difference at p = 0.02

Breakfast food patterns in the Philippines showed no difference in food preference between the urban and the rural participants. Although bread, crackers or oats have been chosen as alternative foods for breakfast, rice, be it boiled or fried, remained the main food staple both for the rural and the urban participants. In Malaysia, the results showed that nasi lemak was the first choice in terms of breakfast food for most of the participants, both from the urban and rural areas. Compared to participants from the rural areas who had limited food choices for breakfast, participants from the urban areas had more local breakfast food.
The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows

In Indonesia, food is usually prepared mid-morning, and is consumed as lunch and dinner that day, and as breakfast the following morning. Hot food eaten as breakfast is usually dinner left over from the previous evening. Breakfast could be either sweet food or hot food that contains chilies.

The food patterns for lunch and dinner in urban and rural areas in the Philippines consist of rice, vegetables, and fish. These are prepared in traditional ways such as sinigang and kaldereta. Sinigang is stewed fish/meat soured by tamarind, while kaldereta is stewed pork with tomato sauce.

The lunch and dinner food patterns in Malaysia consist of rice and vegetables, plus either chicken or fish. Boiled rice is served with sautéed vegetables, while the chicken or fish is deep fried or boiled in coconut milk. Chicken curry and mutton curry are popular dishes in Malaysia.

In Indonesia, basic daily dishes consist of steamed rice, a hot fried dish and a coconut milk dish, with minimal variation from breakfast to evening meals. Lunch is considered to be the most important meal of the day. The core component of lunch and dinner is usually rice. Other carbohydrate-rich foods include cassava, corn, sago or noodles, although they are sometimes considered as snacks. The protein source consumed daily is fish. In the present study, participants in the three of the four villages reported consuming fish 4 to 6 times a week. Beef and chicken are mainly prepared for special occasions.

Western style and franchise fast foods were considered as snack and recreational foods by most of the participants in the urban and the rural areas in the three countries. Therefore, they were not consumed very often. Some participants reported that they sometimes visited franchise fast food outlets or restaurants, rather than the many traditional food outlets in their city because “nowadays, many traditional foods are available and easy to find”. They claimed to still prefer traditional food because they cannot change their food preference.

In Indonesia, all participants agreed that there had been little or almost no difference in food tastes between the two generations interviewed. The Minangkabau traditional food continued to be the first choice of the participants in West Sumatra. The taste preference of the people in West Sumatra was a combination of the hot and spicy, tinged with the flavor of herbs and spices, and a little bit of salt. Western foods such as McDonald’s was hardly known to the villagers. However, the older generation mentioned that compared to 40 to 50 years ago, more food was now available. Restaurants and food outlets can now be found everywhere. Novelty foods have also been introduced, such as instant noodles, tofu and tempeh, which are commonly used in households.

Although traditional food patterns were still maintained by most of the participants in this study, they did inject some changes in the recipe. Some female participants in the Philippines reported that they put more oil and butter when they prepare some traditional recipes. Some participants admitted that they now consume more sugary foods and juices than before. Fruit juices are considered as snacks and are therefore given to children. In Indonesia, all participants agreed that there was no difference in the food preparations of the older and the younger generations. The younger generation continue to use the same ingredients and the same processes in food preparation as the older ones, they said. Any possible differences came in the form of the cooking utensils used, like electric appliances such as rice cookers and food blenders. Like gas stoves, they can be found in many households in the villages.

Trends in the patterns of household expenditure and food consumption confirm the picture on nutrition transition in Southeast Asia. In Malaysia, there has been a significant increase in per person consumption of wheat, from 33 kilograms in 1990 to 58 kilograms in 2005. In contrast, rice consumption per person declined by around 15 percent over the same period. Despite this development, rice remains the major staple and provides close to one-third of the daily calorie intake, on average. Per person consumption of starchy roots also declined markedly between 1990 and 2005, with a significant decline in the consumption of cassava. Compared with other rapidly growing Asian countries, Malaysia’s per person consumption of livestock products is relatively high. For example, per person consumption of meat in Malaysia was around 48 kilograms in 2005. This compares with around 35 kilograms in both Japan and the Republic of Korea, and 24 kilograms in Thailand.
In Indonesia, consistent with significant improvements in living standards, the proportion of household expenditure on food fell steadily since 1969-1970, with most of the decline accounted for by the cereal and tuberous food groups. Correspondingly, the share of non-food items rose and there was a sharp increase in housing and utilities expenditures. Expenditures for meats, eggs, and milk increased significantly, however.

Expenditures for prepared food also increased by 100 percent more than any other food items over the period 1985 to 2007. This was due to more women’s entering the labor force. From only 32.60 percent in 1980, they accounted for 39.60 percent in 1985 and 49.93 percent in 1997. This phenomenon might have resulted in the reduction in their available time to prepare food at home (Central Bureau Statistics of Indonesia 2008; Soemantri et al. 1997).

There have been remarkable changes in food intake during the years 1983 and 1999. Fish consumption remained similar at 52 g/day in 1983 and 54 g/day in 1999. The largest increases were found in soy, and, to a lesser extent, in meat, eggs, and dairy products. In 1983, consumption of soy was 10 g/day, but, in 1999, the consumption increased to 110 g/day. In contrast, rice and cereal consumption decreased significantly from 1007 g/day in 1983, to -512 g/day in 1999. To demonstrate the trends in the proportion of dietary nutrient intakes, results from two case studies made in West Sumatra are reported. There was a dramatic change in macronutrient intake (computed as percent contribution of total energy intake). The average total energy intake was significantly different during the two periods. In 1983, the average total energy intake was 2,722 kcal and 1,740 kcal for men and women, respectively (Malik 1986); while it was 1,890 kcal and 1,825 kcal for men and women in 2004, respectively (Lipoeto et al. 2004). The energy intake of men remained significantly higher than that of women. In 1983, the ratio of energy from carbohydrates, proteins, and fats was as follows: 82:8:10, indicating that the energy intake was mainly from carbohydrates, and that fat and protein did not contribute much. After 21 years, the ratio shifted to 56:18:28, which showed that carbohydrate still contributed a great proportion of energy but to a much lesser extent. The ratio also showed an increase in fat and protein consumption. The increase in protein intake paralleled the substantial increase in meat and dairy products consumption. Fat-derived energy intake increased throughout the period, from 10 percent to 28 percent. The change in the energy contribution of carbohydrate, protein, and fat, percentage wise, may give a broad picture of the nutrition transition in Indonesia.

3. Discussion

Nutrition transition

Nutrition transition in Southeast Asian countries has gone a long way. There have been tremendous increases in the prevalence of obesity amongst adult and children, and in the risks attendant to obesity such as diabetes mellitus, coronary heart diseases and strokes, even as undernutrition problems such as being underweight, severe malnutrition, anemia, and iodine deficiency remain undefeated.

The nutrition transition in the Philippines has been reflected in changes in the proportions of macronutrients and food intakes, and in dramatic shifts in the causes of death, from infectious to chronic, non-communicable diseases. Deaths from infectious diseases have shown a progressive descent since the 1940s, while deaths from heart disease and cancer have increased progressively. In the early 1990s, diseases of the heart and the vascular system were assumed to be the top two causes of death in the Philippines (Dayrit 2003). On the other hand, there have been steady decreases in the prevalence of undernutrition in children in the Philippines, from 34.55 percent in 1990, to 24.6 percent in 2006. However, obesity was also found to afflict 14 percent of the children in Manila and 24.5 percent of the adults.

The performance of the Philippine economy has been remarkable over the past 26 years, inclusive of mid-1997, or during the economic crisis. Gross Domestic Product increased dramatically from Php600 million in 1980 to Php1, 200 million in 2006. Such high economic growth increased food availability and enhanced the purchasing power of the people, thereby accelerating nutrition transition.

Since attaining independence in 1957, Malaysia has achieved marked socio-economic development including advances in the health care delivery system. Vital data over the decades have shown much improvement in the health status of Malaysians, in general. From the Human Development Report
(2000), Malaysia was seen to have better socioeconomic and health status than several countries in the Southeast Asian region, in terms of life expectancy at birth (74.5 years for women and 70.1 years for men), and infant, toddler and maternal mortality rates (9, 10, and 39 per 100,000 live births, respectively). The nutritional status of Malaysians mirrors a society that is undergoing nutrition transition. Consequences of the dual burden of under- and over-nutrition are evident in various age groups in the rural and the urban areas. On the one hand, protein–energy malnutrition persists as shown by the underweight children and the stunted growth of the young ones in the rural areas, which ranged between 20 and 30 percent, and 25 and 35 percent, respectively in 1997 (Khor 1997). These decreased from 16 percent to 13.2 percent, and from 19.4 percent to 15.8 percent per the Third National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS III) in 2006 (Institute for Public Health 2008). In contrast, the prevalence of overweight children and adolescents in the urban areas was growing such that from a range of 5.4 to 6.3 percent in 1996 for children (Bong and Safurah 1996), it rose to 18 to 19 percent ten years later (Zalilah et al. 2006). The number of overweight adults has similarly risen. The Second National Health and Morbidity Survey of the Ministry of Health Malaysia (1997) reported that 26.5 percent of the adult population was overweight in 1997; the figure rose to 29.1 percent in 2008 (NHMS IV 2008).

There have been remarkable changes in the Indonesian economy, as well, even as the average economic growth of 7.8 percent in the 1970s was down to 6.5 percent in the 1980s but went up to 7.2 percent a decade later. Such high economic growth increased food availability and enhanced the purchasing power of the people, which, in turn, accelerated nutrition transition. A shift from labor-intensive occupations in the rural primary product sectors of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, to occupations in the services and manufacturing industries was in consonance with the marked increase in the GNP of Indonesia. This transition was linked to a major reduction in energy expenditures at work. Life expectancy changed dramatically, from 42 to 67 years old and from 47 to 69 years old, for the men and the women, respectively in 1967 and 2008. Indonesia, like many other developing countries, is experiencing nutrition transition, which is being reflected in the rapid changes in the diet structure and the causes of death.

**Dietary habits and food culture**

This study showed that most of the participants still maintain their own food consumption patterns. The nutrition transition in the regions could not be explained by the introduction of Western foods, because the practice of consumption of Western food in this study population was minimal. According to some participants in the FGDs, Western foods were considered as snack foods that were consumed for recreation and leisure.

This study also showed that there has been only a slight change in food preferences amongst the participants. Most of the participants have not changed their dietary patterns. There was little or almost no change in food preferences between the younger and the older generations. A similar pattern of preserving traditional food patterns was found in Korea. Kim et al. (2003) and Lee et al. (2002) reported a recent boom in the demand for traditional restaurants in South Korea. Restaurants called ‘Country dining table’ that served mostly vegetable side dishes, ‘Raw vegetable house’ where people use assorted vegetables to wrap their own food, and ‘Native local food restaurants’ and ‘Buddhist temple restaurants’ where meats were excluded, were gaining popularity, even among modernized people.

In his study in China, Popkin (2001) revealed that the nutrition transition in many developing countries has been reflected in dramatic shifts in food consumption. These diet shifts include large increases in energy density, and in the proportion of the population consuming a high fat diet and more animal products. People living in the urban areas consume food distinctly different from those of their rural counterparts.

One of the more profound effects of nutrition transition is the accelerated change in the structure of diets, which can only partially be explained by economic factors. The improvement of the economic status in the three Southeast Asian countries has increased the people’s food purchasing power. But this does not necessarily mean that the people changed their food preferences.

The addition of more animal products, sugar, and oil to the same traditional recipes was probably the major cause of the increasing obesity that resulted to
The increased availability of palm oil in Malaysia and Indonesia, and of coconut oil in the Philippines may also have had a role, as noticed by Drenowski (1997) and Popkin (2004), in China: the consumption of food derived from fat and refined carbohydrates had grown in many developing countries. Moreover, the cultural perceptions of diet quality, influenced by commercial advertisements, have led to the consumption of more products containing refined sugar (Cabalero 2006).

Conclusion and Recommendation

The results of this study showed that the Malaysians, the Filipinos and the Indonesians have retained many of the aspects of their traditional diets, although there was a significant difference in the food varieties of the urban versus the rural areas. The Western food franchises and culture have not yet overwhelmed the local food culture in this region. The rapid nutrition transition in this region may be due, instead, to the increasing availability of food and the increase in the food purchasing power of the people, rather than to a shift in food preference for modern western food.

But the increase in the number of nutrition-related, non-communicable disease cases such as diabetes mellitus, coronary heart disease, and cancer makes it still important to proceed with the campaign in favor of the consumption of local traditional foods. Health food campaigns encouraging the increased consumption of fiber, vegetables, and fruits, and the decreased consumption of fats and sugars should be supported. This can be done by strengthening the local food culture and reviving the consumption of the traditional diet using an approach that is acceptable. It is also recommended that the governments in Southeast Asian countries focus more on the prevention of obesity and its attendant risks.

Acknowledgment

This study would not have been completed without the help of the hosts in each country. I am indebted to my host in the Philippines, Dr. Imelda Angeles-Agdeppa, from the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI). This institution is under the Department of Science and Technology of the Republic of the Philippines. It is located in Taguig City. Dr. Agdeppa is an assistant scientist at the FNRI. My appreciation and sincere thanks also go to Prof. Khor Geok Lin of the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences of Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). Dr. Agdeppa and Prof. Khor helped me choose the areas to study. Their sharing of their knowledge in local food consumption and government reports on the health and nutrition status in their respective countries was really appreciated.

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Judicialization in Asia: Resolving Social Justice Issues Through National Human Rights Institutions and the Judiciaries

Pichet Maolanond

Abstract

This is a study on the contributions of the judicialization of politics to social justice in four Asian countries vis-à-vis Thailand.

Social justice is the foundation of a healthy community moving toward a society where all the hungry are fed, all the sick cared for, and the environment, treasured. Judicialization roughly refers to the casual but progressive ways by which judicial and quasi-judicial independent institutions rule, after moving away from absolute legalism for the sake of social justice. Judicialization can be traced to the constitutionalism concept where judicial and quasi-judicial powers are the guardians of the rights and liberties of the minorities, the weak and the underprivileged against majoritarianism. This propensity naturally leads to the loose rather than rigid separation of powers. The main goal of this study is to review court cases as they pertain to social justice issues, in an effort to test the force constitutionalism in Asia. Its findings are as follows:

Firstly, it found that the contribution of judicial powers to social justice in Asia has been continually growing since the end of the totalitarian era in each country, but has been ongoing in Japan much longer, that is, since the end of World War II.

Secondly, it also found that the structure of national human rights institutions (NHRIs) have been firmly established in all four Asian nations (except Japan) thereby enabling them to conduct their functions that are ‘complementary’ to the judiciary. Sound democratization cannot leave things entirely in the hands of the judiciary.

To conclude, the judicial culture in all five Asian countries seems to constantly be moving away from the legal absolutism of majoritarianism and parliamentary supremacy (though under money-politics elections), toward constitutional supremacy where the rights and liberties of marginal people are also gradually cherished. The comparative study of judicialized court cases in Asian counties strongly reflects these facts.

NOTE

His paper is in progress as of September 2010. The finalized paper will be published on API website at: http://www.api-fellowships.org/body/archives.php#proceedings.
The Role of the Media and Media Freedom in Democratizing Countries – A Comparative Study of Indonesian and Malaysian Media

Tsukasa Iga

Introduction: Media and politics in democratizing countries

In the 1980s, the world witnessed what Samuel Huntington (1993) called “the third wave of democratization”. In Asia, there were the People Power Revolution in the Philippines, direct presidential elections in Korea and Taiwan, the May 1992 events in Thailand, and the downfall of Suharto’s New Order regime in Indonesia. Media freedom was one of the important indicators that academics and policymakers cited as evidence of these democratization processes. In the Philippines, for example, the Catholic Church’s radio station, Radio Veritas, was critical in deciding the fate of the People Power movement; while in Thailand, the Thai press played a critical role in the ouster of Prime Minister Suchinda in 1992.

Unfortunately, not enough research has been done on the substantive relationship between politics and media. As Duncan McCargo (1999) points out, the reason why media has not been given sufficient attention in the field of political science and media studies is that “those who study politics generally have a limited understanding of the media”, while “those who study media generally have a weak understanding of politics”. Indeed, how does free media develop under democratization? What are the fundamental ingredients for such an emergence and what role does media play in the democratization processes? In this paper, I will try to answer these questions with Indonesian and Malaysian media as case studies.

Indonesia was under the New Order regime of General Suharto for more than 30 years. During this period, the military was omnipotent, while the media was always expected to support the government’s development policies. After the downfall of the New Order in 1998, Indonesia abandoned the repressive media control system of the New Order and became one of the later countries in Asia to have the freest media.

In Malaysia, Alliance, the ruling coalition which had governed the country since it gained independence, was succeeded by the Barisan National (BN) in the 1970s. BN is composed of multiple ethnic-based parties, but its main force is the United Malay National Organization (UMNO), which represents the interests of the majority ethnic group, the Malay. In 1998, following the establishment of the Reformasi movement by Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim upon his removal from the government and UMNO, Malaysia began to experience democratization gradually. Although media remains subject to some undemocratic policies of government, the free space is increasingly expanding.

For the theoretical framework, I refer to the works of Duncan McCargo, who sees media as a political actor and a political institution in its own right. The media, accordingly, is assigned three political functions: it is an agent of stability, of restraints, and of change (McCargo 2003, 2-3). As an agent of stability, the media promotes national ideology, legitimizes the development process, and then helps preserve the social and political order. These functions are sometimes associated with the term “development journalism” in the Third World. As an agent of restraints, on the other hand, the media monitors the political order in peacetime, and provides checks and balances in the interest of a more effective and representative government. Finally, as an agent of change, the media is a firefighter, shaping political change during times of crises and transition periods.

There is no doubt that under an authoritarian regime most of the media support the regime voluntarily or involuntarily. However, in some countries undergoing democratization, we also find that the media functions as an agent of restraint or change, even as the government keeps it on a tight leash. In Mexico, for example, under the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI)’s long dominance, the media was corrupted and manipulated by the government, and was always a strong supporter of the regime. Nevertheless, since the 1970s, the Mexican media was gradually liberalized and diversified, and eventually achieved considerable freedom. How did the media liberalization happen in Mexico? What factors contributed to the liberalization and diversification of the Mexican media? According
to Chappell H. Lawson (2002, 181), “political liberalization is not the sole or even the most important driver of change in the media”. In fact, “media opening was the product of a number of other changes in Mexican society that occurred prior to or independently of political liberalization” (Lawson 2002, 178). Lawson points out two important ingredients leading to this opening. The first was the competition between media outlets, which encouraged economic liberalization and market-oriented reform. The second was the emergence of new journalism, which had new journalistic norms and visions that could influence the transformation of media. I think the theoretical framework implications of the Mexican case can apply to the Indonesian and the Malaysian cases. I will pay attention to the economic competition between media outlets and the emergence of new journalism.

However, I do not ignore the political contexts in both countries. Unlike in the Mexican case, it is hard to deny that the political contexts expand (or contract) the extent of economic competition or the possibility of the emergence of new journalism in Indonesia and Malaysia. For this purpose, I will introduce an analytical concept, political opportunity, which was introduced by theorists of contentious politics, such as Sidney Tarrow, Charles Tilly, and Doug McAdam (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 1997; Tarrow 1998). These theorists argue that the frequency and the scale of contention such as demonstrations and strikes are affected by political opportunity. Political opportunity consists of various dimensions, such as increasing access, shifting alignments, a divided elite, and influential allies. I use the concept of political opportunity in the context of media freedom.

Focusing mainly on print media, I will argue in this paper that media freedom in democratizing countries depends on three ingredients: political opportunity, economic competition between media outlets, and the emergence of new journalism. I will discuss broadcast media on another occasion.

1. Indonesian Media during the Transition – The Mid-1980s to 1998

Indonesian Media under the New Order Regime

Under the New Order regime, the Indonesian media was strictly controlled by the government despite the fact that Article 4 of the 1966 Press Law (Undang-Undang No. 11 Tahun 1966 Tentang Ketentuan-Ketentuan Pokok Pers) ensured that no censorship or bridle would be applied to the press. The reality was so different that to publishers of a newspaper or a magazine had to obtain two permits: the Permit to Publish (Surat Izin Terbit, SIT and later Surat Izin Usaha Penelitian Pers, SIUPP) from the Department of Information and the Permit to Print (Surat Izin Cetak, SIC) from the military security authority (Kopkami). The New Order government repeatedly repealed SIT (SIUPP), and this tendency peaked in 1974 when twelve newspapers and magazines were banned; in 1978 when fourteen newspapers and magazines were put out of circulation; and in 1994, where despite the low number (three) of publications banned, the ban promoted nation-wide protests against the decision.

The government used two journalist organizations to control the media. One was the Press Council, which consisted of representatives from the government, the press, and society. The Council, as a government regulatory body, was officially given the power to repeal the SIUPP because its membership was dominated by people in the government and the military (its chair was the Minister of Information). In this regard, the independence of the Council was questioned. The other organization was the Indonesian Journalist Association (Persatuan Wartawan Indonesia, PWI). A ministerial regulation from the Department of Information in 1969 ruled that anyone wishing to work as a journalist should be a member of the PWI, which issued official journalist cards. Those without a card could not cover government affairs.

Using the power of license control and the pro-government journalist organizations, the New Order government propagated the concept of “Pancasila Press” ideology. What was ironic about this ideology was that the Pancasila Press proclaimed itself supportive of a “free and responsible” press. The “free and responsible” concept of the press was originally borrowed from the 1947 Hutchins Commission Report of the United States, but its Indonesian version, according to Janet Steele, “meant adhering to a set of guidelines prohibiting the reporting of anything that was likely to inflame ethnic, religious, racial or group (class) tensions. In practice, this meant that the press could not report openly on religious clashes, church burnings, race riots, labor unrest, and separatist
movements. Nor could it criticize the first family, senior government officials, or military leaders” (Steele 2005, 94).

**Emergence of New Media Groups**

After the New Order started in 1966, the Indonesian economy began to achieve high economic growth. But the collapse of oil prices and the devaluation of the rupiah in the early 1980s caused a temporary slump in the economy. To put the economy back on the path toward high growth, the government embarked on economic liberalization. The deregulation of the press was also one of the government’s strategies to lure foreign investment. However, behind the scenes, “a schism between the Department of Information’s long-established practice of regulating the press for ideological reasons, and economic ministries such as the Department of Industry and Trade which increasingly recognized the press as a domestic industry” was increasingly expanding (Sen and Hill 2007, 62).

In the 1980s, new developments were evident in the Indonesian media, which the government’s economic liberalization moves stimulated. New media groups emerged, some of which were run as multi-business conglomerates. Leading the print media were Kompas-Gramedia, Grafti Pers, Media Indonesia, and several others (see Table 1). Some of the new media groups that functioned as market players in the 1960s and 1970s began to consolidate their businesses thereafter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Flagship media</th>
<th>Established year of the flagship media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kompas-Gramedia</td>
<td>Kompas [P]</td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sinar Kasih</td>
<td>Sinar Harapan (Suara Phembaruan*1) [P]</td>
<td>1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grafti Pers</td>
<td>Tempo [M] *2</td>
<td>1971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurnalindo</td>
<td>Bisnis Indonesia [M]</td>
<td>1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abdi Bangsa</td>
<td>Republika [P]</td>
<td>1993</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 Sinar Harapan was banned by the government in 1985. Instead of Sinar Harapan, the Sinar Kasih group was allowed to publish Suara Phembaruan.

*2 On 2 April 2001, Tempo started to publish the Koran Tempo daily.

*3 The year that Surya Paloh joined the management as co-publisher.

For instance, the Kompas-Gramedia group, which published Kompas, the most prestigious daily, was established in 1965 by Chinese and Javanese Catholic journalists supported by the Catholic Party. Kompas began with a modest circulation of 5,000 copies but, after 25 years, its circulation hit 500,000, making it one of the biggest media conglomerates in Southeast Asia. What drove Kompas’s growth was its “solid reputation” for analytical depth and polished style (Hill 1994, 84).

The Media Indonesia group, which publishes the daily Media Indonesia, was established by the Acehnese-born entrepreneur, Surya Paloh. Within ten years after he started to concentrate on his media business in the mid-1980s, his aggressive marketing strategy and close relationship with the president’s son put his new media empire on solid ground.

According to David Hill, this rapid change in journalism under the New Order came “with some startling exceptions, from 1978 generally it has been the marketplace rather than government ban which has determined those papers that survived” (quoted in Hanazaki 1996, 60).
**Tempo: The Emergence of New Journalism**

Under the New Order regime, new media groups like Grafti Pers began to publish the weekly magazine *Tempo*, which had a remarkable impact on the development of Indonesian journalism. *Tempo* was established in 1971 by a group of journalists who had worked in the student paper *Harian Kami* and the magazine *Ekspress*. *Tempo*’s founding editor, Gunawan Mohamad, remains charismatic among current Indonesian journalists. He is internationally well-known despite his having retired from the front line of journalism.

*Tempo* drew enthusiastic and royal readers from among the urban middle class and rapidly expanded within a few years after it was established. Modeled on the American weekly, *Time* magazine, *Tempo*’s journalism style was investigative. Over time, it became the wellspring of professional journalism, Daniel Dhakidea writes:

> [T]he magazine [Tempo] was born out a purely professional motivation, to present to the nation what the founders thought of as a professional journalism, manned by professional writers and journalists who were supposed to care for it twenty-four hours a day (Dhakidea 1991, 255).

*Tempo* drew support from the Jaya Raya Foundation, the “charity arm” of the Jaya Development Group, whose investments in Jakarta range from a soccer team to big development projects. In that sense, *Tempo* could be said to have been under the control of the big business at the beginning. But after three years, the magazine no longer needed the financial support of the Jaya Raya Foundation, leading to the conclusion of an important agreement between the Jaya Raya Foundation and the journalists of *Tempo* with regard to *Tempo*’s ownership. In 1974, the Jaya Raya Foundation agreed to a 50:50 joint ownership of the magazine between itself and the magazine’s journalists, thereby enabling *Tempo* to achieve editorial independence.

*Tempo*’s contribution to Indonesian journalism was in part due to *Tempo*’s education focus and the “alumni network” that it nurtured throughout the years. Its education system is especially attractive to newly recruited journalists because of its systematic and sophisticated approach to journalism. Many ex-*Tempo* journalists are admired for the training they received while working for the magazine. A number of them now work as senior journalists in other media companies. It is this “alumni network” which has contributed to the spread of professional values and thinking among Indonesian journalists.

**Keterbukaan and the Struggle for Media Freedom in the 1990s**

The government decided to relax media control in the early 1990s. This new policy was called *Keterbukaan*. Several factors explained why *Keterbukaan* came into being. According to Hanazaki (1996), the power struggle between the Suharto-Habibie-Harmoko (Information Minister and Golkar Chairman) line and the Indonesian Armed Forces (Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia, ABRI) led to the founding of *Keterbukaan*.

ABRI’s support for the policy was a means of indirectly criticizing the Suharto-Habibie-Harmoko line of initiatives and restoring its declining role in politics by wooing public support. It changed its attitude toward the press, not only by becoming less hostile but by also encouraging journalists to write about selective issues (Harazaki 1996, 164).

Malaysians might view the era of *Keterbukaan* in Indonesia as similar to the period under Abdullah Ahmad Badawi’s government where the repressive atmosphere against the media was relaxed and the media was later allowed, to a certain extent, to criticize the government “constructively”. Still, the government’s media control systems—the license and journalist organization control—were maintained.

A good example of the relaxed atmosphere of *Keterbukaan* was the March 1993 publication of the first edition of the weekly political tabloid *DeTIK*. *DeTIK*’s outspoken reporting style was supported enthusiastically by the people such that after selling 7,000 copies of its first edition, its circulation skyrocketed to 450,000 within a year (Hanasaki 1996, 184). This development in Indonesian journalism suggested that the Indonesians were hungry for directly-reported political information.

Then, on 21 June 1994, the government banned three weekly magazines, namely, *Tempo*, *DeTIK* and *Editor* for no apparent reason; although many believed the move meant to block the magazines’ continued coverage of the conflicts between the government’s
ministers and the military over the purchase of a German warship. Here, the three magazines played the role of agents of restraints.

Thereafter, journalists and student groups responded to the ban by holding public protests in Jakarta, Semarang, Yogyakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, Manado, Ujungpandang, and elsewhere. And in reaction to the PWI’s announcement of its approval of the government’s ban of the three magazines, groups of young journalists aged around 30 who were highly critical of the PWI established the Alliance of Independent Journalist (Aliansi Journalis Independen, AJI) as an alternative journalists’ organization. Despite their being threatened and harassed by the government, AJI journalists managed to unite and maintain their activities for the sake of media freedom.

After the New Order

With Suharto’s demise, the repressive media control was abolished. Major developments where Indonesian media freedom was concerned included the enactment of the Press Law in 1999. This law abolished the license control system, banned censorship, and gave journalists the right to join or form journalists’ associations freely. Also, during the administration of President Abdurrahman Wahid, the Department of Information was temporarily abolished. Further, the Indonesian parliament passed the Freedom of Information Act.

The argument I am trying to advance here is that the abolition of the repressive media control systems and the introduction of liberal media laws were achieved after the change in regime. The New Order government introduced the new media policy (Keterbukaan) that, to a certain extent, allowed the media to criticize the government and take an independent position. This “relaxation”, however, came to an end when the three magazines were banned in 1994. The government’s move was too late. The media had been slowly beginning to disobey the government’s authority, and the government, therefore, was increasingly losing real power over the media. In other words, before political liberalization became a reality, new players in the media industry had already emerged and competition had already been well under way, with Tempo leading in popularity among the rising middle class. It was obvious that the emergence of new journalism activated the media and expanded free space.

II. The Malaysian Media during the Transition from 1999 to the Present

Media Control by the Government and Ruling Parties

Unlike the Indonesian media under the New Order regime, the Malaysian government’s control over the media is generally tighter. Today, there are more than 30 laws that regulate and control media activities in Malaysia, the most important law of which is the Printing Presses and Publications Act (PPPA), which requires a publisher to apply for a publication license. However, two additional stipulations of the PPPA – the annual renewal of the license and the discretionary power of the Minister of Home Affairs – made the Malaysian license control tighter than the Indonesian one. Malaysian publishers are required to renew their license yearly, and the government can delay license renewal without providing specific reasons, thus exerting pressure on the newspapers. As a recent example, in April 2008, the Tamil daily Makkal Osai applied for the renewal of its license. But the government rejected the application, forcing the paper to stop operations for a few days. The reason why the daily had been denied the license extension was that the government was dissatisfied with its coverage of opposition party leader Anwar Ibrahim in the 2008 general elections.

The PPPA gives the Minister of Home Affairs discretionary powers over license control, a power that publishers cannot question in the courts. This makes Malaysia’s media control system far more stringent than that of Indonesia in the 1990s, in the sense that in the latter, the publishers could fight back.

The Malaysian government and ruling parties can also control the media through ownership. Notably, divided by the languages, Malay, English, Chinese and Tamil, the Malaysian media market is seemingly diverse which characteristic, in fact, conceals monopolistic government control. For example, in the Malay market, only two groups, the Utusan group and the NSTP group, run business in all states of west Malaysia, and they are controlled by UMNO. The markets of the other languages also suffer from the same: the major groups are controlled by the ruling
parties or the business people with close links to the parties in power (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Utusan</td>
<td>Utusan Malaysia, Kosmo!</td>
<td>UMNO (more than 50 percent share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSTP</td>
<td>New Straits Times, Malay Mail, Berita Harian, Harian Metro</td>
<td>Media Prima group* (linked to UMNO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Publications</td>
<td>The Star</td>
<td>MCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Chinese</td>
<td>Sin Chew, Guan Ming, Nanyang, China Press (+Ming Pau in Hong Kong)</td>
<td>Tiong Hiew King (close to MCA leaders)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nesan</td>
<td>Tamil Nesan</td>
<td>Indrani Samy Vella (wife of MIC president Samy Vellu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sun Publications</td>
<td>The Sun (free paper)</td>
<td>Vincent Tan (close to Mahathir)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KTS</td>
<td>Oriental Daily, See Hua, Utusan Borneo, The Borneo Post</td>
<td>Henry Lau Lee Kong (family of BN’s MP in Sibu)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Major Daily Newspapers and Their Owners

Source: Various sources

*The Media Prima Group controls all free-to-air TV stations in Malaysia (TV3, NTV7, 8TV, TV9).

All these factors have been muzzling the Malaysian media for a long time so that the mainstream media has lost public trust, especially among the young people. Merdeka Center, the public opinion survey institution, once asked young Malaysians between 20 and 35 years old, “How strongly do you trust or distrust the mainstream media in terms of their reporting on political and current issues?”. According to the results, 46 percent of young Malaysians trust mainstream media, while 49 percent distrust it. This is not to say, however, that the mainstream media have not tried to regain the people’s trust. But the pace of their reform remains slow, and change appears to be effected by the new players rather than the old.

Malaysiakini – The Emergence of New Journalism with the Internet

In November 1999, just before the Eleventh General Election, the online news site, Malaysiakini, was launched by Steven Gan (editor-in-chief) and Premesh Chandran (CEO). The government had had no censorship policy toward online space since 1997 (during Mahathir administration) in order to allow for the development of the Multimedia Super Corridor project. Consequently, the online activities were not required to hold government-issued licenses.

The founders of Malaysiakini took advantage of the absence of such regulations, but after a few years, Malaysiakini came under pressure from the government, the ruling parties, and market forces due to its independent and trustworthy news. Today, Malaysiakini averages daily online visits of about 200,000 (Malaysia Press & PR Guide 2009). On the voting day of the Thirteenth General Election of 2008, the number of Malaysiakini’s visitors rose to 500,000.

In this paper, I wish to look at only two points pertaining to Malaysiakini. First, Malaysiakini is a multi-linguistic site: English, Malay, Chinese and Tamil. According to Steven Gan, by making Malaysiakini multi-linguistic, it sought to break the “divide and rule” proclivity of Malaysian society and bridge the gaps between all communities. This is one of the important roles of media in a multi-ethnic society. Second, Malaysiakini’s ownership is held by Steven Gan and Premesh Chandran, each of whom owns 30.1 percent of the company’s equity; and by the Media Development Loan Fund (MDLF), an international NGO in charge of supporting media venture projects, which holds 29.1 percent. The remaining 10.6 percent is owned by individuals, current and former staff members, under the Employee Share Incentive Scheme. The notable point here is that because the founders hold 60.2 percent of the equity, Malaysiakini can maintain its editorial independence.

It should also be noted that the success of Malaysiakini led to the mushrooming of new online news sites. Malaysian Insider, Nut Graph, and Malaysian Mirror are English sites; Agenda Daily and KL Pos are Malay sites; and Merdeka Review is a Chinese site.
In Malaysia, as *Malaysiakini* is the pioneer of the online news sites, it is therefore reasonable to say that it was *Malaysiakini* that established the new style of journalism in the country.

**Sinar Harian – The New Player in the Malay Daily Market**

Signs of change can also be seen in the print media market where a new media player, the Malay daily *Sinar Harian*, which was circulated in the two northeastern coastal states of Trengganu and Kelantan, came into existence in 2006. By its third year, with the exception of the state of Johor, *Sinar Harian* was being distributed all throughout the western states of Malaysia. Its circulation sometimes rose to as high as 200,000. Considering that the other Malay papers recently began to suffer from what appeared to be a perennial decline in circulation, *Sinar Harian*’s dramatic increase in circulation was remarkable. The secret to its success lay in its community-based reporting system and in its fair coverage of both the ruling and opposition parties.

The former is particularly important. Depending on the states, *Sinar Harian* has seven different versions in each area: Selangor and KL, Melaka and Negeri Sembilan, Perak, Utara (Kedah, Penang and Perlis), Pahang, Trengganu, and Kelantan. The front pages of each version are all different. *Sinar Harian* normally allocates one or two pages to the local news of each district in a state. To collect local news in each district, *Sinar Harian* has an original reporting system called the *Skua cj Cakna* (Caring Squads). According to this system, with their portrait photo and mobile number printed in each’s *Sinar Harian* page so that local people can contact them, the reporters are assigned as skua cj cakna in each district. In this sense, *Sinar Harian* is an interactive newspaper.

As for the second secret behind the success of *Sinar Harian*, it is crucial to point out that the paper can maintain fair coverage because its publisher, the Karangkraf Group, is the only one independent Malay media group. The Karangkraf Group was established in 1978 by Kelantan businessman Hussenuddin Yaacub, a “rare Malay entrepreneur who has made it in life with very little government help” (Raslan 2008). The Karangkraf Group now publishes 29 magazines and newspapers, ranging from the woman’s lifestyle weekly *Mingguan Wanita* (160,000 circulated weekly), to the youth weekly *Bacaria* (90,000 circulated weekly), among others (*Media Planning Guide Malaysia* 2009, 2009: 228). The Group has experienced publishing two newspapers – *Watan* in the 1980s and *Eksklusif* in 1999, which covered political news and current issues. However, both papers were later banned by the government. In this respect, the success of *Sinar Harian* is based on the past history of the struggle of the Karangkraf Group.

**Diversification of the Media**

Since 1998, the media in Malaysia has become more diversified. Two aspects of media diversification are worthy of mention here. First, we cannot deny that the organs of the opposition parties play important roles in serving as alternative sources of information for the public. The most famous and influential of such is *Harakah*, the organ of Party Islam SeMalaysia (PAS). The circulation of *Harakah* peaked at about 380,000 in 1999, but began to decline in 2000. Still, it remained relatively high, hovering between 140,000 and 150,000.

Why can *Harakah* still maintain such a high circulation? It is true that the party stalwarts contribute to *Harakah*’s strong base. But there are other reasons, which we can glean from its online strategy and editorial staff.

*Harakah* moved online in the incipient stage of the Internet in Malaysia. It opened the Internet site *Harakahdaily.com* in 1997. Then, in August 2006, *Harakahdaily.com* started Web TV. *Harakah* closely operates with the online site and makes use of technological advances.

Until the end of the 1990s, politicians from PAS occupied the position of editor-in-chief of *Harakah*. Thereafter, the succeeding editors-in-chief had journalistic backgrounds, starting with Zulkifi Sulon, who began his career in journalism with *Harakah* in 1987. Worthy of note, although *Harakah* was originally designed to be a supporter of PAS, those editors with journalistic backgrounds raised the standards of professionalism of the paper.

The other facet of Malaysian media diversification was the recent flourishing of the culture of civil journalism through online blogs. Among the bloggers are the socially and politically influential, which include Ahiruddin Attan (a journalist of the mainstream media), Jeff Ooi (a web engineer and, later, a Member...
of Parliament from an opposition party), Lim Kit Siang (one opposition party’s leader), and Mahathir Mohammad (ex-Prime Minister). Zulukifli Sulong, now the editor of the weekly paper Siasah, said, "Before they [opposition parties’ organs and blogs] surfaced, truth was only from the government. But now we have many alternative sources [of information]."

As the Malaysian media continues to diversify, movements for media freedom have also come out from among the circles of journalists and writers. For example, in 1999, a small group of journalists from the English daily, The Star, which the ruling party, the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) controls, sought to collect journalists’ signatures to demand the government’s repeal of the PPPA two weeks ahead of the World Press Freedom Day.21 The group was able to obtain 581 signatures. Sheila Murugasu, one of the journalists who advocated this movement, says:

I wrote the memorandum and attached a petition form. We then called the various newspapers and asked someone from each paper to get signatures. We passed a copy of the memorandum to the New Straits Times, The Sun, Utusan, Berita Harian, Nanyang Siang Pau and Sin Chew Jit Poh. Sometimes, I didn’t know anyone there and I think I had to ask some other reporters for some names of people I could call. I must give these representatives a lot of credit. The reason for the high number of signatures is that everyone I asked to get the signatures took it seriously and made a real effort to get as many as they could.22

The journalists succeeded in collecting several signatures from the perspective of political opportunity at that time: UMNO had not yet recovered from the chaos caused by the ouster of Anwar Ibrahim. The group’s action was timely and an indication that even journalists working in media controlled by the governing parties can play significant roles in promoting media freedom if they grab and take advantage of the right political opportunity.

Conclusion

From the analyses of Indonesian and Malaysian media, we can conclude that the driving forces behind the expansion of media freedom in both countries were the amalgam of political opportunity, the emergence of competition in the market, and new journalism, which attempts to challenge conventional thinking.

As pioneers of new journalism, Tempo and Malaysiakini, taking advantage of political opportunities, practiced investigative journalism, projecting a huge impact on local journalists. Tempo was the great beneficiary of the stable economic development under the New Order regime, which produced the middle class market. Schisms between the elite within the New Order regime (e.g., the Department of Information versus the economic ministries; or the Suharto-Habibie-Harmoko lines versus The ATRI) likewise contributed to Tempo’s success. However, what I wish to underline here is that’s enterprising spirit proved instrumental in attracting the middle class of the New Order regime. Because of such a broad audience, it was not surprising that the government’s closure of Tempo triggered a nationwide protest.

Similarly, Malaysiakini took advantage of the government’s no-censorship and no-license policies toward the Internet. In the first few years, Malaysiakini suffered continuous harassments from the government and ruling parties. At the same time, its survival was being threatened by market competition. However, Malaysiakini, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, has always attracted a good number of advertisements from multinational companies and conglomerates in the domestic market.

Also, it is important to note that Malaysiakini today often covers interviews with powerful politicians of BN and is growing to be a “mainstream online medium”. Thus, it can be reasonably concluded that Tempo and Malaysiakini functioned (and are still functioning) well as agents of restraints.

Malaysia’s Sinar Harian is now breaking the monopoly of the Malay market with its ideas and community-based reporting system. The major attributes shared by the three media outlets discussed in this paper are that they are able to maintain editorial independence and are unencumbered by political interference. In Malaysia where the governing parties control the media groups, the importance of ownership has been confirmed and should thus be emphasized. Moreover, as already mentioned with regard to the collection of signatures for the abolition of the PPPA, even those journalists working in media directly controlled by parties in government can assume meaningful roles in enhancing media freedom if they are able to seize and make clever use of the political opportunity available to them. One vital implication of the study, therefore, is this: the most
important factor in promoting media freedom in a democratizing country is the individual journalists’ decision to sustain their spirit as independent actors.

NOTES

1 In 1977, Kopkamb abolished SIC.

2 After the New Order regime, the Media Indonesia group established Metro TV, a 24-hour TV news channel like the American CNN.

3 For example, Harian Rakjat (Communist Party of Indonesia Organ), Pedoman (Socialist Party of Indonesia), Salah Indonesia (Indonesian Nationalist Party organ), Abadi (Masyumi organ).

4 For details on the Jaya Raya Foundation and the Jaya Development Group, see Dhakidea (1991, 258-259) and Steele (2005, 60-61).

5 Tempo has been seen as a “school of journalism” in Indonesia. See details in Goenawan Mohammad (2007) and Steele (2005, 3-23).

6 Budlono Darsono (influential editor of DeTIK) was a former editor of Tempo. He started his online news site Detik.com after Suharto’s ouster.

7 During the Megawati administration, the Department of Information was resurrected.

8 In Malaysia, the print media is under the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs, while the broadcast media and the Internet are under the control of the Ministry of Information.

9 In Indonesia, Tempo’s editor-in-chief, Goenawan Mohammad, sued the government because of the ban. Surprisingly, at that time, Goenawan won the case in the first and second courts.


11 Both Steven Gan and Premesh Chandran joined the social movement during their stint as students in Australia. They were colleagues in the English daily The Sun in the early 1990s.

12 The Multimedia Super Corridor project was originally set up to host multinational, foreign-owned, and Malaysian companies focusing on multimedia and communications services in an area of approximately 15×50 km². The area stretched from the Petronas Twin Tower to the Kuala Lumpur International Airport. Later, the entire Klang Valley was included.


14 Interview with Steven Gan (editor-in-chief of Malaysiakini) in Kuala Lumpur, 15 July 2009.


17 According to an ABC report, the circulation of Berita Harian in 2008 was 192,982, while that of Utusan Malaysia was 197,952.


19 Interview with Ahmad Lutfi Othman (editor-in-chief of Harakah) in Kuala Lumpur, 6 July 2009.

20 Interview with Zulkifli Sulong (editor of Siasah) in Kuala Lumpur, 2 July 2009.

21 As other movements aimed at promoting media freedom also emerged, I would like to clarify that I am referring here to the activities of groups of journalists like the Writer’s Alliance for Media Independence (WAMI) and the Kumpulan Aktivis Media Independen (KAMI). WAMI covers more Chinese-related events, while KAMI covers more Malay-related happenings.

22 Email interview with Sheila Murugasu on 30 July 2009.

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The Representativeness and Inclusiveness of Democratic Institutions—
A Study of the Distribution of Political Rights within the Legislature and the Executive Branch in Japan and the Philippines

Toh Kin Woon

1.0 The Objective and Significance of the Study

This paper aims to study the representativeness and inclusiveness of the legislature and the executive branch, viewed as two key institutions of democracy in both Japan and the Philippines. The space provided within the electoral and legislative systems to the various interest groups, especially the poor, to pursue their political and socio-economic demands; and the state’s policy responses to these demands will be our major concerns. This study is not in any way unique. It merely stresses the point that the legislative and executive branches of the state in capitalist social formations are not class neutral. In pursuit of our objective, we begin in section 2 by looking at the nature and weaknesses of the electoral system in both countries. The relationship between the legislative and executive branches of the government, the relative influence of the different interest groups on these institutions, and the state’s response to these influences in Japan will then be examined in the next section (section 3). This will be followed in section 4 by an examination of the situation in the Philippines. Attempts by the left progressive forces to break the hegemonic control of the state by powerful elite interests and to challenge elite democracy thereat will also be discussed. The major findings of this study will then be summarized in the concluding section (section 5).

2.0 The Electoral and the Legislative Systems: Participatory or Elitist?

2.1 The Electoral System in Japan

2.1.1 The Electoral Reform Law of 1994

In 1994, the Japanese Parliament or Diet passed the Electoral Reform Law. Implemented since the general election to the House of Representatives (HR) in 1996, these reforms aimed to overcome several weaknesses found in the system prior to the reforms. These include campaigning based on personalities, connections and interest rather than on issues or party platforms; the high cost of campaigns; corruption; the stress on the delivery of private pork rather than public goods to win support; and the emergence and perpetuation of one party-dominance (Curtis 1988; 1999; Hrebenar 2000; Krauss and Pekkanen 2004; McKean and Scheiner 2000). The whole purpose of
the reforms was, therefore, to overcome these weaknesses and to have in place a system that would be free of corruption and clientelism; where campaigning would be issues-based; and where the old one-party dominance would be replaced by the alternation of parties or the coalition of parties in power. However, after four elections to the HR under the new system, there have been conflicting views as to whether the reformed electoral system had indeed achieved and will achieve the aims intended.

2.1.2 Conflicting Views on the Effectiveness of Electoral Reforms

(i) Some are of the view that the candidate-centered strategy of campaigning at the constituency level, based on support from the local, district-level organizations, commonly referred to as *koenkai* in Japan, is still very much widespread even after the reforms (Dabney 2008). A key factor is the absence of a strong, constituency-level party organization that the party’s candidates can rely on for voter mobilization. This was disputed by the people I interviewed, however. They all share the view that national issues are becoming increasingly important in campaigns for elections to both the HR and the House of Councillors (HC) (interviews with Mr. Mawatari Tasuharu, member of the HR from the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP); Mr. Ogushi Hiroshi, member of the HR from the Democratic Party of Japan (DP); and Professor Iio Jun, Professor at the Graduate Research Institute of Policy Studies (GRIPS), Tokyo). My own observation of the campaign by the leaders of the various political parties on television in the recently concluded general election held on 30 August 2009 confirms this contest of ideas, albeit within the framework of an open, market economy.

(ii) Issues- or programs-based campaigning has been made difficult by the absence of policy differentiation among the different parties (Curtis 1999; Dabney 2008; Stockwin 2008). The nature of the single member district (SMD) system is such that parties hoping to win have to design policies that appeal to the median voter. This leads to a convergence of the policy agenda of most parties to the center of the ideological spectrum. This is not to say, however, that there is an absence of contest at the level of specific policy measures, except that the contest is now on an issue by issue basis, rather than along the broad ideological lines of being between the left and the right of the political spectrum, as in the past (interviews with Professor Iio Jun; Mr. Ogushi Hiroshi). The proportional representation (PR) component of the electoral system further provides some space for this contest, as voting is for a party and not a candidate.

(iii) Again, this was confirmed in the campaign in the recently concluded general elections. The then major opposition party, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), through its leader, Dr. Hatoyama Yukio, who has since become Prime Minister of Japan, offered some radically different views and perspectives on markets and globalization, from that of the then ruling party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). DPJ eschews the idea of markets’ penetrating the provision of goods and services in all sectors, preferring rather that those which affect the lives, safety, and welfare of the people, such as agriculture, the environment and health, should best be left to the public domain and not to global market forces. While markets will remain the key mechanism in the allocation of resources, the reliance on markets should not be to the extent of ignoring human welfare and dignity, and building fraternal ties and cooperation. This is in opposition to the LDP’s adoption of neo-liberal reforms that encompass rolling back the frontiers of the state, including the privatization of postal services; the plan to raise the rate of consumption tax; and abandoning the social safety net in the form of labor market reforms, all of which have been blamed for the rising inequality in Japan (Tabuchi Hirono 2009; Hatoyama Yukio 2009). The DPJ further believes in fiscal transfer payments, such as cash payments to households and the abolition of toll charges, to boost domestic demand. There are also foreign policy differences between the DPJ and the LDP.

2.1.3 Present Weaknesses

(i) However, quite apart from the policy convergence at the center, the dual candidacy system, which is very much a trait of Japan’s mixed electoral system, provides an incentive for candidates to focus more on campaigning in SMDs. This dual candidacy system induces candidates that contest in both the SMDs and the PR elections, and many of them do, to focus on performing well in the SMDs. A relatively good performance in the SMD election buys the candidates some insurance of...
getting into the HR through the PR portion, in case they fail to win the SMD election outright. This, in turn, means that personality-based elections and the reliance on the personal support of organizations, which the reforms intended to minimize, will continue to be practiced.

(ii) The practice of seat inheritance under the old but still extant system, that leads to the development of political dynasties which is very much a feature of the political system in Japan and the Philippines, will be perpetuated.

Although political dynasties are more rampant in the LDP, the DPJ is not bereft of them either. None other than the present Prime Minster, who is the leader of the DPJ, hails from a distinguished political family. This phenomenon of political dynasties prevents new blood from entering politics, stifles new ideas, and makes the system more rigid and less democratic.

(iv) Dual candidacies bring along with them a host of other disadvantages. They reduce the number of candidates and, hence, choices for the voters. Like the old system, the dual candidacy system favors the incumbents. This incumbency advantage will reduce the pressure on parties to develop deeper grassroots organizations, which will further depress political innovation and responsiveness to new demands (McKean and Scheiner 2000). It leaves little room for new challengers. The dual candidacy system also provides a way for losers to escape defeat and win anyway, and turns the PR candidates into locally-based politicians, effectively defeating the purpose of creating a PR segment in parliament (McKean and Scheiner 2000). When this dual candidacy system is fully used, as the trend seems to indicate, Japan’s electoral system will end up emphasizing personal service and private pork over national concerns during both the campaigns and actual legislative action, so that the voters will lose the ability to obtain the public goods. However, this incumbency advantage seems to have been considerably reduced in the recent general election, when the opposition DPJ won an overwhelming 308 seats to the House of Representatives, an almost threefold increase over their previous number. In contrast, the ruling LDP kept only 119 of their previous 300 odd seats.

2.2 The Electoral System in the Philippines

The electoral system in the Philippines is based on the United States’ Presidential, first past the post system. The extent of participation and the inclusiveness of the system, as it is practiced in the Philippines, has, however, been weakened by several practices.

2.2.1 Weaknesses

(i) One is the capture and domination of the system by political families or dynasties, as is the case in Japan as well. Once entrenched, influential politicians often work to bequeath the prestigious family name, power and position to their children, in effect seeking to transform the public offices that they have won into a private legacy for their family (McCoy 1994: 24-25). In the arena of electoral politics in the Philippines, a family name is a negotiable political asset that commands attention among voters and allegiance among followers. Wealth and name bequeathing is an important source of power and influence that enables future generations to continue to hold high political office.

(ii) Unlike Japan, the Philippines does not have a strong and stable party system. Parties lack ideological bases. The exception would be the left-wing parties, which have participated more actively in the recent few elections under the party list (Rocamora and Hutchcroft, u.d.; Rocamora 1998; David 2001; Quimpo 2008). Mainstream parties are characterized by shifting leaderships and memberships, with an absence of ideology or programs.

(iii) Often, electoral outcomes are influenced by personalities, gold, and cheating. The ideological orientation of parties hardly ever plays any role in determining outcomes (if it, at all, exists in the first place). Cheating through the alleged tampering of certificates of canvas during vote tallying is resorted to so that the efficacy of the ritual of election is not assured as it may be undermined from above by leaders manipulating the rules, intimidating voters and opponents, and cheating (Mojares 1994). To the above factors is now added a fourth one, glamor. Popular film stars and TV personalities have made their mark in electoral politics.
(iv) In the Philippines, the cultivation of patron-client ties among the elites seeking elected office is widespread and rampant. The elites in the center, acting as patrons, deliver patronage resources to their provincial clients in return for block votes (De Dios and Hutchcroft 2003). This, too, is prevalent in Japan, where there are close ties between the construction industry and the members of the legislature and the executive branch.

(v) This process is, in turn, replicated at the provincial, municipal, and even barangay levels. Electoral outcomes have thus been very much distorted by this “notes for votes” barter. Participation in an election in the Philippines, especially at the national level, can be costly (interview with Professor Benjamin Diokno). Electoral politics is an expensive game that requires the expending of a tremendous amount of financial resources. Candidates who aspire for high electoral office are often from wealthy families, whose members have previously held high offices in the executive or the legislative branch of the government. There is thus exclusion of those who fail to muster the considerable resources needed to mount a campaign.

3.0 Distribution of Power among Decision-Making Institutions

We have looked at the nature and effectiveness of the electoral system as an arena for the participation and articulation of demands by the poor. A key issue is the extent to which their demands are incorporated into policy outcomes. We attempt to explore this by first looking at the nature of the relationships between the various decision-making institutions, the relative influence of the different interest groups, and the shifting policy responses of the state to these different influences in Japan.

3.1 Power Relations between Decision-Making Institutions in Japan

There are two schools of thought on the distribution of power in decision-making in Japan. One is the elitist school which asserts that this influence over decision-making lies primarily in the hands of the previous ruling party, the LDP, the national bureaucracy, and the big interest groups comprising in the main big business, the small and the medium size businesses, the rural farmers, and professions. Labor is excluded. (Mulgan 1988). The other model asserts that the state often engages in constant consultation and negotiation with powerful organizations in society and is thus more inclusive, open, and pluralist (Richardson 1997). Yet another view suggests that the state in Japan has a mix of both the elitist and the pluralist features.

Among the policymaking institutions, the bureaucracy has always been one of the key or dominant decision-making institutions in Japan. The others are the Diet, especially the Lower House of Representatives, and the Prime Minister and his Cabinet. Although formal power rests with the Prime Minister, his Cabinet, and the Diet, a great deal of authority over decisions has rested for a long time with the bureaucracy. Their strong influence over policy formulation and implementation is based on their formidable control over the functions of policy advice, initiation, formulation, and implementation. Bureaucrats have expertise in the formulation of administrative guidance; a virtual monopoly of information; mastery of the technical details of policy; and dominance over the law drafting process (Mulgan 2003; interview with Professor Iio Jun). They also preside over systems of economic intervention in which they exercise substantial discretionary powers of regulation (granting licenses, permissions, and approvals) and allocations. Elected representatives in the Diet may have formal power, but the capabilities lie with the bureaucrats (Curtis 1999).

Although bureaucrats have a great deal of authority to initiate and draft policies, this does not mean, however, that they have unlimited space in the exercise of this authority. Indeed, such space has been restricted by the vetting and vetoing powers of the Prime Minister and his Cabinet members. Some have argued that the bureaucrats’ perceived authority in policymaking is precisely because they have been able to formulate policies that are in tandem with the preferences of the political elite. It is this skill that has seen many of the bills drafted by them obtain the approval of the political elites.

The other restraining influence on the exercise of bureaucratic power in policymaking was the intervention of the Diet members from the LDP and the Komeito, its coalition partner in government. The LDP had long formed the Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC), which was an independent and separate locus of policymaking disconnected from the executive. All potential legislations had to be cleared by PARC, the Executive Council of the LDP, and the Joint LDP-Komeito Council. The PARC’s operations
were extensive, formalized, and institutionalized, making the policymaking power of the party both overt and regularized (Mulgan 2003). The active involvement of the Diet members from the previous ruling LDP in policymaking brought them into direct negotiations with the bureaucrats, with both sides negotiating as equals. Government policy was then formulated via the interaction between these two fundamentally interdependent structures. Such interactions led to consensus building or “reciprocal consent” between the Diet members and the bureaucrats (Richardson 1997).6 While exercising considerable authority in the exercise of power, the bureaucracy in Japan was far from being a monolithic entity (Richardson 1997). There were pluralistic and conflictual relationships within the Cabinet, the Diet members, and the bureaucracy, and between them. At the same time, there was a lot of consultation and coordination.

3.2 Changing Power Relations

The power relationships between these different policymaking institutions have, however, changed, especially over the last two decades. The passage of the Revised National Administrative Law and the Revised Diet Law towards the end of the nineties, later reinforced by further administrative reforms that encompassed creating new positions in the government, ostensibly shifted the prerogative of policy proposal and formation away from the bureaucrats, to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet (Martin and Steel 2008). However, this relationship between the bureaucracy and the Cabinet was very much dependent on the personality of the Prime Minister. The other important policymaking body, the Diet, had been more assertive and pluralistic than it appeared. The Diet used to enjoy greater autonomy and independence from the executive than in most other developed countries, with the legislative processes in the Diet being relatively competitive. Both the procedural necessity of interparty consensus on legislative agendas and the adherence to cultural norms favored accommodation.7 The ruling LDP was concerned with seeking legitimacy through adherence to institutional as well as social norms (Richardson 1997).

Despite attempts at accommodation, legislative agendas were still set largely by the conservative parties and the bureaucrats. These were largely right wing, often excluding the left and the labor unions. An important political force had at least been partially excluded from participating in agenda setting and policymaking at critical stages, even though legislative pluralism prevailed.

The decision-making power of the bureaucracy is likely to be further eroded under the new, current DPJ administration, if the policy pronouncement of its leader is anything to go by. Concerned over the previous LDP-bureaucratic-political nexus, the new government promises to rein in the power of the bureaucrats by, among others, proposing to remove control over the budgetary process from the Ministry of Finance and placing the power of determining the budget in the Prime Minister’s office instead (Murphy, R.T, 2009).

3.3 The Relative Influence of the Different Interest Groups

The exclusion of organized labor from the legislative processes is very much part of the general trend that started since the end of the eighties. Such exclusion was primarily due to a relative weakening of organized labor relative to capital, which had the support and backing of the state. It was manifested in the relative decline of trade unions and the progressive left parties, in particular the former Japan Socialist Party (JSP), now renamed the Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ). The fragmentation of the peak labor organizations because of ideological differences; the break-up of industry-wide unions into enterprise unions that conducted wage bargaining direct with employers; the co-optation of a section of labor leaders by the state; policy-induced changes such as the privatization of state enterprises; and structural changes to the economy which led to a declining share of manufacturing—these were but some of the factors that brought about the decline in the relative strength of trade unions8 (Allinson and Sone 1993; Kumo 1988; Mochizuki 1993; Rebick 2005). This was further exacerbated by the state’s passage of the Dispatched Manpower Business Act in 1985, later amended in 1999 (Shinoda 2009). This Act enables employers to hire, contract, and dispatch workers from dispatch agencies on the argument that this labor hiring practice will enhance the flexibility in production and reduce costs, thereby improving industrial competitiveness in Japan. Dispatch, contract, casual, and other irregular workers, who now make up about one-third of the workforce, are not allowed to join unions.
The weakening of organized labor has, in turn, led to the weakening of left parties. The SDPJ, in particular, suffered near complete electoral annihilation in the general election for the House of Representatives in 1996, and has never quite recovered since, not even in the recent general election.9

The catchall policy of the two major parties, the LDP and the DPJ, has also been touted as a possible reason for the decline of the left-leaning parties (interviews with Mawatari Tatsuharu, LDP Member of the HR and Professor Iio Jun). Professor Iio is of the view that both the LDP and the DPJ are relatively sensitive to the demands of the poor. Certain local politicians, who are popular with the masses, will be approached to stand as candidates under the LDP banner. Policy pronouncements that have been well received, especially by a majority, including the working poor, will be adopted by the LDP as a way of undercutting political support for the opposition and diverting it to themselves.10 Public pressure waged through campaigns also helped in this regard (interview with Mr. Inoue Satoshi, Member, HC from the Japan Communist Party).11

Be that as it may, the voices that speak up for the poor in the representative institutions remain weak in comparison to the loud and strong voices of the conservative right. Organizations representing big businesses, viz., the Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren) and the Japan Federation of Employers’ Associations (Nikkeiren) have merged to form the Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren), Nippon Keidanren, which is embedded in government and acts as a funding channel to the LDP, is Japan’s most powerful lobby group today (Stockwin 2008).

The weak representation of the poor could also be due to the fact that they are numerically smaller compared to the middle class, which thus becomes a more important target of support mobilization among the opposition parties. This situation is in sharp contrast to that in the Philippines, where the poor make up an overwhelming majority.

3.4 The Changing Distribution of Benefits from the State Policies in Japan

Parallel to the weakened political representation of labor is its declining economic status. In the fifties, sixties, seventies, right up to the eighties, the Japanese state, which was described as developmental, drew legitimacy from its success in promoting and sustaining rapid economic growth (Johnson 1995). Through a mix of instruments encompassing industrial policy, trade policy, fiscal policy, monetary policy, and even protectionism; the outbreak of the Korean and later the Vietnam wars, which boosted exports; and the undertaking of its external defense by the United States under the US-Japan Defense Treaty which, in turn, reduced fiscal demands on the state, the Japanese state successfully transformed its economy into the second largest in the world, as measured by the size of its GNP. The benefits of growth were spread to the lower strata of society so that per capita incomes improved and, with this, the standard of living of the average Japanese. The then party in power, the LDP pursued a catchall policy framework and was fairly sensitive and responsive even to labor, although it was pro-business. When the economy faced economic stagnation after the two oil shocks in the seventies, the Japanese state resorted to Keynesian deficit spending to pull the economy out of recession, focusing in the main on massive infrastructural development, environmental improvement measures, and social welfare schemes, such as pensions and public health. However, the state soon reached the limits of this deficit spending, with a huge deficit in the budget that had to be curbed. The policy of Keynesian deficit spending was replaced by the adoption of more pro-market, neo-liberal policies in the eighties, nineties and the first decade of the 21st century.12 First, administrative reforms that focused on cutting down public spending and the privatization of public enterprises were launched and implemented. This was followed by further administrative reforms that attempted to shift the locus of policy-making power from the bureaucracy and the LDP, to the executive branch of the government. Meanwhile, tax reforms by way of the introduction of a consumption tax, which is regressive compared to the income tax, were initiated and launched. Reforms in the labor market were also instituted to enable capital to engage in the hiring of contract, casual, and irregular dispatch workers to enhance the flexibility in production schedules, as well as to cut costs. This was in response to the demand of export capital so that their competitiveness could be improved. International trading partners, in particular the USA, were also putting pressure on the Japanese state to put into effect market opening measures and an exchange rate policy that would be favorable to US exports, in a bid to correct the trade imbalance that was largely in favor of Japan. Japan somewhat relented to this demand of international capital by opening up...
its market to the import of citrus fruits, beef, and, later, even rice, which had long been protected. The implementation of the Large Stores Act, which placed a lot of restrictions on the opening of large foreign stores in Japan, was also relaxed. The result of this move further to the right led to losses by several social groups, including some that had long been the traditional strong supporters of the LDP. These included the farmers, the small and medium businesses and, of course, labor. Apart from the increased fiscal burden arising out of the consumption tax and the higher share of medical costs to be borne by the sick, up to one-third of the work force that comprises the irregular, contract, casual and dispatch workers do not enjoy security of tenure and are highly vulnerable to the vicissitudes of global and domestic demand (Rebick 2005). The post-war social contract of life-long employment in return for loyalty to a company is increasingly being jettisoned.

The working poor’s relative deterioration in socio-economic status can also be seen in the fact that Japan has one of the highest rates of relative poverty among the OECD countries. The rate of relative poverty, defined as the percentage of the population that lives on one-half or less of the median income, was 15 percent in Japan in 2005. This was second only to the USA, which had the highest rate at 17 percent (OECD 2006 Report). According to a thrice yearly report issued by Japan’s Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare in August 2007, Japan’s Gini coefficient rose to 0.5263 in 2005, from 0.4983 in 2002. This suggests worsening income distribution in Japan.

4.0 The Elitist Nature of the Legislature in the Philippines

Switching over to the Philippines, its legislature as an institution is perceived to be biased in favor of the interests of the elites such as big businesses, contractors, and landlords. One clear example was the long contest in Congress over an important piece of legislation affecting the economic interests of the poor and landless peasants: the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). Towards the end of 2008, when the tenure of CARP ended, not all land due for redistribution had been acquired and redistributed. One of the problems was the strong resistance of the landlords, who constitute an influential and powerful lobby, both inside and outside Congress. With the termination of the tenure of CARP, the approval for its extension had to be sought from Congress. In the event, CARP was given only a six-month extension, but without the key compulsory acquisition clause included. This meant that land available for redistribution could only be obtained through the voluntary surrendering of this land by the landlords, a move that was unlikely to happen. The short period of its extension, plus the emasculation of what was already a weakened piece of land reform legislation, was due in no small measure to the strong influence of the landed interests and their supporters.

The elitist nature of the legislature is further confirmed by the class background of a great number of the legislators themselves. In a classic study on this subject carried out by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, first in 1994 and again in 2001, the Center found that in the 12th Congress, which ran from 1998 till 2001, at least half of the Congressmen belonged to political clans or dynasties (Gutierrez 1994; Datinguinoo and Olarte 2001). Interviews conducted with academics, trade unionists, leaders of farmers’ groups. Members of Congress, both past and present, and leaders of non-governmental organizations in early 2009 confirmed that these trends have not changed very much in recent times. The hegemonic control of the legislature in the Philippines is partly also caused by the lack of participation of the left-leaning progressive parties in electoral politics. For a long time, many on the left have been wary of the institution of elections.

4.1 Contested Democracy in the Philippines

This changed when the party list system of proportional representation was introduced in Congress in the 1998 elections. Since then, several progressive groups have taken part in the elections. Several of them have even been elected under the party list to the House of Representatives. Their numbers still remain small, however, with the traditional politicians still the dominant force. Be that as it may, the presence of these left progressives in the House of Representatives, even if small, has minimally provided the legislature with some voices of dissent and challenge to the particularistic demands of the elites that have for so long dominated the legislative agenda. Issues germane to the poor are now brought to the floor of Congress for some attention, discussion, and debate. Contesting elite democracy and hoping to put in its place a more representative and participatory democracy have long been and still are ongoing processes (Quimpo 2008). To be sure, the faith of the
lower strata, as well as that of many among the middle class and even some among the business elites towards the current practices of democracy by the elites, has been eroded; but their commitment to the ideals of democracy remains strong (Rocamora and Hutchcroft undated). Increasingly, parties on the left see taking part and winning elections as the best way to seek legitimacy among its political constituency, and to build up their organizational strength among them. Through their participation, they hope that political contests will increasingly shift from being personality-based to being programmatic or ideologically-based, thereby effecting a qualitative change in the nature of political competition in the Philippines. Their presence in Congress will also, hopefully, make this institution less captive to the particularistic demands of the rich elites, and be more inclusive and representative of the poor.

5.0 Conclusion

This study attempts to look at the representative nature of the legislature and the executive branch in Japan and the Philippines. Specifically, it seeks to look at the extent of the space provided to different interest groups, especially the poor, to participate in the electoral, legislative and executive systems through a critical examination of the nature of these systems. The differing influences of the various interest groups on the key policymaking institutions and the resultant broad policy outcomes were also looked into. An assertion often made is that democratic institutions within a free market framework are class neutral. They are catchalls and all-inclusive, with no one particular group or class of interest being neglected or marginalized in the decision-making process and, hence, in policy outcomes. A noted British political scientist, Bernard Crick (1987), however, maintains that such an assertion ought to be viewed with skepticism and suspicion. These institutions, located as they are within a capitalist political socio-economic structure, are seldom class neutral, certainly not in the absolute sense. Although essentially pro-capital, they may, however, vary in the degree of their accommodation of the interests of the lower strata of society. The extent of such inclusiveness of the legislative and executive branches of the government is, in turn, influenced by the relative, organized strength of the poor.

In this brief paper, we have found that the organized strength of labor, the largest single group in industrial Japan, has declined over the years. The influence and strength of trade unions, certainly at the national level, has plummeted; likewise, the left-leaning progressive parties that have for long counted on their organizational and financial support in challenging the electoral hegemony and dominance of the right-wing conservative parties. Internal fragmentation of both the labor unions and the left parties, the successful co-optation of union leaders through some deliberate degree of collaboration and cooperation by both capital and the state with labor, union busting by the state through such measures as the privatization of major public sector utilities and policy-induced changes in labor market practices that are unfavorable to the growth of unions—all these have combined to weaken the unions and the left forces. While organized labor continues to weaken, there is a growing proportion of workers who are not even organized or protected. Meanwhile, the right conservative forces continue to dominate the legislative and the executive branches of the government.

Although tending towards a two-party system, the two major contending parties in Japan, the LDP and the DPJ, are largely representative of these conservative forces, though with some inclusion of the interests of the poor. But these interests of the poor are not dominant on the political agenda. When some specific issues do get the attention of the legislators and the executive, they are often the result of mass campaigns by the people themselves, with support from NGOs and the media. Contestation between these two major parties centers on specific issues within the same ideological framework, rather than between different ideologies. Meanwhile, under pressures from capital, both domestic and international, the state in Japan has, since the mid-eighties, embarked upon a series of neo-liberal policy measures that have adversely affected the poor, labor, and even some of the LDP’s traditional supporters such as the farmers. It remains to be seen whether the more statist and professed humane approach of the new DPJ government will help bridge the yawning gap in the income distribution pattern in Japan.

In the Philippines, the absence of a strong and stable party system has led to shifting alliances among political leaders and a lack of genuine ideological competition. The capture of the state by big business elites has led the state to pursue and implement policies that are largely pro-capital; while the development of patron-client ties, the tendency to
resort to gold, electoral fraud, and glamour; and the perpetuation of political clans have led to the inability of the electoral system to reflect the popular will. These practices have also led to the domination and control of the legislative and the executive branches of the Philippine state by the rich elites, both from the provinces and Manila. The faith in the current institutions and practices of democracy in the Philippines of the poor, of many in the middle class, and even of some in the big business league, has declined. However, this elite democracy, which has led to the exclusion of the interests of the mass of the poor, both in terms of participation and policy outcomes, is increasingly being challenged by the left progressive forces. Elite democracy, as it is currently practiced in the Philippines, is now being contested. Finally, a comparison of the experiences of both Japan and the Philippines seems to suggest that there are a lot of similarities, despite their obvious differences in the levels of economic development. Both states are pro-capital and elitist in nature, with many of their leaders hailing from well-known, distinguished political dynasties.

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NOTES

1 In Japan, interest groups need political parties to provide them with an institutionalized channel into the Diet (Japanese Parliament), while parties need interest groups to act as surrogate party organizations at the electoral level (Mulgan 1988: 112). Connections and interests carry a greater explanatory force in elucidating the motivating factors behind the Diet members’ positions on issues and policies, rather than ideological or philosophical conviction or considerations of equity, rationality, or efficiency.

2 Japan has a bicameral legislature, commonly referred to as the Diet, which comprises the House of Representatives (HR) and the House of Councillors (HC). Members of both these Houses are popularly elected by voters, who are Japanese ages 20 and above, in periodic elections. Elections are held once every four years or earlier for the HR, while they are held once every three years for the HC. However, in the latter case, only one-half of the seats (121 out of 242) are to be filled in each election. The electoral system adopted for electing members of the HR is a mix of single member districts (SMDs), using first past the post (FPTP) and regional proportional representation (PR). Out of a total of 480 members, 300 are elected under the SMD and the remaining 180 under the PR system. As for the HC, 48 out of a total of 121 seats contested in each election are chosen under a nationwide PR, with another 73 elected under the multi-member district (MMD) system, with each district being a prefecture. Prior to the adoption of the SMD under the FPTP system for election to the HR in 1996, Japan used the MMD under the single non-transferable vote (SNTV) system. The switch occurred as a result of the Electoral Reform Law passed in early 1994.

3 Under the dual candidacy system, candidates can contest for both the SMDs and the PR elections at one and the same time. For many parties, many candidates in the party list for the PR election are frequently not ranked in order of priority, but are clustered in a group of equal rank. Should the party win votes enough only for a portion of those in the cluster to get into the HR, the choice of victors from among this cluster will be based on the candidates’ performance in the SMDs. The higher the votes they obtain in the SMDs, the higher their ranking in the cluster and, hence, the better their chances of winning in the PR portion of the election. In other words, the ranking of a party’s candidates is done by voters during the election, rather than by the party prior to the election.

4 In Japan, 40 percent of the lawmakers from the ruling LDP are descendants of lawmakers, while among the main opposition DPJ, 20 percent are descendants. Further, six former Prime Ministers were sons or grandsons of former lawmakers (International Herald Tribune and the Asahi Shimbun, 16 March 2009).

5 The influence of the bureaucrats started since pre-war times, when they were politically responsible to the Emperor. Very early on, their status and prestige were high, having been recruited from among the best-educated elites in Japan’s top universities (Inoguchi 2005; Richardson 1997; Stockwin 2008). Unlike the military which was disbanded and the politicians, many of whom were purged after the war by the Supreme Command of the Allied Powers (SCAP), the bureaucrats were not only left relatively untouched, but were, in fact, recruited to carry out the reforms of the SCAP under its system of indirect rule. Many bureaucrats also joined and took up important positions in both the conservative parties and the government, especially after the formation of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in 1955.
The influence that Diet members exert over the bureaucrats depends on their status within the PARC. The higher their standing, the more specialized and knowledgeable they have become and, hence, the greater their influence (Fukui and Fukai 1996). Diet members compete to ascend the ranks within the hierarchical structure of the PARC. Long-term specialization and influence bestow membership of informal policy tribes (zoku), which represent the most powerful groups of special interest politicians within the LDP. Zokus have, however, been criticized as being mere lobbyists for special interests in return for campaign donations.

In the Diet, bills tabled can be passed, amended, postponed, or even abandoned. Formal debates at the plenary and committee meetings of the Diet are usually much shorter than they are in other countries such as the United Kingdom, the USA, and Germany. This is because substantive issues have already been resolved through informal consultations among the leaders of the various parties outside the Diet. Intraparty and interparty negotiations, and bargaining outside the formal Diet are just as important, or perhaps even more important than the formal Diet processes, in the processing of legislation. These consultations often lead to a great deal of interparty accommodation in the Diet’s legislative processes.

The co-optation of labor by both capital and the state has implications for political development in Japan (Allinson and Sone 1993). Through their legal cooperation with management to achieve their economic ends, their base for a viable opposition to the ruling coalition may be jeopardized. Then, by negotiating a secure niche within the system, their oppositionary principles may be so compromised that they will be wholly co-opted. When this happens, the question is whether the Japanese polity will still be able to sustain a real alternative to the LDP’s one-party dominance.

For a long time since its formation, the JSP, now the SDPJ, counted on the then largest and relatively more militant General Council of Trade Unions or Sohyo for organizational and financial support. Towards the end of the eighties, however, Sohyo was dissolved and amalgamated with the National Federation of Private Sector Unions or Rengo, which is the largest national confederation of trade unions in Japan today.

Another more plausible reason could be the JSP’s abandoning of long-held principles and its capitulation to the conservative LDP in return for a share of state power from 1994 to 1996, which could have disappointed many of its followers and supporters.

A good example is the work done by an NGO called the Zenkoku Komuniti Yunion Rengokai (National Federation of Community Unions). Together with a group of labor activists, Zenkoku Yunion organized the Toshikoshi Hakenmura (which roughly translates to ‘New Year’s Eve Village for Dispatched Workers’) at the Hibiya Park in Tokyo, to provide temporary shelter and food to dispatch workers who were retrenched and displaced from housing provided by their previous employers. Their plight was widely publicized by the media, and elicited a quick response from the state, especially the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, as well as all the political parties (Shinoda 2009).

Mr. Nonaka Hiromu, an ex-LDP Member of the HR, in an interview, confirmed these shifts in policies. He claimed these neo-liberal policies were carried out with even greater vigor and intensity during the premiership of Mr. Koizumi Junichiro. He was of the view that some of these neo-liberal measures were decided by committees in the then Prime Minister’s office, without consultation with the PARC of the LDP or the Diet. The main source of legitimacy for these policies was Mr. Koizumi’s own immense popularity with the public. He further lamented that these policies, which have contributed to the worsening of inequality in Japanese society, will cause the downfall of the LDP in the general election scheduled for 30 August 2009. Another interesting observation of Mr. Nonaka is that big business interests, which have gained from the implementation of neo-liberal policies, have engaged public relations companies to advertise through the media, for even more neo-liberal policies by the main contending parties for power.

None other than the son of the current President, whose family owns large tracts of land, led the lobby in Congress to extend CARP for six months, but without compulsory acquisition (Philippine Daily Inquirer, Manila, December 20, 2008; Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (Philippine Peasants’ Movement) 2006).

There have been some recent changes, however. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo will sign into law an extension to CARP on 8 August 2009, with retroactive enforcement from 1 July 2009. Efforts to derail the CARP with extension and reforms (CARPER) are, however, still possible. One such effort is to allow foreigners and foreign corporations to own and control agricultural lands and other natural resources in the Philippines. For example, 600,000 hectares of public land in northern Luzon (more than one half of the entire land reform target of CARPER) will be sold to Pacific Bio-Fields Holdings Inc. for the production of bio-fuel to be exported to Japan. Such efforts will not bring about the desired tangible benefits to CARPER’s targeted group of small and landless farmers (Philippine Daily Inquirer 14 July 2009).

REFERENCES


Rights of Stateless Children Born to Asian Women Living Illegally in Japan

Yuwadee Silapakit

Introduction

Amidst the steady stream of globalization since the late 1980s, many women from China, North and South Korea, Brazil and the Philippines started entering and working in Japan. The number of working age women (around 25-34 years old) who were Filipina or Thai was comparatively higher than the rest of the nationalities. These women came to Japan with dreams of being able to support their indigent families back home, and found jobs through brokers. Although the term ‘human trafficking’ was not yet used much during the late 1980s, it was clear that these women were victims of it. They had no legal working permits and their passports were often confiscated by the brokers. Many worked long hours to pay back the money they borrowed for transportation and accommodations; and very often, they could not complete the payments on time. Low wages and poor living conditions added to their hardships, and these became worse when they decided to go underground once their working visas expired. Prostitution became almost the only way to survive.

Because of their work and their general reluctance to use contraception, many of these women got pregnant by Japanese men. As abortion was risky and expensive, they decided to deliver these children. They pinned all their hopes on the possibility that their Japanese partners would marry them and register the children. However, this dream rarely came true. Since most Japanese men were reluctant to register their marriages and/or give legal status to their newborn babies. The women, in turn, hesitated or were afraid to register their children in their respective embassies. They were terrified of deportation. Some mothers believed that babies born in Japan would automatically receive Japanese citizenship, but according to the Nationality Law, the Japanese man must claim the child before birth for it to be registered (its amendment will be discussed later). Therefore, the babies became stateless.

This study focuses on the current situation of these children with the goal of showing the importance of vigorously promoting a rights-based approach in consideration of international and national laws. Focusing on Thai women and Filipinas, this study looks specifically at how networks of government institutions and agencies deal with the issue of stateless children. It then draws out the best problem-solving method from the ones provided currently by various social agencies devoted to stateless children. It also tries to find the most effective steps that families, social organizations, and the government could take to grant Japanese nationality to these children.

I conducted field work in Japan from August 2008 to April 2009 and in the Philippines from May to August 2009. In both countries, the available data on stateless children was limited because this issue was not really well-known and was even ignored. Getting information also required a certain sensitivity since it dealt with undocumented children. These drawbacks were partially offset by extensive interviews with families that had stateless children, participating in conferences and meetings, and gathering information from concerned individuals, families, groups, government/non-government organizations, and embassies. I studied ten cases for which I conducted in-depth interviews and consultations with the Royal Thai Embassy in Tokyo and the Thai volunteer organization (the Thai Volunteer Network in Japan), and the International Social Service Japan. Finally, I was able to accumulate statistical and legislative data from websites of the Japanese Ministry of Justice and Foreign Affairs, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

Additionally, it was such a nice opportunity that NHK, Nippon Hoso Kyokai, the Japanese National Broadcasting Association, asked me to help and participate in a 30-minute TV program describing statelessness in Japan in April 2009. The program became quite a useful channel for the advocacy for the rights of stateless children. Moreover, the program had a major impact on families which some public service officers contacted after the show was aired, to ask how they could help them in their needs.
Findings

Definition

Statelessness may be described as “the condition of an individual who is not considered as a national by any state” (UNHCR 2009). There are many types of statelessness in the world, but this study will examines statelessness from a human rights’ perspective. The booklet, “Stateless Children—Youth Who Are without Citizenship” defines statelessness as “circumstances that bar children and youth from enjoying their right to nationality” (Aird et al. 2002). In general, most countries facilitate the acceptance in schools of stateless children without discrimination; however, they are not fully nor legally supported. Most countries put priority on children who are their citizens. In the following paragraphs, Japanese legal contexts will be examined to show unique practices involving stateless children.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

After the Japanese government signed and ratified the CRC in 1994, the Convention became a strong basis for subsequent national legislations and organizational policies. Its 40 provisions revolve around four major rights: 1) survival, 2) development, 3) protection, and 4) participation (UNICEF 2009). Especially, Article 7 of CRC states on registration and nationality that:

All children have the right to a legally registered name, officially recognized by the government. Children have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country). Children also have the right to know and, as far as possible, to be cared for by their parents.

To ensure that these rights are upheld, the government must expand or redefine its national laws and acts, and monitor their certain implementation. On 5 June 1998, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child—eighteenth session, which was specially formed to investigate the country’s implementation of the CRC, strongly recommended a thorough review of how the rights of children have been protected in Japanese society. The committee recommended doing away with the discriminatory treatment against ethnic and cultural minority groups including North and South Koreans, Ainu, Buraku, and Okinawa peoples. It is obvious that traditional and chronic discrimination in employment, housing, and education against these minority groups still exists. Although they are Japanese or belong to another nationality but have the right to legally stay in Japan, they are on the receiving end of these discriminatory treatments. From these recommendations, it can be assumed that the stateless children will also face similar types of social discrimination.

National Policies and Laws

1. The Constitution of Japan

Examining the legal context of stateless children in Japan shows that the Constitution of Japan (1946) would be the most fundamental document that lists down their various rights and duties. Article 14 (1) especially defines the principal of equality as follows:

All of the people are equal under the law and there shall be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations because of race, creed, sex, social status or family origin.

The Constitution also prohibits all types of discrimination and the government is committed to protect children’s access to security, health care, education, welfare and other public services. All other national policies and laws have been legislated according to the Constitution of Japan.

2. The Nationality Law

Before the enforcement of the 1899 Nationality Law, the kosei (family registry) was the primary means of determining Japanese citizenship. Japan is a jus sanguinis state, meaning it attributes nationality by blood, not by location of birth. On the other hand, jus soli determines the nationality of a child by the country where he/she was born (Tsukida 2008, 216). Asian mothers often think that Japan is a jus soli state.

The Nationality Law states that a child can obtain Japanese citizenship if the mother or father is of Japanese nationality, at the time of the child’s birth (Law No.147of 1950, as amended, Art.2, Item 1). Article 3 states:

A child (excluding a child who was once a Japanese national) under twenty years of age whose father or mother has acknowledged paternity or maternity respectively, may acquire Japanese nationality through a notification to the Minister of Justice, if the father or mother who made the acknowledgement was a Japanese national at the time of the child’s birth, and such father or mother is presently a
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Japanese national or was a Japanese national at the time of his or her death.

A child who makes notification in accordance with the preceding paragraph shall acquire Japanese nationality at the time of the notification.

Previously, nationality was obtained only when the father recognized a child before the birth, leaving many children without nationality and many men without responsibility. However, an amendment was made on 5 December 2008 after several historical trials at the Supreme Court regarding children born out of wedlock to Japanese fathers and foreign mothers. It was determined that the child could obtain his/her Japanese nationality even if the father acknowledged paternity after his/her birth. Many children have successfully obtained Japanese citizenship under this new provision.

3. The Child Welfare Act

While most national laws and regulations apply only to Japanese nationals, the Child Welfare Act (1947) is applicable to all children in Japan. It means that there is no discrimination against children of non-Japanese nationalities and stateless children. The Child Welfare Act defines ‘child’ as:

- a person under 18 years of age, and children shall be classified into the following categories: (i) Infant: Person under 1 year of age; (ii) Toddler: Person of 1 year of age or more before the time of commencement of elementary school; and (iii) Juvenile: Person under 18 years of age after the time of commencement of elementary school.

This Act guarantees the children’s right to receive necessary protection services through specific public institutions including the Provincial and District Child Guidance Centers, which are designed according to specific age groups and types of disabilities. It is one of the supportive legislations that protect the rights of stateless children.

However, some public officers do not understand that foreign or stateless residents have rights that are protected by these acts. Therefore, their words and attitudes often imply discrimination against parents who come for help, who have little understanding of the Japanese language and social service policies/systems. Communication obstacles and lack of understanding of the laws in the areas of public service might have created unregistered children as a result.

4. The Fundamental Law of Education

Fortunately, most stateless children seem to be able to attend schools in Japan. There are even some grown children who go to University or technical colleges. The Kansai area is very friendly to these foreign or stateless children because the provincial (centered by Osaka) and/or city education committees have traditionally had much experience with children of North or South Korean descent. The area is generous in enrolling non-Japanese children in basic education (Lee et al. 2005).

The Fundamental Law of Education (1947) provides basic policies for national education principals. Article 4, Compulsory Education declares:

The people shall be obligated to have boys and girls under their protection receive nine years’ general education. No tuition fee shall be charged for general education in schools established by the state and local bodies.

It is also a fact that some children don’t receive invitations for vaccination before entering primary school if their nearest city halls don’t have the children’s records. Furthermore, others have experienced hardship such as separation from their deported mothers, or deportation together with their mothers to their mothers’ countries, of which they know nothing about. As a result, children are separated from friends and schools with which they had developed some social, intellectual, and emotional attachment. All these children tend to identify themselves as Japanese even though their legal nationality has not been approved. They may face conflict or crisis in their self-identification. The incompatibility of one’s psychological identity and one’s legal nationality often causes immeasurable mental damage in children.

Institutions and Agencies

To effect positive steps on the situation of statelessness, there are several institutions and agencies which have communicated with each other, such as immigration offices, city halls, hospitals, nurseries, schools, child guidance centers, nursery/foster homes, and the welfare commission. The embassies of the mothers’ countries also try as much as they can to make representations on birth registrations, contacts with the children’s home countries, consulting services for the mothers and other family members, and extending
assistance to concerned families with the help of NGOs. Family courts and lawyers are also involved when cases are brought to court.

To maintain the rights of stateless children and prevent their statelessness, coordination is necessary. Probably, NGOs can play significant roles among the above public and private organizations in promoting the rights and welfare of migrant workers and stateless children. Recently, the Thai/Filipina Volunteer Networks were established to provide information and extend other forms of assistance using their own languages. The Japanese NGO, International Social Service Japan (ISSJ), has helped provide counseling services to stateless children, following up on their birth registration, and assisting in inter-country adoption. Lawyers working with embassies and NGOs also provide consultation on legal matters, and defend actual cases in court, if necessary.

Statistics

To be able to understand some factors that occur attendant to statelessness, it is better to grasp statistical facts on foreign residents in Japan. Most interactions start with the appearance of foreign residents in Japanese society, after which many couples develop relationships and sometimes produce babies, without the benefit of marriage or marriage registration. Because of invisibility, there are no detailed statistics about the number of stateless children and even unmarried couples. However, the following statistics could help speculate on how many children need legal assistance to obtain their nationality.

1. Registered Foreigners in Japan

The number of registered foreigners, persons who show their intention to stay more than 90 days, has increased within the decade from 1,512,116 in 1998 to 2,217,426 in 2008. Registered foreigners or 2,217,426 people, make up 1.74 percent of the total population in Japan, the highest rate in the last 30 years. The male and female ratio was almost balanced at 1,031,785 males (47 percent) to 1,185,641 females (53 percent) in 2008.

The top three countries of origin are China at 29.6 percent, North and South Korea at 26.6 percent, and Brazil at 14.1 percent. Filipino and Thai residents comprise 9.5 percent and 0.9 percent, respectively, doubling within the decade: the Philippines from 105,308 (1998) to 210,617 (2008); and Thailand, from 23,562 (1998) to 42,609 (2010).

Most foreign residents live in Tokyo (18.1 percent), followed by Aichi (10.3 percent), Osaka (9.6 percent), Kanagawa (7.8 percent), and Saitama (5.5 percent), according to statistics from the immigration office in 2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries of Origin</th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>272,230</td>
<td>655,377</td>
<td>383,147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North &amp; South Korea</td>
<td>638,828</td>
<td>589,239</td>
<td>-49,589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>222,217</td>
<td>312,582</td>
<td>90,365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Philippines</td>
<td>105,308</td>
<td>210,617</td>
<td>105,309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>41,317</td>
<td>59,723</td>
<td>18,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>42,774</td>
<td>52,683</td>
<td>9,909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>23,562</td>
<td>42,609</td>
<td>19,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>13,505</td>
<td>41,136</td>
<td>27,631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>14,962</td>
<td>27,250</td>
<td>12,288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>8,658</td>
<td>22,335</td>
<td>13,677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>128,755</td>
<td>203,875</td>
<td>75,120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,512,116</td>
<td>2,217,426</td>
<td>705,310</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Registered Foreign Residents (Edited by author)
Source: Immigration Bureau, Japan 2009.

2. Overstaying Asian Women Workers

According to the Immigration Bureau of Japan, there were 113,072 overstaying individuals in Japan as of 1 January 2009. The male/female ratio was almost balanced at 58,411/54,661 and the top four countries from which they came are listed below:

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Except for China, the number of female residents is double that of male residents. More than 60 percent of the overstaying population came with temporary visitors’ visas (tourist visas valid under 90 days), which means that the other 40 percent are registered because they came with non-tourist visas, as shown in table 2. As table 1 shows, the percentage of Thai and Filipina overstaying residents against the registered residents is much higher than that of North and South Koreans and Chinese.

### Table 2: Overstaying Foreign Residents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries of Origin</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. North and South Korea</td>
<td>8,703</td>
<td>15,495</td>
<td>24,198</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. China</td>
<td>10,969</td>
<td>7,416</td>
<td>18,385</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Philippines</td>
<td>5,395</td>
<td>11,892</td>
<td>17,287</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Thailand</td>
<td>2,092</td>
<td>3,931</td>
<td>6,023</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total of Top 4</strong></td>
<td>27,159</td>
<td>38,734</td>
<td>65,893</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All countries</strong></td>
<td>58,411</td>
<td>54,661</td>
<td>113,072</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Immigration Bureau, Japan 2009.*

### 3. Stateless Children

It is very difficult to determine the number of stateless children since they are invisible in official documents. Table 3 shows that there are 1,573 registered stateless residents in Japan as of 2007; however, most of them might be adults who are seeking political asylum in Japan or may be refugees who have settled in Japan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region of Origin</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,915,030</td>
<td>1,973,747</td>
<td>2,011,555</td>
<td>2,084,919</td>
<td>2,152,973</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>1,422,979</td>
<td>1,464,360</td>
<td>1,483,985</td>
<td>1,540,764</td>
<td>1,602,984</td>
<td>74.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>343,635</td>
<td>358,211</td>
<td>376,348</td>
<td>388,643</td>
<td>393,842</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>63,271</td>
<td>64,471</td>
<td>65,029</td>
<td>67,035</td>
<td>67,195</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>57,163</td>
<td>58,429</td>
<td>58,351</td>
<td>59,995</td>
<td>60,723</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>16,076</td>
<td>16,131</td>
<td>15,606</td>
<td>15,763</td>
<td>15,191</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>10,060</td>
<td>10,319</td>
<td>10,471</td>
<td>11,002</td>
<td>11,465</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stateless</td>
<td>1,846</td>
<td>1,826</td>
<td>1,765</td>
<td>1,717</td>
<td>1,573</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Immigration Bureau, Japan 2009.*

Thirty-six cases of stateless children were submitted to the Royal Thai Embassy in Tokyo in July 2008. Some cases were reported by their actual mothers, while some were identified by child guidance centers and other agencies. Thirteen of these cases were typical stateless children born to Japanese fathers and Thai mothers, nine were children who lived in child nursing homes, while four stayed with their acquaintances.

In the past five years, International Social Service Japan also gave a list of the different types of stateless children based on their parents’ nationalities. Some cases remained stateless and no progress was evident.
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The Philippines

“Japanese-Filipino Children (JFCs)” have a thirty-year history, almost, that began in the 1980s when Filipino migrant workers became one of the newcomers in Japan. Most of these workers were female performing artists who entered Japan with entertainment or tourist visas that allowed them to work in the sex trade. As a result, after several of them developed partnerships with Japanese men without the benefit of marriage registration, several JFCs were born in Japan and in the Philippines. They could not be Japanese citizens because their fathers did not want to commit to a marriage registration and refused to acknowledge paternity. Moreover, this acknowledgement had to occur before the birth of the children, as per the Nationality Law. Repeatedly, that was a critical factor which was finally amended in December 2008, after numerous court trials involving JFCs transpired in Japan.

Now, countless JFCs live in Japan and in the Philippines, in underprivileged circumstances. Some Filipino mothers submitted birth registrations to the Government of the Philippines through their Embassy or local authorities, leading to most JFCs’ obtaining Filipino citizenship. On the positive side, these children are not stateless and have a nationality. However, many have to live in fatherless families without a stable visa status and without the benefit of social protection in Japan. In the Philippines, they might encounter prejudice and discrimination because people tend to hold negative impressions of children of mothers who worked in the sex trade. People also tend to misunderstand the mothers receive continuous financial support from Japan due to a biased impression to Japan as an economically advanced country.

Several NGOs and public organizations have started to encourage and support JFCs and their mothers by providing legal and mental health services through various programs both in Japan and the Philippines. I had the chance to visit some of these agencies like the Development Action for Women Network (DAWN), Maligaya House, Batis Center for Women, and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Ministry of Social Welfare. NGOs set up in Manila often cooperate with one another and collaborate with the DSWD.

Additionally, I participated in the National Conference on Japanese-Filipino Children on 6 June 2009 in Manila. Organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the conference’s theme was “Multi-Sectoral Cooperation towards Protecting and Advancing the Rights and Welfare of Japanese-Filipino Children”. Approximately 80 people participated from various sectors such as NGOs, the government of the Philippines, the government of Japan. There were also lawyers and representatives of private companies/foundations, vocational training centers, Japanese language schools, employers, and JFCs from each region.

In the conference, the IOM introduced a pilot project called, “JFCs Multi-Sectoral Networking Project”, whose overall objective was “to promote the welfare and human rights of JFCs and their mothers, especially those in the Philippines; and to build a sustainable voluntary migration/voluntary return scheme for JFCs and their mothers from the Philippines to Japan, through building a multi-sectoral network and model/pilot cases” (IOM 2009). It was a good opportunity to explore future options for the current stateless children in Japan and to apply this movement in the context of Thai NGOs that support “Japanese-Thai Children (JTCs)” in Thailand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Japanese - Thai</th>
<th>Japanese - Filipinos</th>
<th>Japanese - Others</th>
<th>Total Cases of Statelessness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Stateless Children in Cases Brought to International Social Service Japan

Source: ISSJ 2009.
Actual Cases of Stateless Children

To get details about stateless children, I contacted ten families through home visits and meetings in town. They were introduced to me by ISSJ, the Embassy of Royal Thailand, and Thai volunteers. At that time, many of them could not acquire Japanese citizenship since acknowledgement of paternity after birth was still invalid per the Nationality Law.

The ten cases consisted of 2 children living in foster homes, 5 living with their mothers, and 3 living with acquaintances. All the children went to elementary schools near their homes. Some families received Seikatsu hogo (public financial assistance) because of their low income or the lack of it. Most of the children seemed to be in good health and received adequate social guidance through local welfare commissioners (voluntary posts).

The following Cases A, B, and C were taken from the above ten cases. Case D differs in that I met the parties involved in Thailand and then followed up their case in Japan. The Japanese father tried to acquire a Japanese nationality for his son for many years.

A girl was born out of wedlock to a Thai mother and a Japanese father. Their marriage registration could not be completed because the father could not get a divorce from his ex-wife (another Thai). The father did not take any action to recognize the child while the mother feared getting her registered in the Royal Thai Embassy because she had overstayed in Japan. After staying together for several years, both parents died due to poor health. The girl was sent to her uncle’s family (father’s side) and he found out that she was stateless. He tried to ask NGOs how she could get back her nationality, but was not successful. The girl was sent to a foster home.

An NGO and Thai/Japanese individual volunteers reported this case to the Royal Thai Embassy (RTE). The girl was over 10 years old at that time. The RTE and the team discussed the appropriate solution to get her out of her statelessness. The proposal was to let her obtain her Thai nationality first and then apply for Japanese citizenship, under Article 5 of the Nationality Law. The RTE worked on this case by compiling the appropriate documents of her dead mother, while negotiating with the child’s relatives in Thailand. Finally, the girl got her Thai citizenship and a legal visa in Japan.
The father saved the mother, a victim of human trafficking, from a broker and then they started living together without marriage registration. They had a boy soon after, but his mother hesitated to go to the RTE because her Japanese visa had already expired. So, the boy became stateless. After several years, the father was hospitalized and the mother started to work again to ease their financial burden. The mother was arrested by immigration officers and deported to Thailand. The child was sent to a foster home because the parents were not able to raise him at that point.

The Japanese father contacted an NGO to help get his son's Japanese nationality. However, recognition after childbirth was not valid for birth registration under Article 3 of the Nationality Law at that time. The NGO and Thai volunteers consulted with the RTE and they suggested the father to apply for his son's Thai citizenship first. The deported mother in Thailand submitted all documents necessary for a Thai birth registration through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, then to the RTE. The boy finally obtained his Thai citizenship and was expected to apply for his Japanese citizenship later, per Article 5 of the Nationality Law. The deported mother is preparing some supporting documents from her side in Thailand now.

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**Case B: Child born out of wedlock to Thai mother deported later and Japanese father (boy, age 11 currently)**

The father saved the mother, a victim of human trafficking, from a broker and then they started living together without marriage registration. They had a boy soon after, but his mother hesitated to go to the RTE because her Japanese visa had already expired. So, the boy became stateless. After several years, the father was hospitalized and the mother started to work again to ease their financial burden. The mother was arrested by immigration officers and deported to Thailand. The child was sent to a foster home because the parents were not able to raise him at that point.

The Japanese father contacted an NGO to help get his son's Japanese nationality. However, recognition after childbirth was not valid for birth registration under Article 3 of the Nationality Law at that time. The NGO and Thai volunteers consulted with the RTE and they suggested the father to apply for his son's Thai citizenship first. The deported mother in Thailand submitted all documents necessary for a Thai birth registration through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, then to the RTE. The boy finally obtained his Thai citizenship and was expected to apply for his Japanese citizenship later, per Article 5 of the Nationality Law. The deported mother is preparing some supporting documents from her side in Thailand now.
The Filipina mother, who had overstayed her visa, had relationships with several male friends, and eventually got pregnant by a Japanese partner. The latter invited the mother to live with him and promised to help take care of the baby. Suddenly, the mother disappeared without any warning. Then, the partner tried to establish the paternity of the boy so he could get him Japanese citizenship; but the DNA test showed that the baby was not his child. So, he left the baby with his own mother and eventually got involved with another partner. The man’s mother continued to take care of the boy and, together with other relatives, decided to adopt him.

The man’s mother contacted the Philippine Embassy and also requested NGOs to show the way to get Japanese citizenship for the boy. The Embassy found the report of birth filed by the Filipina mother before she had abandoned the child. Since she had affixed her signature to the report, the Embassy proceeded with the application of the foster family to become the child’s legal guardians.

**Chart 4: Case D**

**Disappeared Myanmar mother**

**Japanese father** (acknowledging his child)

**Unmarried**

**Stateless child born in Thailand (settled in Japan)**

Case D: Child born out of wedlock to mother from Myanmar living illegally in Thailand with the boy’s Japanese father (boy, age 5 currently)

The mother was an illegal migrant worker from Myanmar when the Japanese father visited Thailand. They decided to stay together and the father went to visit her every three months over a two-year period. Meanwhile, a baby boy was born to them and he lived with the mother until he was two years old. However, the mother disappeared and the boy was left with an acquaintance living in a town along the Thai-Myanmar border.

While the father continued to look for ways to bring his boy to Japan, he continued to send money to the foster family. The Japanese father and his parents consulted this matter with many agencies and individuals. Finally, they contacted volunteers in Thailand who understood the situation and started the process to bring the baby to Japan. Following suggestions from the Embassy of Japan in Thailand and upon consultations with volunteers, the father proceeded to apply for birth registration from a local authority in the Thai government. That was the most important document he needed to submit to apply for a travel document to Japan for the boy. Luckily, the father had kept a birth certificate from the hospital, which contained the Japanese father’s name and his passport number.

The birth registration proceeded smoothly as the volunteers had explained the case to public officials before the father’s visit. The Thai government has a system for issuing an ID number with birth registration for a child born in Thailand, regardless of the parents’ nationalities. In this case, the baby’s nationality was blank which meant “unknown” or “stateless”. It was obvious why this was so: both parents were not Thai according to the birth certificate. But that was enough for an application for a travel document to Japan.

The father reported to the Embassy with the birth registration in order to get the special travel document from the Japanese Government. After a few months, the document was issued and the father and his parents came to pick up the boy to settle in Japan. In Japan, the
father had already started to contact city hall in their town for his boy’s Japanese citizenship. The implementation of the amendment to the Nationality Law was expected in December 2008.

It had taken one year for the child go to Japan; the father had to contact volunteers for help. However, it might have been more difficult and could have taken more time had the father worked on the matter by himself. It was a fully international issue and required an understanding of the complicated legal details in both countries.

Conclusion

This research project focused on examining the current situation of stateless children born to Asian women (mainly Thai and Filipino women) living illegally in Japan. Using a rights-based approach, I intended to figure out effective actions to confirm the babies’ Japanese nationality in collaboration with supportive networks in Japan.

As a starting point, it is effective to revisit Article 7 of “The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)”:

All children have the right to a legally registered name, officially recognized by the government. Children have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country). Children also have the right to know and, as far as possible, to be cared for by their parents.

Obviously, based on this international provision about children’s rights, the children whom I met were not supported enough to obtain Japanese citizenship. If these children were not granted such citizenship, they would likely experience various kinds of social exclusion, sooner or later. The following paragraphs are major problematic situations and recommended actions, to confirm Japanese citizenship on stateless children.

In the legal sense, although the Nationality Law has been amended to approve after-birth acknowledgement by Japanese fathers, the official birth registration process seems slow and difficult in finalizing their paternity. Furthermore, some public service officers, who should have a certain aptitude for the law. Paternity tests can be forced in the course of implementation.

Japanese fathers tend to be irresponsible and uncommitted in conferring the Japanese nationality on their children. Marriage and/or birth registration must be facilitated basically by Japanese fathers for their children to become eligible to assume Japanese citizenship. It cannot be forced upon them by the courts the way it is done in other nations. Public information may lead the fathers to take voluntary action for protection and the nearest counseling service could facilitate early action.

Asian mothers usually do not have much information about their marriage registration and their children’s birth registration. Formal and informal information should reach them so they can register their children in their own embassies and/or in the nearest Japanese city halls. Continuous public and private counseling sessions are necessary; however, those should start in areas where the mothers live most of the time using a language which they understand. It is also important to consider getting social services to help if the mothers have very limited language skills.

Many children experience identity crises when they realize their statelessness. Since these children have already identified themselves as Japanese, the Japanese nationality should be the final goal for fixing the psychological gap. Among the cases described in this paper, some have decided to assume their mothers’ nationalities. However, it is also important to regard the mothers’ nationality as a temporary and transitional one, and to plan for Japanese naturalization in the earliest possible time.

Separation from parents and friends by deportation is traumatic for children. The children’s right to stay with their parents and to study in school must be protected and well taken care of. These days, immigration officers might be more child-friendly such that they avoid sending the children to their mothers’ countries of origin. However, the advocacy should proceed from this point.

Further Studies

To continue studying this subject, the following topics should be focused on:

Thai volunteer groups in Japan—They seem not strong enough compared to the Filipina volunteer
network. As an advisor of the Thai Volunteer Network in Japan (TNJ), I would like to continue collaborating with them.

Other types of statelessness in Japan—There are several people who become stateless due to political and economic reasons. The resources of an organization established in 2009, Stateless Network (http://www.stateless-network.com), may prove very interesting to work on.

Japanese - Thai Children (JTC)—In Thailand, children recently started to raise the need to know their Japanese fathers. It will be good to introduce the samples of activities of JFCs and NGOs both in the Philippines and Japan.

Stateless people in Thailand—Thailand has many ethnic minorities that who have not yet registered their birth, and millions of migrant workers and refugees from especially neighboring countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Malaysia. Their legal status and rights for protection should be examined.

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Conferences


APPENDIX

I was involved in the production of this TV program.

*Nippon Hoso Kyokai* (NHK), *Understanding Statelessness—The Fields of Support*, 14 April 2009. This was a feature story for the 30-minute program of the Welfare Network in the Digital Education Channel, Japan.

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International Organization for Migration (IOM), Tokyo  
‘JFCs Citizens’ Network for Japanese-Filipino Children  
Center for Japanese-Filipino Families (CJFF)  
All the stateless children and their mothers of the cases

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Department of Social Welfare & Development, Quezon City

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to all the staff and advisors of Nippon Foundation, the API Program Office in Thailand and in the Philippines, as well.
From Army Generals to *Mama-sans*: A Study on Human Insecurity in Indonesia and Japan

Ukrist Pathmanand

**Introduction and Methodology**

I consider this research to be the toughest intellectual challenge in my two decades as an academic researcher. First, it is the product of a cross-cultural study conducted in two countries, Japan and Indonesia, both countries of which I had no prior expertise. The two are strikingly different in terms of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, customs and traditions, histories and socio-economic structures.

Apart from the foregoing objective obstacles, I was also burdened by a next-to-nil knowledge of Bahasa Indonesia and Japanese, forcing me to rely entirely on interpreters and translators for the interviews and my comprehension of the reading materials. Secondly, being a political scientist, my work revolves extensively around the study of political leaders, coups d’etat and democratization in Thailand; but this paper focuses on non-traditional security, particularly the human insecurity of the working class and rural populations.

Still, I also must admit that I thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of this intellectual adventure during which I had to deploy new research methodologies different from those I traditionally employ as a traditional armchair academic. And after some adjustments, I was able to transform myself into an anthropologist, conducting field interviews in Indonesia, talking to three members of the human rights committee, five staff members of three human rights NGOs, two journalists, four leading Indonesian academics, and four Sudanese civilians.

Overall, however, the most difficult but also the most fulfilling part of my fieldwork was in Japan going to the dark, sordid areas of the underground. My interviews with seven Thai sex workers started off with great difficulty and involved both adventure and risk. This study’s progress was at their mercy, but eventually, I did interview them no less than four times each, at different times and places, e.g., from 2 a.m. onward along the streets of Osaka where they worked in January and February, the coldest winter months in Japan. Initially, some of them refused to be interviewed. However, once I explained to them that their stories would be compiled in a book that would be a testament to their hardship, struggles, and dreams (which I admit were far more interesting than the lives of many army generals in Thailand whom I interviewed), they agreed. I assured my subjects that no photos would be taken; no voice recording would be made; and no true identities revealed. Some continued to refuse being interviewed, while others consented to short conversations. Still others agreed to full interviews after their working hours (which could be as late as 3 a.m.). I talked to each of them separately and, on many occasions, our interviews were postponed due to urgent calls from their customers for services to be rendered. Interviews were also impossible during certain nights when there were police officers patrolling the streets. I recall one occasion when I had to run away from the officers while talking to a sex worker on the street. After this tough beginning, however, my friendships with the women blossomed. I held conversations with them in cafes or restaurants, while they waited for their customers or after they had finished work. We developed a sense of mutual trust and they were soon after comfortable enough to talk about their private lives. Some even showed me photos of their children in Thailand, and asked for advice as to what their children should study in the university. A few asked about career opportunities and their future, after they quit as sex workers. Still there were those who discussed the possibility of returning to Thailand in the near term. A few suggested that I should also talk to their friends working in traditional Thai massage parlors. Others helped me contact some other women. I eventually had the opportunity to visit their apartments and enjoy their home-cooking, while learning about their hardships through our conversations and my observations. The information thus gathered was highly valuable.

In order to better understand the human insecurity which threatened the lives of Thai sex workers in Japan and to appreciate the connection between the *Mama-sans* and global sex trafficking, I interviewed 66 people between January and June 2009, as follows: seven Thai sex workers; two each of Japanese sex workers and Taiwanese sex workers; one Thai *Mama-san* and one Taiwanese *Mama-san*; eight police officers from...
Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto; three Osaka immigration officers; four Osaka consular officers and four officers from the Indonesian consulate in Osaka; six Japanese NGO staff; eight Thai volunteers; six Japanese university lecturers; three journalists from the Japanese press; four owners of Thai restaurants and three owners of massage parlors; two Thai interpreters; one member of the Japanese Yakuza; and two love-hotel managers.

In the past decades, Asia underwent great changes that affected its environmental security. It was expected to achieve peace and stability after the end of the Cold War, but this proved to be temporary. In the 1990s, the region became a target of old and new security threats, the latter referring now to a wide array of problems capable of inflicting damage on a large number of people. These nontraditional security (NTS) threats included climate change, the wanton destruction of cross-border natural resources and its effect on the environment, the impact of diseases, natural disasters, illegal migration, food shortages, human trafficking, drug trafficking, and other forms of transnational crime.

NTS covers areas beyond conventional warfare, the conflicts of ideals (e.g., communism and liberal democracy), and the stability of state sovereignty. It encompasses a much broader definition of human security to include famine, global warming, and the deterioration of natural resources and the environment. However, this does not mean that issues like the conflict of political ideas and the fight for justice of the working class, have become less of a priority. In fact, they remain fundamental problems and continue to have a much greater impact on human security than global warming or the deterioration of natural resources.

In developing countries like Indonesia, problems like the violation of human rights and conflict over political differences still prevail, even after the end of the Suharto era. In economically advanced countries like Japan, intense racial division continue to persist, with foreigners subjected to even more political restrictions and being targets of racial prejudice (Takao 2003, Apichai 2005, Apichai 2008). Foreign female sex workers, in particular, are forced to live underground lives because of their illegal profession plus the fact that many of them are staying illegally in Japan. Despite the growing debates over the human and political rights of sex workers, pushed vigorously by an assembly of social movements, there seems to be little progress in dealing with this problem, however. Japanese immigration and police authorities continue to report of large numbers of foreign women from Russia, Hungary, China, Korea, the Philippines and Thailand, who are forced to work as sex workers.

This study thus focuses on man-made human security issues in which the against politicians and democracy activists in Indonesia and the exploitative world of the Thai sex worker in Japanese are two classic examples. With the help of Mama-san groups, organized crime syndicates physically abuse these women, extort money from them, and murder some of them. In Indonesia, on the other hand, the key figures behind human insecurity are the army generals who inflict violence on those they regard as threats. Both assemblies represent the dark side of globalization.

Indonesia, Army Generals and Human Rights

The restoration of democracy in Indonesia has been portrayed, in general, as having a very positive impact on a people subjected to over 30 years of authoritarian rule. After its restoration, citizens were able to voice their political opinions freely and openly, and could form political parties and compete for seats in Parliament. Despite its seemingly fragile condition, post-Suharto Indonesian politics saw no instances where political rivals accused each other of subscribing to communism in order to imprison or banish them, of banning protests or the establishment of labor unions, or of closing down newspapers and media outlets, as were done in the past. Human rights violations, however, remained a major problem with the state itself provoking fear and violence.

At present, the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM) is investigating several cases. These include the kidnapping of human rights and political activists between 1997 and 1998, the Wasior and Wamena May cases, the Riot of 1998, the Trisaki, Semanggi I and Semanggi II cases, the Tanjung Priok massacre in 1984, the East Timor incident in 1999, and the poisoning of Munir, who was a former Kontra S coordinator.

Almost all these aforementioned violations of human rights originated from the victims’ voicing out of their political opinions, their making political demands or resisting the state. State authorities may have been offended by their criticisms and attacks, leading them to subsequently target these activists as potential and actual kidnap victims.
The second issue is that Islamic radicals are increasingly being blamed for the political violence prevailing and are thus equally accused of being serious human rights violators. However, violence is not solely the result of religious differences but also involves politics and the exercise of power by leaders of religious groups.

It is noteworthy to point out that human rights problems in Indonesia have more to do with civil and political rights, rather than with economic, social, and cultural rights. Of all the 3,291 complaints received (Komnas HAM) in 2005, only 490 were economic, social, and cultural in nature. Some 727 had to do with the violation of civil and political rights, whereas 212 dealt with the violation of the rights of the disadvantaged. The violation of human rights is classified under state violence.

**Indonesia: Human Insecurity under State Violence**

Activists who spoke out on East Timor, Papua and Aceh became targets of the state, according to Indria Fernida. Indria claims, however, that all cases were based on political demands, and had nothing to do with the separatist movement. Separatism could hardly even be used as an excuse in the case of Papua, since the independence movement there was very weak. The state, however, saw an opportunity to accuse these activists of involvement in separatist movements, and therefore provided the justification for prosecuting them. In two other two cases, namely, the Tanjung Priok case in North Jakarta in 1984 and the Talangshri Lampung case in South Sumatra, the state agitated the protest, leading to the burning of entire villages in the case of the latter.

Usman Hamid argues that the decade of reform (1998-2008) brought about more freedom and guaranteed human rights more than did the Suharto period. He believes that both stemmed from the decreasing role of the military in Indonesian politics. He illustrated his point by pointing out that no military officers had served as provincial governor or as a member of Parliament (MP) in the pre-2004 era. However, field studies on state violence showed that the military continued to wield its coercive powers. House raids, the destruction of property, and occasions of mob rule were frequent throughout the major towns, rural villages, and areas of conflicts in Papua, Aceh, Poso, and Kalimantan. Some of the violence appeared to have been “approved” by or to have sanctioned by the state authorities.

During the reform period, the military continued to play a major role in the legal and illegal spheres of politics and business. In Papua, Aceh, Ambon, and Kalimantan, military and police units, as well as intelligence agencies, continued to maintain their political and business influence through the use of violence.

**The Cases of Papua, Aceh and Ambon**

Unlike in other places where civil political parties had successfully built their administrative and political capacities, the local administrations of Papua and Aceh faced continued instability and violence that allowed the military to retain its influence locally. Large transnational companies like Freeport and ExxonMobil were frequently attacked by separatist movements, prompting them to pay the local military unit for security services.

The military, in turn, managed the conflicts so that these would not reach the critical point that would drive the transnational companies out of the area. It also made sure that the threats did not completely disappear, because if these did, the police would replace them as overseers of security. The military’s management of unrest and low intensity violence in Papua and Aceh are thus considered a means by which local military commanders acquire more compensation from the companies (The Editors 2003, 26).

In Papua, a Freeport employee was shot by an unidentified gunman on 30 August 2003. An extensive investigation of the incident suggested that the shooting was part of a military ploy that hoped to lay the blame on the separatist movement called the “Free Papua Organization” (OPM). The OPM was subsequently classified as a terrorist group. Another investigation, on the other hand, suggested that the incident was instigated by an internal conflict among the security personnel, with one group hiring assassins to attack Freeport employees and thus discredit the military by accusing it of providing inefficient security (The Editors 2003, 26). Still another investigation suggested that it was the military which was behind the killing, because it needed to force Freeport’s hand over compensation issues in 2003 (The Editors 2003, 27). Regardless of which investigation was right, this episode demonstrates the persistence of violence by local military officers and its direct impact on human insecurity and human rights.
Apart from providing security service to Freeport, local military officers in Papua also provided security for legal and illegal forest operations, forestry being one of the area’s main industries. The military provides log transportation systems to legal and illegal loggers; and, like in the Freeport case, does not hesitate to use violence if there are problems with the fees (The Editors 2003, 27). In Aceh, the nature of state violence is remarkably similar to that in certain areas in the Philippines. The local military command, Kodam (Iskandar Muda), was set up in 2002 to guarantee the security of the area for the sake of the transnational oil company, Exxon-Mobil. This was done in exchange for a fee. Frequently, however, there were reports that the same military officers had disguised themselves as members of the separatist Free Aceh Movement (GAM). They fomented unrest to pressure the company to hire more security units (The Editors 2003, 28).

The transnational companies enabled the local military to expand its activities to other businesses in Aceh. The army now controls harbor management and attendant to this, the transportation routes across which all landed products are moved. In Aceh, the local communities have rejected the armed forces, with some of the former accusing the latter of being involved in drug trafficking and small arms dealing. The military is believed to have staged various crimes to demand additional budget increases. But the local commanders have also kept the security level low, thus preventing the central military command to alter the local organizational configuration which appears to be—in the eyes of Jakarta—well managed (The Editors 2003, 28-29).

A similar situation prevails in Ambon, where the military works with both sides of the politico-economic setting. It provides security for companies and business, while also threatening them with violence if their security fees are not adequate. Information from the local military unit indicates that 18 percent of the military officers are also trained to stage bomb attacks and train juveniles to help them in their efforts. In short, the military itself is a factor of violence and instability in Ambon mainly because of the insufficiency of the military budget, which has somehow driven the military to disturb the peace by stirring insecurity (The Editors 2003, 29-30).

The General

It is true that no generals have served as members of Parliament or as provincial governors after Suharto. But this does not mean that their powers have dwindled. Many generals continue to keep their political and business power in Java and other parts of the archipelago.

Despite the efforts of human rights activists, most cases of human rights violations remain unaddressed in the courts until now. To make matters worse, the kidnapping and poisoning of political activists have become common practice, while the military have been accused as suspects. Thus far, no generals have ever been sent to jail.

Japan: Mama-San and the Female Migrant Sex Worker

The Female Migrant Sex Worker and Japan’s Sex Industry

Prostitution is illegal in Japan, but the human trafficking of Southeast Asian women for the sex trade in Japan has continued to increase since the 1970s. Women brought to Japan for the sex industry are called Japayukis.

Before this boom, Japanese men joined sex tours to other Asian countries, some of them accepting their companies’ offer of an “overseas weekend sex tour”, occasionally as part of their annual bonus package (Matsui 1991). Some farmers who sold their land to the state and property developers also joined these sex tours. During the boom period, with a strong yen backing them up, over one million Japanese men traveled to the red light districts of Southeast Asia in the 1970s (Lumbera 1988, 1).

The first major destination of for these sex tours was Taiwan, followed by the Philippines and Thailand in the 1980s. From 1970 to 1980, a Japanese sex tourist was estimated to spend approximately US$70 in the Philippines, but a Filipina sex worker would only receive approximately US$7. Amidst the boom in the sex trade, Japanese human trafficking agencies began to bring in Southeast Asian women for sex trade employment. Initially, most of them came from the Philippines but their number began to decline in the 1980s after then President Corazon Aquino sought to stop labor migration through stricter airport measures and the arrest of a large number of immigration officers who were collaborators of human trafficking agencies. With the Philippines causing problems, human traffickers moved to Thailand, resulting to the alarming increase in the number of Thai women being trafficked.
flown to Japan for the sex trade. Almost all of the estimated 100,000 sex workers in Japan are from Thailand and the Philippines (Pasuk et al. 1998, 165-167).

Human trafficking for the Japanese sex industry in the 1980s flourished for three reasons: the expansion of the night-time entertainment businesses, the decrease in the birth rate in Japan, and the low number of married Japanese men (Watanabe 2000). The nighttime entertainment businesses expanded during the boom years, as could be seen in the following data gathered by Hosoda (1996, 171): the consistent rise in the number of bars, cabarets and nightclubs, as follows: 27.2 percent in 1969; 34.2 percent in 1972; 10.7 percent in 1975; 30.3 percent in 1978; and 45 percent in 1981. This also coincided with the growing demand for a work force in the fields dubbed as the “three K”: kitanai (dirty), kiken (dangerous), and kitsui (difficult). The three K encompassed the types of work that the Japanese themselves did not want to do (Anchalee 1995, 54). The Filipinas and Thai women filled the void left by the Japanese and enabled a large number of workers to migrate to Japan and work in both the industrial plants and the sex trade.

The trafficking of Thai women rose in the early 1990s and then steadily declined thereafter. According to the Japanese Migration Office, the number of Thai women overstaying in Japan reached a high 55, Japan in 1993, then declined steadily from 49,992 in 1994, to 44,794 in 1995, then to 41,280 in 1996, to 39,513 in 1997, and to 37,046 in 1998, until it dipped down considerably to 30,065 in 1999. The 1990s saw the largest number of overstaying Thai women in Japan6. From 2003 onwards, the number of Thai females overstaying in Japan began to decrease from 15,693 in 2003, to 14,334 in 2004, then to 12,787 in 2005, down to 10,352 in 2006, and, finally, to only 7,314 in 2008.7 Of this number, only 1,553 Thai females were sent back home.8 Between 2006 and 2009, approximately 400 women were sent back home by Prompol Sod-Eiam, the Thai consul in Osaka; almost all of them were sex workers.9

According to my interview with a former Thai consul in Japan, who became involved in bringing the women back to Thailand, there were approximately 23,000 Thai sex workers in Japan in 1995. This figure closely coheres with the number of Thai females overstaying in Japan, or Thai women who entered Japan without a proper Thai passport.

Mama-san and the transnational network

The 1990s was regarded as the golden age of the migration of female foreigners to Japan for sex trade employment. This phenomenon was a part of the larger worldwide trafficking of women for the sex industry, which was valued at an estimated US$7000 to US$1200 million worldwide per year (Hughes 2000, 626). The Japanese sex industry experienced a boom, as mentioned earlier, but it began to decline after the end of the boom years and hit rock bottom in the early 2000s. Still, migrant sex workers continued to come to Japan albeit in smaller numbers. They included the “traditional” groups like the Thais and the Filipinas, who were joined by the Indonesians, Vietnamese, Columbians, Brazilians, and Peruvians.

In Japan, once these women managed to get through immigration, they were then taken care of by the Mama-san, who served as the link between the women, the sex industry, and the transnational crime organizations. It was also discovered that the Peruvian women were managed by a Filipino Mama-san who married a Japanese and worked in either a Filipino snack bar or a Japanese hostess club. The Filipina’s knowledge of Spanish helped facilitate this contact.10 Female migrants also continued to work in the traditional forms of the sex industry such as bars, snack bars, and brothels.11 A field survey shows that Filipinas, and Chinese and Korean women were likewise available through “new forms” of sexual service outfits like the Deri Heru (or Health Delivery in English) and call girl services entities.12 The Thai women were also into Internet-based sex for hire.13

The women still use fake passports to come in, with many of them persuaded by friends and relatives, who are themselves sex workers, to join the sex industry. Today, these are considered the main features of the second wave of trafficked women (Hughes 2000, 635). Another new method of acquiring sex workers is through false marriages arranged by the transnational crime networks either through mail order bride agencies or introduction via the Internet and mass media advertisement. In Thailand, the advertisements promise a golden opportunity to marry good Japanese men, although in reality, these soon-to-be husbands may be unemployed and are simply the marriage to be paid by the crime networks.14 To make matters worse, some men who enter into fake marriages with Thai women subsequently rape them.15
The seven Thai sex workers interviewed in Osaka described the entry procedure into the Japan sex industry as a complicated process revealing the involvement of the transnational human trafficking network. All of the women entered Japan in 1990 with the help of their friends and agents in Thailand. They all signed a contract stipulating that they should all the money from the contract fee once they arrived in Japan.16

After the contract signing, the women were separated from each other. Nok was hidden in a house in Saphan Kwai, Bangkok for three months, waiting for her trip to Japan. She moved to two other places and there met ten other girls who were also waiting for their journey to Japan. None of them had passports or any other travel documents, but upon arriving at the airport, they were hidden in a huge luggage and in it, flew to Japan. Once in Japan, she was brought by an agent various snack bars in Osaka for two weeks to be assessed by the brothel owners.17

Nok was sold to a Japanese boss for 3,500,000 yen. At the brothel, she learned about the sex trade system, which began with a phone call from a client. A Mama-san would answer the call and make the necessary arrangements. Women like her would then be driven in a tinted van to a client’s apartment or a hotel room where a CCTV was installed to monitor Nok, for example. Once finished servicing the client, Nok would call the Mama-san who would send the same van to take her back to the brothel. Due to her large number of regular customers, Nok completed the contract in only one year, but she continued to work for another three more months. She was fortunate enough to have a Japanese customer who really loved her, and thus asked her to quit the sex trade profession. She lived with him for two years before marrying him. Due to her illegal entry, there were complications in the marriage process initially, but with the help of Kimura Yuji from RINK, Nok is now married and living legally in Japan.

Nok’s case is a rare and extremely fortunate one. Two of her friends who were sold to two different snack bars managed by a Taiwanese Mama-san had to work much harder and under stricter conditions for two years. Despite their desire to return to Thailand, they were unable to go home as they had no passports, money, or friends who could help them.18 Nok has not heard from her friends since.

Nang is another woman who migrated to Japan around the same time as Nok, this time using a fake passport.19 She was only 19 when she started her journey by traveling to Padang Besa by bus to enter Malaysia, before spending another night in Singapore and boarding the plane to Japan the next day. Nang arrived with four other friends and was sent to a snack bar in Ibaraki, while the others were sent to other snack bars in Saitama. Nang spent an entire week familiarizing herself with the location, an area consisting of only rice fields and the snack bar in the middle. The owner of this snack bar was a Yakuza, whose Thai wife acted as the Mama-san. Most of her clients at Ibaraki were elders over 60 years of age, a fact that Nang found difficult to live with as her Thai upbringing and values taught her to view elders as respectable figures; the elders at Ibaraki often visited bawdyhouses. She told me that “During that period, the Japanese elders were dressed very shabbily but carried pocketfuls of cash”.20 The Mama-san was in charge of deciding which women could work. Those who were young and good-looking got more jobs, while those who were older and less pretty got less work and had to spend more time under the contract.21

Nang was in debt for 4,000,000 yen but was determined to work as much as she could, in order to complete the contract. She did so in one year, but continued to work at a snack bar in Saitama after contacting a friend who came to Japan on the same trip. She got pregnant by a lowly paid Japanese chef and had to switch to street prostitution in Osaka. During the interview (May 2009), Nang admitted that she had to borrow some money from the Mama-san because of her low income and after her husband’s mother forced her out of the house, declaring, “There is no place for a woman like her here”. As a street prostitute, she relies on a Mama-san for protection, food, and finances. She has become addicted to pachinko.

Mama-san after the end of the contract

Thai women who went to Japan illegally to be part its the sex industry made up but one group of female migrants to Japan for the sake of prostitution during the industry’s golden age in the 1990s. At that time, most of them did not have passports, or held only fake ones. Bosses and Mama-sans generated immense profits from selling them. Some of the women made lot of money due to their youth and beauty; and they
often received attention from the *Mama-san* who made sure they were properly groomed and well-trained in handling clients. Those who were not so good-looking, however, took longer to fulfill their contracts. Whenever any conflict arose, such as when a woman failed to comply with a client’s requests or ran away, some gangsters were hired to run after the women and beat them up. In some cases, even their parents in rural Thailand were beaten for punishment.

Many of the women I interviewed had completed their contracts but continued to work as freelance sex workers. Some *Mama-sans* continued to help them with guests and with the paperwork for their passports or visa extensions; some even provide them with protection from gangsters. Nowadays, there is an increasing number of fake marriages, with some *Mama-sans* helping these women find a fake husband to enable them to continue living legally in Japan and working as sex workers. Police officers in Kyoto and Osaka admit that these women who fake their marriages with Japanese men cannot be arrested. They could, however, be fined and cleared of charges after showing their passports.

The sex workers are of various nationalities: Thai, Filipino, Chinese, and Korean—and this diversity reflects the fact that *Mama-sans* continue to stay in touch with these women even after the end of their contracts.22 At present, Japan’s economic downfall and the police’s increasingly strict stance on the sex trade may reduce the number of foreign sex workers. However, for so long as foreign females continue to work in the sex industry, *Mama-sans* will maintain their significant role as caretakers—looking out for their workers well-being and safety, lending money to the sex workers, and making some extra income out of the loan.

**Insecurity providers compared**

In Indonesia and Japan, the importance of army generals and *Mama-sans* is indisputable. Both drive forward the dark side of globalization and exploit the underground world to generate wealth, influence, and social status for themselves. The post-Suharto period in Indonesia may no longer see examples of citizens’ being charged and imprisoned for upholding communism. Reforms have made a huge impact on generals who refuse to give up their power. The attack, kidnapping and assassination of political activists and the government continues without anyone ever being named as the mastermind behind the acts. Violence has erupted in areas where democracy, human rights, and freedom and the decentralization of power have taken shape. In the meantime, separatist movements have been labeled as “the new ghosts”, and been used to facilitate the negotiation for “compensation” from transnational companies in areas of conflicts such as Ambon, Papua, and Aceh.

In the boom period of the sex industry in Japan, the *Mama-sans* served as the main facilitators between the sex industry, the migrant sex workers, and the transnational crime agencies. They helped recruit the women, forge fake papers, and bring these women into Japan. They also managed the migrant sex workers’ work and services to the customers. They controlled who could work and collected charges following what the contract stipulated. No matter their nationality, all *Mama-sans* seemed strict and stern, forcing the women to earn as much and as fast as they could. *Mama-sans* did not tolerate the stubborn ones or those who attempted to run away. After their contracts were fulfilled, the sex workers remained unfree. They were forced to find a house, clients, a passport and a visa; and even a Japanese man who could serve as a fake husband—but all of these requirements they could not acquire without the help of the *Mama-sans* who could therefore still earn some commissions/fees from these women.

The Japanese sex industry demanded youth and beauty, making it necessary for the workers to relocate to other snack bars or other towns frequently, with the *Mama-sans* again acting as key middle-women. The difficulty most sex workers experienced in communicating in Japanese also made the *Mama-sans* indispensable.

Migration and human trafficking were inseparable. The transportation of these women to Japan involved various parties, but once they arrived and were bought by the bosses, the *Mama-sans* who became their main connection to the underground world, handled all the chores between the transnational crime networks, the sex industry, the sex workers, and the clients.

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**NOTES**

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Interview Coordinator, The Commission for Disappearances and Victims of Violence (Kontra S), interview by the author, Jakarta Indonesia, 11 July 2008.


Table Changes in the estimate number of overstayers by major nationality (place of origin) Immigrant Control 2008, Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice, Japan, 30.

Ibid.

Table changes in the number of deportees by nationality (place of origin) Immigration Control 2008, Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice, Japan, 42.

Prompol Sod-Eiam, a Thai consul, interview by the author, Royal Thai Consulate-General, Osaka Japan, 10 January 2009.

The Philippine Mama-san’s daughter revealed that she brought three Peruvian females to work at Gion Kyoto’s Philippine snack. Prior to this, she taught Japanese to many female Peruvians. Interview at Gion Kyoto’s Philippine snack, 10 May 2009.

Osaka and Tokyo police, interview by the author, in Tokyo inn March 2009, and in Kyoto and Osaka between April and May 2009.

Field work in the red light areas of Osaka, April-May 2009.


Thai restaurant owner, interview by the author, Kobe, 11 March 2009.

The contract fees covered the following items: paperwork, tickets, accommodation, food, travel guardians, and education given in preparation for the journey to Japan, such as on basic Japanese conversation.

Nok 18, interview by the author, Osaka, Japan, 22 January 2009.

Nok 5, interview by the author, Osaka, Japan, February 2009.

Nang 8, interview by the author, Osaka, Japan, 12 May 2009.

Nang 2, interview by the author, Osaka, Japan, June 2009.


Sato Naruo and Takada Hiromichi, interview by the author, Kyoto Prefectural Police Headquarters, Daily Life Safety Department (Kyoto fu keisatsu honbu seikatsu anzen bu), 18 February 2009.

REFERENCES


The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows
Participatory Arts and Creative Media in Asia: Engaging Communities and Empowering Youths for Change

Tan Sooi Beng

Uncle Aunty why do you go to the market?
Vegetables, fish, chicken, all are cheap and fresh
All prices can be bargained
[The market is] near the house, [one can] save petrol and time...

Lyrics of Opera Pasar

The song in the Malay language echoes across the streets around the Campbell Street Market in Penang. Gamelan gongs chime in the air. A young child starts beating an accompanying rhythm on an old tin can, followed by interlocking rhythms on other found objects. Young dancers enter, moving as if they were animals waking up in the morning. The storytellers sing and chant the story. The audience stands around watching intently, as the history, sounds, movements, and energy of one of Penang’s oldest markets unfold in front of them.

Welcome to Opera Pasar (Market Opera), my project with Anak-Anak Kota (Children of the City) which was presented by Ombak-Ombak Artstudio in 2008. For six months, 25 young people aged 10 to 19 researched, composed, experimented, and then performed the 30-minute piece about the market at the site itself. The young performers were introduced to different methods of collecting oral histories.

After reading some articles about the history of the market as part of their research, they talked to vegetable, fish, and meat sellers about their trades and lives at the market. Once they got over the smell of fresh fish and wet floors, the young participants (many of whom are accustomed to marketing at supermarkets) became crusaders for the preservation of this old market with its beautiful façade. Like many who belong to the younger generation today, they had taken the availability of fresh food in the market for granted, before they got involved in this project.

Communicating what they learned to the community at the market itself added to the excitement. The site-specific performance juxtaposed local folklore with festivals, the past with the present, the animals with humans. It mixed the different local languages of Penang with the eclectic musical traditions from the Malay dikir barat (folk singing genre), Hokkien ditties, Chinese opera, and jazz. There was improvisation of the music, which combined the use of everyday objects and junk materials with traditional musical instruments such as the gamelan, and various types of storytelling. The young dancers used their bodies to convey their impressions of the market, ranging from chickens being slaughtered, to fish being caught in the sea, mutton being hung, or, simply, to buying and selling in the market.

Since the 1990s, I have been involved in musical theater for young people. I have seen the development of a Malaysian children’s theater that projects multiculturalism and a distinct local identity. Musical compositions for We have a Dream (1990), Kami Bukannya Patong (We are not Puppets, 1991), Red and Gold Shoe (2001), and Hen or Rooster? (2002) have helped children’s theater step out of theater buildings and return to the streets and public spaces, where the performing arts had been traditionally enjoyed by the community at large. Multietnic audiences are also able to access the music with ease and familiarity, while yet experiencing how traditional music can be used in new ways.
More recent performance projects such as *Kisah Pulau Pinang* (The Penang Story, 2006), *Ronggeng Merdeka* (Independence Ronggeng, 2007), *Opera Pasar* (Market Opera, 2008), and *Ko-Tai Penang* (Penang Ko-Tai, 2009/10), are experiments in the use of ‘engaged art’, which focuses on local needs and interests. They are performed in public community spaces and engage the community in the processes of doing art. Having worked long term with children of mixed ages, gender, and ethnicity, I have devised ways for them to collect oral stories from old people living in Georgetown who, in turn, share their experiences with the young people. These stories are then used by the children in song lyrics and storytelling, and then performed back for the community. The young people extend the practice of ‘making theater’ to the community, focusing on issues relevant to them. An exciting outcome is that in having contributed to the compositions, children develop a sense of affinity and ownership of the reconstructed traditions, and begin to internalize traditional music through new and engaging channels.

What is the social impact of this work on the young people? Besides the investigation of local cultures and concerns, the whole process of *Opera Pasar* aims to promote the spirit of goodwill and to build bridges among young people of various ethnic origins. Through research, the young people learn about each other’s history, religion, and culture. Through intensive interaction during the workshop and performances, they learn to appreciate and interact with children of different backgrounds. The young people learn to appreciate their own and other cultures through ethnomusicological tasks such as fieldwork, interviews, participant observation, audio-visual recording, analysis, the learning of traditional instruments, and the performance of the music of various ethnic groups. They also acquire the tools for cross-cultural conservation. By crossing stylistic and ethnic boundaries, and appreciating cultural differences, children also develop perspectives that are more inclusive and so challenge the dominant discourse of ethnicism. The children then bring their energy and their insights to the community and other audiences.

As an ethnomusicologist, I have always advocated activism and practice in the field. Ethnomusicologists can help to bring about change in society if they actively collaborate with the communities they study, in addressing issues of concern, and apply their knowledge to solve particular problems in the field of culture. In the midst of the *Opera Pasar* project, for example, the young people found out that several tenants in the vicinity of the market were being evicted as they could not pay the high rentals. They discovered that Georgetown’s living cultural heritage is being threatened as traditional communities who have been living in the inner city since the Second World War are being forced to vacate their premises to make way for upmarket businesses like boutique hotels, pubs, and restaurants. This threat did not only give the children extra motivation to tell their story, but also offered tenants a channel through which to make known their plight.

This processual way of working toward performance may also be viewed as a step in the direction of the democratization of cultural education and research. Acquiring the ability to conduct research, investigate, analyze, and communicate findings in creative ways, can help young people voice their opinions regarding issues that are affecting them and their communities. The overall effect of these creative participatory processes is ‘empowerment’, such that young people gain the capacity to make positive choices about their future and transform these decisions into action. The community is also able to present its views through oral history and the performances of the young people.

The Origins of Participatory Theater Arts and Networking in Asia

Theater, popular media, and the creative arts have been employed effectively as means to promote social and political change in developing countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia since the 1960s and 1970s. Often referred to as theater for development, community theater, people’s theater, process or participatory theater, the genre has been adopted by artists, non-governmental organizations, and educational groups to encourage discussion and understanding of critical issues affecting the communities. Although the term ‘theater’ has been used, it is understood that other forms of creative art and popular media are also employed (Eskamp 2006).

Participatory theater has been influenced by the ideas of Brazilian educator, Paolo Freire, who was critical of the western pedagogical principle which he called “The Banking Concept of Education”. Under the said concept, knowledge is “a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom
they consider to know nothing” (Freire 1972). For Freire, education for liberation requires a new kind of teacher who believes in the creativity and knowledge of the oppressed. By analogy, a theater of liberation also requires a new kind of actor who activates the inherent creativity of his/her target group.

The Philippines Educational Theater Association (PETA) is one of the pioneers in Southeast Asia and serves as reference for the development of similar types of theater in the region. Politicized by the repression of the Marcos regime, PETA held theater workshops among student groups, labor unions, teachers, farmers, workers, and other communities throughout the Philippines in the 1970s. In these workshops, a variety of social issues was explored through drama, dance, music, and visual arts.

A range of theatrical practices and participatory methods helps members of the community build self-confidence and social cohesion, stimulate self-expression and awareness of the possibility of taking action to solve the problems of the community. Through participatory research and analysis, members of the community determine the issues that concern them. They portray these issues and the possible solutions through a performance that they themselves devise. The performance is a community forum where audiences are engaged in discussion. In community theater, the process of creating theater is more important than the performance as an aesthetic product. Very often, the final product can be a video or an art work, which is shown to the community to generate discussion.

In the last forty years, participatory activities using the creative arts have been adapted in non-formal education in Asia, to address issues in relation to conflict resolution, peace-building, gender sensitization, heritage conservation, and health campaigns such as AIDS prevention. These activities also seek to help children and adults cope with trauma caused by war or natural disasters such as the tsunami.

There is no doubt that Asian artists have made a major contribution to community development through theater and the creative arts. As there are many ways of doing community theater and one method cannot simply be plugged into a new context, it is pertinent to study how creative arts workers in different parts of Asia have applied their skills for participatory development. Best practices can be shared among theater practitioners and non-governmental activists, who can apply them in local problem-solving processes.

With the aims of networking and entering into a broader dialogue, this project explores how various groups in Asia have used the arts and other forms of popular media to empower young people to understand and deal with the issues, concerns, and changes in their lives. What roles do communication media play in democratic expression and community building? What are the participatory processes and educational models employed? How is research conducted? What kinds of creative arts and popular media are effective? How is the community engaged?

This project acknowledges a depth of knowledge and praxis among creative arts and theater groups in Asia, and seeks to initiate an exciting exchange leading towards the sharing of knowledge and training resources in community cultural development for the future. For reasons of space and focus, I can only compare a few selected groups out of the many that I encountered during my research in Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

**Lessons about War for Peace: Oral Histories in Haebaru Town Museum**

The Haebaru Town Museum or Haebaru Bunka Center in Okinawa, Japan, is a museum which raises awareness about the effects of war and immigration on the lives and identities of the local people of Haebaru. Besides exhibits about war, immigration, local folklore, and the arts, the museum organizes activities for children to learn about rice planting, brown sugar making, and tofu making with community members, so that they will know and appreciate their cultural heritage.

When I visited the museum in April 2009, I was particularly struck by the role it has played in peace education. The museum has actively involved young people in Haebaru town in the collection and documentation of oral histories from the older generation that lived through and suffered the Battle of Okinawa in 1945. They then disseminate these stories to the community through drawings, essays, dramas, and videos.

The Battle of Okinawa was the last battle of the Pacific War and the only one fought on Japanese soil. It lasted for more than 90 days, claiming the lives of more than...
200,000 Japanese and Americans, and some 120,000 Okinawans. The museum exhibition information booklet states: “The Battle of Okinawa not only took the lives of people but also traumatized the survivors and inflicted damage on the traditional culture. Because Haebaru lay along the evacuation route to southern Okinawa, it became a battlefield and was called ‘the Crossroads of Death’. Many buildings were burnt down and 42 percent of its population (3,345 villagers) were sacrificed to war”.

Haebaru was an important hub for transportation linking Shuri, Naha, and the Shimajiri districts. It was an important center for the Japanese army. Weapons, food supplies, and transportation units were stationed there during the War. Local people were forced to dig trenches, supply food, and carry ammunition for the Japanese army. Haebaru was also the site of a military hospital where wounded soldiers were treated. In 1945, there were about 2,000 injured soldiers and 450 hospital staff in the Haebaru Underground Army Hospital Caves. When the hospital unit withdrew from the area in late May, the severely injured were compelled to commit suicide using the potassium cyanide that had been distributed.

Kazuki Osuko, the director of the museum, emphasizes that “War is a tragedy of our own making and we should be able to prevent it. Why do we have to kill each other? That is the message we convey to our visitors by telling the grim stories of survivors”. Our message is: “No more war”.

The museum has actively involved young people in Haebaru town in its activities about war, human rights, and identity. Curator Tsugiko Taira, who is in charge of the museum’s youth programs, says that the “Youths learn about the effects of the war by talking to their own grandparents and relatives. Each family has someone who died in the war. Almost every one of the older generation in Haebaru has lived through the war. For many, it has been too traumatic to recall these experiences. They only began to open up when their grandchildren wanted to know more and interviewed them”.

Young visual artist Ai Arakaki’s sketches of her grandfather’s confession about how he was forced to kill his own family in the caves is a good example. After killing his family, her grandfather could not kill himself and has suffered from guilt since then. Official records and history books say that the group suicides were results of Okinawans’ sacrificing themselves. But the official records and history books downplay Japanese discrimination and their ill-treatment of Okinawans. In contrast, the oral histories collected by the young people show that the soldiers actually provided grenades and cyanide for the local people to kill themselves in the caves.

How did the museum prepare these young people for oral history collection? They were given a set of questions to refer to and had to record their interviews on tape. The young people were trained on interview techniques and had to learn certain words in the Okinawan dialect before they could do the interviews. In this way, the history of each family and the Okinawans’ experiences of the war were recorded. The histories were published as a book, while the war recollections were exhibited in the museum. Some of the stories were also performed as short skits for the community. Consequently, everyone in Haebaru knows the community’s history and is engaged in the process of documentation.

Under the guidance of Tsugiko, the youths of Haebaru are now working on a video documentary on Haebaru’s history. They gather at her house each night to edit the video. That was where I chatted with them. Following the oral history project, Kotaru, the youth leader, told me that “the video starts with an old man telling the story of Haebaru to his two grandchildren. The video allows the youths to present their views about the early history and culture of the town. We interviewed many people and looked at historical documents to get photographs of the Battle of Okinawa so that we can show the impact of the Battle of Okinawa and the loss of Okinawan lives”. Tsugiko adds that “if young people know their history, they will know that peace is important. They can tell their children”.

The museum also organizes peace study exchanges and field trips to Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and other places in Japan, for the young people to study peace and human rights. Thus, the young people of Haebaru did not only learn about the consequences of nuclear bombings, but have exchanged stories with Hiroshima victims such as Suzuko Numata, who survived the nuclear bomb but had her legs cut off.

In 1990, the Haebaru Underground Army Hospital caves were declared municipal cultural properties. The site is where the story of the Battle of Okinawa can be passed down to future generations. Today, the survivors of the war and the members of the
community take visitors to the caves for site visits. Schoolchildren from other parts of Japan who do not know about the effects of the Battle of Okinawa from official history books can learn what people experienced during the war by walking through the caves and listening to the war survivors who act as tour guides.

To contest and rectify historical representations of the Battle of Okinawa in official books, “remembrance and culture” can be invoked. Oral histories and research about the war explore contemporary Okinawan claims to “authority and identity” (Figal 2001). The people of Haebaru are still experiencing the war as bombs underground continue to explode and injure people today. The US airbases, airplanes, and military personnel still present in Okinawa are strong reminders of the war. Through oral histories, creative arts, drama, drawings, and video, the young people are empowered to tell their own stories and make known their desire for future peace.

Theater for Community Cultural Development: Makhampom Foundation, Chiang Dao

Makhampom is a “Thai community-based organization which uses theater as a way of exploring social and cultural issues. Beginning in the 1980s, the organization grew out of the Thai pro-democracy movement, using performance to encourage awareness raising and dialogue” (http://www.makhampom.net). As advocates of theater for community cultural development (TCCD), Makhampom has set up a community-based Living Theater Center in Chiang Dao in Northern Thailand. The group is engaged in community classroom projects in Chiang Dao, where community teachers show the importance of local knowledge and traditional wisdom through lessons in local handicraft making, dances, and foods. Children are involved in photography, visual arts, and storytelling workshops in the theater program. The book bike caravan takes books to the countryside to encourage children to read. Makhampom also works with other community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations to explore issues of peace and conflict in the Thai-Burma border and in Southern Thailand.

In March 2009, I had the opportunity to speak to Pongjit Saphakhun and Richard Barber, active senior members of Makhampom, at the Living Theater Centre, which is also their home. We had just come from an invigorating Children’s Day which is held on the last Friday of every month. The theme that week was recycling. Two hundred children from primary schools around Chiang Dao came in jeeps as early as 8:30 a.m., and brought with them old bottles, paper, and tin cans for recycling. They were shown how to clean the junk materials before these could be recycled. Then the students watched the young Makhampom performers do a skit about how the rivers in Thailand are clogged with rubbish. The performers dressed as fish, turtles, and other living creatures, get sick or die as they cannot breathe or move amidst the rubbish. Through this interactive drama performance, the children learned about the effects of pollution. Following the show, the recycling man of the village told the children how to recycle and where the collection points were. The children then made their own sculptures using the junk materials they brought. At noon, the lesson about recycling ended. The children jumped into their jeeps carrying their sculptures to be displayed in their schools, as reminders of their lesson on recycling.

Pongjit and Richard tell me that the Children’s Day activities are very popular and the children look forward to the monthly programs. School teachers are beginning to run similar programs in the schools. It is important to engage the community and schoolteachers, in order for long-term change to take place.

The case is similar in the conflict resolution and peace-building workshops that the duo have conducted in the refugee camps at the Thai-Burma border, where 140,611 refugees from Burma have been resettled. Tension exists between the different ethnic and religious groups there. Conflict also arises when people feel the loss of their sense of freedom when they are
made to live in the overcrowded camps and are separated from their families.

“Theater and participatory activities are appropriate tools to help build relationships and trust. They help to initiate discussions, understand different types of conflict, and plan ways to make positive changes”, says Richard. “But the will for peace lies with the local people”.

“The theater approach works well with young people. Games which become the foundation of exercises help young people to understand themselves and the world around them”, adds Pongjit. “When one plays a game, one competes, improvises, negotiates, explores, cheats, shares, wins, or loses. In play, defenses begin to drop, laughter can create shared positive experience, and trust is given space to develop. Then the participants can begin to dialogue” (Barber 2008). However, “these theater activities are not guaranteed to solve conflict”, they both remind me. “Theater activities are tools that help to deepen our understanding of issues and conflicts. With this understanding, we can then find new ways to resolve problems”.

Makhampom’s pedagogy is based on the following tools (Barber 2008): “(1) mapping conflict (personal story of homeland, community, and history) to understand identities, personal histories, perceptions of the community, an overview of the conflict, and types of power in the community; (2) playing games to explore conflict, power, violence, discrimination; (3) imaging conflict (naming the problems, analyzing issues, exploring resolutions through image theater and tableau); (4) group dialogue (evaluation of the process and outcomes); (5) action plans (charting the players, brainstorming steps towards taking action for peace building); (6) community performance (sharing ideas and transferring the outcomes and dialogue to the public through the arts); and (7) facilitator training (for follow-up work in the community)”.

It is emphasized that these creative tools must be adapted to different contexts to suit different objectives, interests, and cultures. The approach does not offer solutions but, rather, facilitates the forum to draw out ideas and feelings about conflict from the community and to explore ideas for change. In most traditional societies, the local community is the most important unit for organizing. Working to address conflict at the community level then, is important as it can empower those affected by the conflict to work towards change. Decision for action needs to be made by the community members themselves.

Children of the Streets and Their Rights: Bahay Tuluyan, Manila

Bahay Tuluyan is a non-profit organization that works with children in need of special protection (CNSP) in the Philippines. They include children who are out of school, sexually abused, trafficked, physically abused, or children from the streets. Bahay Tuluyan is currently providing alternative education and social services for children in Manila, Laguna, and Quezon, Philippines. Its mission is to work towards a society where “children’s rights are respected and protected through alternative education which empowers children to participate in society as socially responsible citizens” (http://www.bahaytuluyan.org). Children are trained to teach other children about their rights and to specific issues they face through the Junior Educators Program. They are trained in interviewing, documentation, and analysis so that they are able to conduct research about children’s issues in the Participatory Research Team Program.

The Participatory Children’s Street Theater and Arts Program provides children the opportunity to express themselves using a variety of creative media. Children in the program are trained in the use of mixed media including writing, singing, dancing, acting, and the visual arts. “After completing the training, the children

The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows
participate in theater advocacy. This not only gives them the ability to share their newly acquired skills but, at the same time, they are able to advocate to the wider community about children, children’s rights, and children’s issues” (http://www.bahaytuluyan.org).

I was fortunate to see the children’s theater group PILAK from Bahay Tuluyan (Laguna) in action in May 2009. Gail Billones, head of the youth advocacy arm of PETA, took me to Pandacan, a poor area in Manila, to watch the children perform at the community hall. As part of PETA’s advocacy work, Gail was involved in training the PILAK children. She told me to be careful with my hand phone and camera, as many locals in Pandacan are laborers who have no jobs. As we approached the vicinity, we were met by a boy guiding traffic at the crossroads for a few pesos. Small children were rolling self-made carts on the railway track to transport people from one place to another, to earn pocket money. This was the plight of the street children there. As Gail and I could not find the destination, we hopped on one of these carts and finally reached the community hall after having to jump off halfway to avoid a leaking pipe. Luckily, no train was passing by.

The PILAK children were ready to perform as soon as we arrived. They had set up their mobile props and sound system themselves. The audience comprised street children and other small kids who came with their parents. They brought their own stools to sit on, but most were huddled close to one another on the floor. Using movement, mime, and music, the performers presented a story about child trafficking. A young child was abducted and was made to sell things in the streets. What happened to her? How did she get out of this predicament? The second story was about teen pregnancy and drugs. The street kids watching the show were thrilled when the performers entered carrying big needles made of paper, which they poked at each other. At the end of the performance, a discussion was held where the performers introduced the different characters in the two plays. They asked the kids in the audience, “What do you do if someone kidnaps you?”. The small children got involved in giving answers and different options for children who are kidnapped. Similarly, they discussed the effects of drugs on young people. After the discussion, the performers packed their props, climbed into the jeepney, and prepared for their next performance in another, different, community space.

As we travelled back to the Bahay Tuluyan house in Manila where the performers were staying for the night, the 20 year-old Donato Dimailig exclaimed that he was very proud of the performance. He was able to direct a play by himself! “We created everything ourselves including the props in eight days, during the intensive workshop with PETA. After long discussions, we wrote our own stories and songs, based on the issues that concerned us”. Donato and the other performers (the youngest of whom was only 10 years old) felt empowered and gained ownership of the performance as they had done everything by themselves. Everyone had a specific duty. With their compositions, they were also able to advocate to the children of Pandacan and other areas, about child trafficking, drug abuse, and teenage pregnancy.

For Gail, training the children was a “tiring process”, but rewarding. According to her, “some of the street children were not very disciplined, while some did not have the right attitude as a result of years of living in the streets by themselves”. PETA also demands high performance standards as a model for other children. Consequently, Gail and her team of facilitators had to work very hard and innovate, to get the attention of the young performers. Nevertheless, in the end, they performed well and elicited positive responses from the community audiences. It is now time for the PILAK members to start their own theater sessions in Laguna and to train new children in advocacy work through participatory arts.
Participatory Video: Kampung Halaman, Jogjakarta.

Kampung Halaman is a non-profit organization based in Jogjakarta. It promotes the use of audio-visual media as tools to encourage youths to speak out about their concerns at community-based programs. In these programs, youths aged between 15 and 25 years identify the problems they are facing and the ‘social capital’ owned by the community in the area where they live, so that they can initiate some action to improve the conditions of their community (kampung halaman). Film and video were chosen as the media of communication as the group believes that youths in Indonesia are highly influenced by the global audiovisual media. Imported films and television programs, which have their own agenda, often encourage youths to build dreams that are not realistic and to distance themselves from their actual communities and environment.

Kampung Halaman introduces the video camera to the youths so that they can understand the functions and strengths of the audiovisual medium. The youths are also encouraged to develop a ‘new language’ using video, to help them reflect on their daily realities; foster communication and visual literacy; enable the exchange of experiences through discussions; and so empower them to initiate change.

As she shows me the video editing lab where young people were editing video clips using laptops in October 2008, Dian Herdiany, the director of Yayasan Kampung Halaman, said that “motion pictures and sounds are reflective and experiential. By making a video program about their own community’s condition, the youth members will be able to identify the issues in their daily lives that are often overlooked. This will help to foster change”. The video is also a good medium because appearing on television is a novel experience for ordinary folk. “Television is usually associated with film stars and advertisers, and not with ordinary people. Video gives local people a chance to take part in television”, Dian adds.

Kampung Halaman has developed the ‘video diary’ as a personal medium for youths to show their own perspectives concerning specific problems they face. The youths are given lessons on how to identify problems (through writing or drawing), and how to conduct research on certain topics like simple camera techniques, script writing, and interview techniques. “The portable digital camera is now easy to handle. Just click and focus. After three practices, they could actually shoot pictures”, said Dian. The editing is done by a team of young people who have been trained to use special editing software on the computer. The young people then show the five- to six-minute edited video clips which they have created in public spaces, and engage the community (including parents, villagers, local government officers, teachers, school leaders) in discussion.

Kampung Halaman has worked with youths in various programs which include ‘Me, Myself and My Video’ (10 video diaries by junior high school children in Medan, Balikpapan, Jakarta, Malang and Makassar, 2006); ‘Der, Kita Bikin Film’ (Der, We Make Films; 4 video diaries by youths in the juvenile detention camp at Tangerang, 2006); and ‘Helo Video’ (14 video diaries by the female youths at Indramayu, 2007). These video diaries have dealt with issues such as problems in schools (for example, top-down teaching, too many free periods in class, or what happens when female students are not able to buy sanitary pads in the school), joblessness, the plight of migrant workers and juvenile prisoners, forced marriages, the right to choose one’s religion, as well as the consequences of tsunami and earthquakes.

In Anak Negara vs Anak Pidana (Children of the State vs. Underaged Criminals), the juvenile prisoners at Tangerang interview their fellow inmates and illustrate on video the daily lives and fears of young people in detention. The video shows the conditions in the detention camp, the everyday activities of the prisoners, and their hopes for the ‘remission’ of their sentences or their early release. Thirteen-year old Pido tells the audience that he was arrested for stealing when he was 11 years old. Because he had no parents or relatives to speak up for him then, he was categorized as a “child of the state” and sentenced to seven years of detention. As a “child of the state”, the remission of his sentence was not allowed and he could only be released when he turned 18. Marsono, on the other hand, is counting the days when he will be released. Also caught for stealing, Marsono is categorized as an “underaged criminal” as his parents were around at the time of his sentence. Compared to Pido, he was given an eight-month sentence. Being an “underaged criminal”, he was granted a remission of one month and will be released after seven months of detention.
In the video *17 Years and Above*, the girls of Indramayu show how they are forced into marriage after elementary school, when they are 13 or 14 years of age. Even though the minimum age of marriage is understood to be 17, parents give their daughters away early, as they believe that it is unlucky to turn down a first proposal. "Often, parents are too poor to send their girls to junior high school," says 15-year old Elinah, the production manager of the video clip. Elinah further laments that she cried for four days when her parents wanted to marry her off. She was one of the lucky ones who was allowed to go to junior high school after all her crying and pleading. "Indramayu is known as a town for young widows or divorcees as many girls divorce after one or two years of marriage", adds the village headman who is also interviewed. As the young brides in the video stress, "Early marriages are inappropriate as the girls are not prepared emotionally, physically or mentally for marriage. They should be given the chance to go to junior high school, instead". Elinah ends the video diary by telling girls that "your future is in your hands".

In 2008, Kampung Halaman initiated the Indonesia Youth Media Camp (IYMC) in Yogyakarta. Thirty-seven young people from 18 communities throughout Indonesia (including Java, Aceh, Bali, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua) participated in the camp to learn about community participatory media. The young participants were introduced to many local stories and values, which they did not learn at the camp. In particular, they were impressed with Bekinya Tampung and Sepintak, two young IYMC participants who live and study in the forests of Bukit Duabelas National Park, Jambi, where there is no electricity there and where one has to walk to get anywhere.

Bekinya introduced the participants to the idea of *segelo isa diagi*, meaning "everything can be shared". This refers to a way of life that has become distant from the lives of Indonesia’s young people today, as they have become increasingly individualistic and competitive. The principle of sharing is the key to the survival of a community when it undergoes a crisis. Bekinya told the youths about how he used to change hand phones frequently because he had been influenced by his friends. In the end, he realized that a hand phone was not what he needed. The survival of his community has been threatened by the large-scale selling of fields in his area. It is therefore important for him to save money and to protect the fields of his community from being sold.

Bekinya and Sepintak’s school is called School of My Life, the Real School, which is based on local wisdom and values, close interaction with families and community members, and sensitivity to the surrounding environment. Inspired by Bekinya and Sepintak’s philosophy of life, Kampung Halaman has launched the new 2009 Youth’s Path 1208 program, which adopted the theme ‘School of My Life’. This program is dedicated to the 40 million young Indonesian people who live in the little towns, neighborhoods, and isolated areas of Indonesia; who have no space in the public discourse of Indonesian youths (http://www.kampunghalaman.org).

Documentation through video has empowered young people to speak their minds and challenge propaganda disseminated by mainstream television and film, which the State and multinational corporations control.

Final Remarks

The case studies above show that participatory arts and media programs which engage communities empower young people to question and challenge their social circumstances and make positive choices about action for change. Even though the issues, contexts, or media used in Penang, Haebaru, Chieng Dao, Manila, or Yogyakarta might be different, there are many similarities regarding functions and the participatory approaches.

At the psychological level, participatory processes strengthen the self-esteem and confidence of the youths through self-expression, interaction, and involvement. Moreover, the whole process of research and development of the performance, visual art, or video clip, becomes a form of participatory action research. As illustrated in all five case studies, the youths first gather information by interviewing their
community members or their peers regarding their situation, problems, and expectations. They analyze the data to understand the main issues. They select a theme and create scenarios for a creative work based on the analyses of the issues. The creative work which can be in the form of theater, music, dance, video, visual art, photography, or mixed media, is then shown to the community. After the performance, exhibition, or video showing, the youths lead audiences into discussions about the issues raised, the causes of the problems, possible solutions, and plans to tackle the problems. Group discussions and evaluations serve as interventions or problem-posing strategies which can lead to action.

Furthermore, unlike mainstream radio and television which are dominated by methods of production and content from Europe, the United States of America, and Japan; or are controlled by the State government, participatory arts and media are popular forms of communication, which are independent. As shown in the examples above, the contents of the art works and media programs are based on the experiences of the local people. They illustrate the rich, indigenous knowledge that exists in the community or in the local area. They are accessible and promote participation and self-reliance as the media used are controlled by the youths themselves and serve their own interests. They promote democratic expression including dissent and protest.

The creative arts and popular media also represent a counter-discourse, which explores alternative values and aspirations. In particular, the use of video recordings allows young people to talk back to leaders and policymakers. A video is a small version of the television (which is controlled by the government and big corporations). A video can be the local television, dealing with local issues and problems. The final video product, which can be an educational program, a theater play, a diary, or a documentary becomes an autonomous form of expression. The video has become increasingly popular among arts groups, as the cost of video cameras and computers has been reduced in recent years and the ability to recycle the videotape makes production affordable.

Finally, in the context of community development, creative participatory processes are vehicles of participation and a forum for raising and analyzing local problems. They bring young and old people together, and build solidarity in the community. Older people are identified as resource persons: they possess the knowledge on how people interacted in the past (during the war or the colonial period), on medicinal herbs, and the natural or social environment. Education then becomes a continuous process of joint exploration and a social process. The community joins in the process of participatory exploration. This type of education gives young people the opportunity to build their own future and to project their own identity. A major outcome is the empowering of youths who, prior to participating in these projects, had little or no say in decision-making in the community.

Nevertheless, as I have emphasized repeatedly, the creative arts and popular media are only tools for intervention in communities striving for self-reliance and change. They cannot solve problems; they can only illustrate and expose them. It is up to the local communities to use their indigenous or other alternative ways of communication to shape their own development. All media used in participatory projects are means to initiate and facilitate communication among community members. In order to generate greater impact, there must be a high level of involvement of the local community in all aspects of research, in the development of scenarios, analysis, and decision-making – the community must be engaged.

The case studies also illustrate that research and documentation are essential tools for intervention. As Arjun Appadurai (2006, 175-177) has written in his article “The Right to Research”, it is important for young people to “make independent inquiries about their own lives and worlds.... Developing the capacity to document, inquire, analyze, and communicate results has a powerful effect on their capacity to speak up as active citizens on matters that are shaping their city and their world”. Writing, taking photographs, drawing, videoing, singing, or play acting “envision more public forms of debate and communication”. Citing the Mumbai-based Partners for Urban Action and Research (PUKAR) as an example, he concludes that “Taking part in democratic society requires one to be informed. To be informed, one needs to do research”.

How can these encounters with participatory arts groups lead to the creation of an Asian community? As Takashi Shiraishi (2009) has written in the Asian Public Intellectuals (API) Newsletter, the “concept of an Asian community stems from the necessity to solve issues together that we cannot solve by ourselves”. These issues “challenge our security and well-being,
Each issue is a new place for collaboration. Throughout my research, the participatory arts groups that I encountered were using creative arts methods to explore common issues in the region such as peace-building, conflict resolution, human trafficking, AIDS, earthquakes, community-building, migrant workers, refugees, heritage, and identity. They are experimenting with alternative methods to respond to these issues by using participatory approaches and engaging communities in action-oriented research, discussion, and presentation through the creative arts and popular media.

We see the emergence of a community and a movement in the Asian region that can share knowledge, experience, and praxis towards democratic citizenship, peace-building, and justice. We believe that the joint knowledge produced through this project can be shared in the region. The development of a network will lead to collaboration, with the potential for continuing dialogue and a website on community cultural development methodology in Asia.

What is expected of public intellectuals who are also ethnomusicologists? As researchers and performers of traditional and popular music, they are equipped with the tools for fieldwork, interviews, participant observation, audio-visual recording, analysis, and performance. They are able to act as facilitators and catalysts for change. With these skills, ethnomusicologists, as public intellectuals, are responsible for raising issues at the heart of the communities where they work and for aligning with other movements to initiate strategies that will overcome problems in the community. As highlighted in my own *Opera Pasar* experience, creative arts projects have the ability to empower young people to address issues and concerns in the community, such as heritage, the importance of wet markets, the displacement of traditional communities, and the loss of cultures, which occur as a result of upmarket development. The interviews, workshops, and performances help to revitalize and restore a meaningful place for theater, music, and artistic traditions in the community.

Returning to my fieldwork in Haebaru, curator Tsugiko Taira was very apologetic for the atrocities that occurred during the Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Southeast Asia. Tsugiko told me that the first time she heard about how the Japanese army killed many locals was when she visited Indonesia after she graduated from university! She was horrified when she saw a photo of the massacre of locals by Japanese soldiers in a museum. This is not surprising as Japanese history school textbooks are silent on this aspect of the war. Both Kazuki Osuko and Tsugiko Taira emphasize that it is important for the young people in Japan to know this aspect of Japanese history. They ask for research materials to help them build an exhibit at the Haebaru Museum. The seeds for future collaboration and networking have been sown.

**REFERENCES**


EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA NOW IN MALAYSIA AND THAILAND

Tomonari Nishikawa

INTRODUCTION

Experimental cinema is considered a genre, which is made not for the mainstream commercial circuit but rather for filmmaker’s personal expression, using innovative, unconventional filmmaking methods and often made by an individual artist. Most experimental film and video works have neither stories nor linear narratives and often consist of abstract visuals and sounds.

Experimental cinema emerged in the early twentieth century with strong connections to the Dadaist and avant-garde movements. In developed countries, the advent of affordable 16 mm and 8 mm movie cameras boosted personal filmmaking and prompted artists to start experimenting on the film medium after World War II. Later, the video technology welcomed even more artists into the art of moving images in these countries.

Today, major international film festivals, including the Berlinale, the Edinburgh International Film Festival, the Hong Kong International Film Festival, the International Film Festival Rotterdam, the London Film Festival, the New York Film Festival, and the Toronto International Film Festival, have screening programs dedicated to experimental cinema. In Thailand, the World Film Festival of Bangkok started featuring programs for experimental cinema for the first time in 2009. Furthermore, since the mid-1990s, film festivals that screened only experimental cinema started popping up, and among them was the Bangkok Experimental Film Festival (BEFF).1

In Southeast Asia, personal filmmaking has been flourishing in the last decade as a result of the increasing affordability of digital video equipments. Today, numerous universities and other institutions offer video production courses for commercial filmmaking. Although experimental cinema is not taught at these institutions, art students use video technology to explore the medium freely, using unconventional methods.

Recently, several international film festivals, including the International Film Festival Rotterdam, have been screening experimental films from Southeast Asia, but the number of such films shown in foreign venues remains small. The experimental film movements in this region is not yet too visible to most film scholars and curators in other countries, although independent films from Malaysia and Thailand today are becoming well known to them.

The aim of this project is to establish a network of experimental filmmakers and film curators throughout Asia, in order to enrich the Asian cinema art. I first visited Malaysia and Thailand, attended screening events, interviewed filmmakers and curators, and conducted screenings and talk events to understand the local experimental filmmaking scenes.

Findings

MALAYSIA

Malaysia’s independent film scene has been well known in the international market, particularly the works of Da Huang Pictures, a production company founded by award winning film directors. Their works have been well received and are often described as the Malaysian New Wave.2 What is unique about the Da Huang Picture filmmakers is the way they work for each other’s projects. They make movies as directors but they also work as producers, assistant directors, artistic directors, and sometimes act for fellow artists’ movie projects. Some of their works, like the early films by James Lee and the recent short videos by Tan Chui Mui, may be considered experimental, although these are based on narratives.

The experimental film scene in Malaysia, however, is almost unknown in Western countries. A few artists who studied overseas now make experimental films in Malaysia—Au Sow Yee and Siew Wai Kok to name a few—and actively conduct screening and performance events in Kuala Lumpur and other major cities in Malaysia.

The lack of screenings of experimental films does not enable artists and filmmakers to learn of the current movements and trends in experimental cinema in
other countries. In the past few years, many major avant-garde and experimental films were released on DVD, but these were not circulated in licensed DVD stores. Instead, they were sold by pirated DVD vendors, who have been very important patrons of artists interested in experimental films. The online video archives too are important resources for these artists.

Censorship is visible in any art practiced in Malaysia, including movie making, and artists and curators need to be conscious about it when they exhibit artworks. Moreover, individuals and organizations that conduct art-related public events are required to obtain a license from the Censorship Board at the Ministry of Home Affairs for each event. At the symposium, Artists’ Experiences of Censorship in Malaysia, a former member of the Malaysian Bar Council Human Rights Committee, Animah Kosai pointed out:

When it comes to film or anything that is on digital media, so it could be film, recording, there are basically three statutes that are relevant here. The first is the Film Censorship Act 2001 (updated version), secondly the FINAS (National Film Development Corporation Malaysia) Act 1981 and thirdly, a rather more recent law, the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998. Under the Film Censorship Act, we heard the practical aspects of that from Teck Tan, what is really required for any film to be publicly distributed or shown in this country is that there needs to be a certificate from the Censorship Board, which falls under the Ministry of Home Affairs. It has no fixed guidelines, but there is a lot of uncertainty and it is not applied consistently. (Khoo 70)

Screening Venues

As stated above, there are no regular screening venues or film festivals for experimental cinema in Malaysia. However, this does not mean that experimental cinema is completely banned. In fact, there are venues where experimental cinema is screened occasionally.

Valentine Willie Fine Art is a well-known and established commercial gallery in Kuala Lumpur that specializes on contemporary art in Southeast Asia. It also screens video works. In September 2008, the gallery hosted an event, Southeast Asian Video Screening, featuring Malaysian experimental videos together with similar works from Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Contemporary art curators, Simon Soon and Erna Dyanty, curated the Malaysian program for this event. They selected the diverse range of video works, from experimental documentary to triple-projection video work.

The Annexe, a building complex located next to the Kuala Lumpur Central Market, is probably the most exciting venue for art-related events. The Annexe Gallery sometimes holds exhibitions of video installations and screenings. Findars is an artist-run studio space located below the Annexe Gallery, presents sound performances by cutting edge artists every week. It sometimes exhibits experimental video works too, including video performances, multi-projection installations, and live collaborative works by visual and sound artists.

Another venues for experimental cinema is the Studio in Cheras Kuala Lumpur (SiCKL), an alternative space run by a collective of media artists. In the spring of 2009, SiCKL invited Japanese video artists to show their videos in the space, thereby attracting the local audience. SiCKL conducts its OPEN LAB project every last Saturday of the month, when it shows multi-disciplinary art collaborative projects, including experimental music, videos, and performances.

At the Museum and Art Gallery Universiti Sains Malaysia in Penang, video and electric arts by domestic and international artists are regularly exhibited. Lead by the museum director, Hasnul Saidon, the Museum is in the process of accumulating Malaysian video and electric works for archival and preservation purposes.

Film Festivals

The National Film Development Corporation Malaysia (FINAS) organizes several film festivals, but none of them screens experimental films. The smaller but more interesting film festivals are sponsored by other organizations, one of which is the Freedom Film Fest. Organized by KOMAS, an organization formed by social activists, its fifth festival took place in the end of 2009. For the first time, the festival has issued an open call to artists to submit not only their project proposals, but also their completed movies. Unlike most film festivals, the Freedom Film Fest gives awards, based on a prior selection of project proposals. It supports the award recipients financially and technically, so that they can complete their respective projects by the time the festival opens. These works
have premier screenings during the festival, along with programs of invited international works. Most of the selected projects are documentary style videos about social and political issues.

In 2007, the second Notthaibalai Art Festival was held in multiple venues in the greater Kuala Lumpur area. During the festival, a number of screenings were of experimental cinema works from Japan, Taiwan, the Netherlands, and the U.S. The main venues for the screenings were the Annexe Gallery and SiCKL. The most significant event in this festival was a filmmaking workshop conducted by Janis Crystal Lipzin, an artist and educator from San Francisco, who spoke on *direct filmmaking* using 16mm film. Lipzin did not only teach alternative filmmaking techniques to participants, but also explained how the film projector could produce apparent motions on the screen, the fundamentals of the art of moving images.

The lack of regular venues for experimental cinema in Malaysia led me to think of establishing a new film festival. I discussed this matter with Sow Yee Au, Yap Sau Bin, an artist and curator, Siew Wai Kok, Goh Lee Kwang, a sound and video artist, and Yong Yandsen, an improvisational musician, and we agreed to start a new film festival in Malaysia, the Kuala Lumpur Experimental Film and Video Festival (KLEX). For the first festival, KLEX will soon issue an open call for submissions from all over the world. We plan to hold six screening programs, with emphases on works from Malaysia and other Asian countries, plus a symposium about experimental cinema in the region.

**THAILAND**

Experimental cinema in Thailand bloomed after the successful holding of the two film festivals in 1997: the Bangkok Experimental Film Festival (BEFF) and the Thai Short Film and Video Festival. The BEFF shows only experimental films and videos, while the Thai Short Film and Video Festival features all kinds of works. These film festivals started when the Thai contemporary art scene received international attention. The establishment of Project 304, a non-site-specific event-based art organization in 1996, was followed a few months later by About Studio/About Café, an alternative art space that provided opportunities for young artists to exhibit their works in a public space.

The co-directors of the BEFF, Gridthiya Gaweewong and Apichatpong Weerasethakul were two of the founders of Project 304. They set it up with other Thai artists, including Michael Shaowanasai and Kamol Phaosavasdi, who are known for their experimental videos and other conceptual artworks. The contemporary art scene and the experimental cinema scene are well connected in Thailand, where more artists have started making experimental videos because of the increasing affordability of digital video equipments in the market.

The Goethe Institute appears to have played an important role in the flourishing of the experimental and personal filmmaking scenes in Thailand during the 1990s. It conducted 16mm film production workshops and screenings of independent and experimental German cinema. Today, the Goethe Institute still organizes film screenings like other similar Bangkok-based foreign organizations, such as the Alliance Francaise, the British Council, and the Japan Foundation, but no filmmaking workshops are conducted. Meanwhile, the Thai Film Foundation holds occasional filmmaking workshops, including cinema appreciation classes for young audience.

Pirated DVDs are often the only available resource for rare foreign independent and experimental films in Thailand. There are only a few pirated DVD vendors that carry such rare DVDs, but it seems like everyone who is serious about cinema art in Bangkok knows these vendors. There are also vendors of pirated computer software who sell pirated professional video editing software at a very cheap price. If bought at their regular sales price, this software will be extremely expensive.

There are several magazines that feature Thai filmmakers. *Bioscope Magazine* contains interviews with Thai filmmakers and reviews of Thai films, while *Thai Film Quarterly* focuses on Thai film history. *Fuse Showcase* comes with a compilation DVD of short movies, including experimental films, and it emphasizes emerging filmmakers, and *Film Virus* discusses domestic and international independent movies.

There are libraries that store personal films on DVDs. The Thailand Knowledge Park (TK park) holds more than 200 short films by Thai filmmakers, and their works range from documentary to narrative, animation, and experimental. The William Warren Library at the Jim Thompson Art Center also have a collection of several experimental film works by Thai
filmmakers plus works from the previous BEFF selections. The Thai Film Foundation archives all works screened at the Thai Short Film and Video Festival on DVDs.

Censorship, however, is an issue affecting filmmaking practices in Thailand. A group of people launched an international awareness of censorship in Thailand, when the Thai Censorship Board refused to approve the domestic release of *Syndromes and a Century* (Weerasethakul 2006), unless some censored scenes were taken away. In the online petition, Chalida Uabumrungjit notes, “The Thai Censorship Board still operates on the basis of antiquated legislation dating from the Film Act of 1930, which was the time this country was still ruled by Absolute Monarchy” (Uabumrungjit PetitionOnline.com).

**Film Festivals**

The BEFF 5 screened more than 80 works by Thai filmmakers, and showed a variety of experimental cinema works from other countries. It is interesting to see how the screening programs of the BEFF were put together. The festival did not select works that could simply be ascribed to the Western ideas on experimental cinema, but chose a great variety of works that would even question the ideas of experimental cinema. The screenings of the BEFF 5 also varied in location and method. Some were shown through a monitor mounted on a boat floating in the river, and others took place in a gallery space as installation works, while most of the single channel projection videos were screened in a cinema. The theme of the BEFF 5, *The More Things Change …*, may suggest the unstable situation in the aftermath of the Thaksin Government, the rapidly changing scenes of video art in the age of globalization, and recent changes in our lifestyles because of the arrival of more advanced technology. All these manifestations of the theme were presented in the festival events, organized by the festival curator David Teh, an Australian freelance contemporary art curator, and by the two directors, Gridthiya Gaweewong and Apichatpong Weerasethakul, who all have been passionately involved in the international contemporary art movements. After its Bangkok screenings, the BEFF 5 toured in Chiang Mai, Phuket, Khon Kaen, Mahasarakham, and Phitsanulok. Some selected works by Thai filmmakers in the Festival were also screened in film festivals in foreign countries.

The Twelfth Thai Short Film and Video Festival took place in a theater at the Bangkok Art and Cultural Centre, a newly constructed venue for art and cultural exhibitions at the heart of the Thai capital’s busiest shopping mall district. The 17-day admission free festival welcomed numerous people. The majority of the programs, more than 50 works, featured short videos by Thai filmmakers, and most of them were narratives. There were also some examples of Thai experimental video works expressing personal voices through visual and sound, which were assembled using unconventional methods. The festival director, Chalida Uabumrungjit, said that they were receiving more submissions from Thai filmmakers every year, indicating the rapid expansion of the Thai independent and personal filmmaking scenes (Chalida 2008). The Twelfth festival included a retrospective screening of films by Hamer Salwala, one of the participants in the experimental film production workshops conducted by the Goethe Institute Thailand in the 1990s. The retrospective program showed a diversity of Salwala’s interest in expressing his ideas through non-narrative, stop-motion animation, and photographed images.

I believe that all the works shown at the Twelfth Thai Short Film and Video Festival were on video formats. The festival catalogue does not say anything about the screening or original format of each work; neither does the BEFF 5 catalogue include such information. I merely surmised that this was the case because the description of a video installation work does not usually indicate its video format (e.g., DVCAM), but its exhibition form (e.g., single channel video). One might say that since not many Thai artists work on celluloid anymore, they do not care much about the difference in screening formats. Digital photography is alluring to young artists, and film photography is becoming history. In fact, the Faculty of Communication Arts at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok was about to close their black and white darkroom in 2009. Finishing a project on 8 mm and 16 mm film is very expensive compared to the cost of finishing one on the digital media.

**Filmmakers’ Communities**

No doubt Apichatpong Weerasethakul has greatly influenced on the younger generation of Thai filmmakers, including Thunska Pansittivorakul, who formed Thailndie, a collective of now 33 Thai independent filmmakers, in late 2004. Many Thailndie filmmakers have shown their works in major international film festivals, among them.
Sompot Chidgasornpongse, Nontawat Numbenchapol, Thunska Pansittivorakul, and Chulayarnnon Siriphol. ThaiIndie conducted an outdoor, one-of-a-kind screening event, Nothing to Say, that consisted of 53 silent short videos with live music performance by local indie bands. Their works were personal statements against the current political situation in Thailand. Although the screening was interrupted by thunderstorms several times, the massive audience refused to leave. The screaming, amplified sound from the speakers and the flicker of lightning from the skies added value to the silent images.

There are several production companies that promote experimental cinema works in Thailand. Extra Virgin is a Bangkok-based production and distribution company established in 2007 (Meksawan 2008). It distributes experimental videos by Uruphong Raksasad and Jakrawal Nithamrong, and most of whose works have been presented in international film festivals. Electric Eel Films is another production company based in Bangkok since 2006. Run by a collective of filmmakers, it makes short and feature-length independent films. The Twelfth Thai Short Film and Video Festival dedicated one program to introduce their recent works.

There are also rather small organizations that conduct screening events in Thailand. One of them is Third Class Citizen, a relatively new organization that holds monthly screenings in Bangkok called Third Citizen Cinema. They show blockbuster movies, documentary shorts, and sometimes experimental and personal shorts at the William Warren Library, Jim Thompson House. The Thai Film Foundation also conducts screening events such as the event Short Film Marathon, where all works submitted by Thai filmmakers to the previous Thai Short Film and Video Festival are screened.

Although Bangkok is definitely the center of art and film activities in Thailand, Chiang Mai has active communities of artists and filmmakers. Kosit Juntaratip, a faculty member of the Media Arts and Design Department at Chiang Mai University, conducts rooftop screenings of experimental/independent foreign cinema. This rooftop venue was one of the regional tour locations of BEFF 5. In 2009, Chiang Mai University kicked off the first New Media Festival at the Art Museum in Chiang Mai University.

CONCLUSIONS

The emergence of the experimental film movement is dawning in Malaysia. Now it needs regular venues to screen experimental cinema. It is also important to conduct workshops and events to inform people of the history of experimental cinema and to increase their appreciation of it. Active discussions with scholars, filmmakers, and curators of experimental cinema are essential for the art form to expand its reach, given that many people who are not too familiar with it.

Thailand has already very strong communities of experimental filmmakers and film curators, and the existence of regular screening venues encourages artists to keep working on the medium. Thai experimental cinema has been well screened in venues in other countries, but there could be more dynamic exchanges with the experimental film scene in other countries.

THOUGHTS ON EXPERIMENTAL CINEMA IN MALAYSIA AND THAILAND

The screening format is not a big concern in building up the concept of a work among most young experimental filmmakers in Malaysia and Thailand, but the choice of a screening format may be decided upon based on more practical reason, presentation or cost, except among those who trained in the traditional celluloid filmmaking. As a result, there are not many experimental cinema works expressing the filmmakers’ interest in the medium and the apparatus of cinema, when compared to that found in the works of Western experimental filmmakers.

FUTURE PROJECTS

The launch of the Kuala Lumpur Experimental Film and Video Festival (KLEX) is scheduled the month after the Ramadan in 2010. It will introduce a broad range of experimental films and videos, both contemporary and historical works, to a larger audience in order to nurture future experimental filmmakers and their communities. Even though the festival may also show major avant-garde films from the Western countries, it does not intend to plant the Western ideas of experimental cinema on the Malaysian audience. Rather it intends to ask them to define what experimental cinema would mean in the Malaysian context. KLEX will work closely with other film festivals in Asia and beyond, including the BEFF,
in order to exchange the issues found in contemporary experimental cinema. The festival will be a venue for active discourse about cutting edge ideas for art of moving images.

NOTES

1 The Bangkok Experimental Film Festival (BEFF) started out as the Bangkok International Art Film Festival. It changed its name to BEFF the second time it was held. Unlike the Thai Short Film and Video Festival, the BEFF does not take place every year but biennially or triennially.

2 Da Huang Pictures was established in 2004 by Amir Muhammad, James Lee, Liew Seng Tat, and Tan Chui Mui.

3 The Valentine Willie Fine Art is a gallery focusing on contemporary art in Southeast Asia.

4 The Annexe Gallery is a rental space for exhibitions, screenings, bazaars, and other events.

5 The Findars is a studio space located in the same building where the Annexe Gallery is located. It also represents a collective of young artists who run the space. The studio which the collective shares with other artists serves as a venue for various performances, screenings, and exhibitions every week. Their lease on the studio was until the end of August 2009.

6 SiCKL is an artist-run alternative space and studio.

7 Direct film is made without using a camera to obtain images on film. Instead, colored fluid is applied directly onto the clear film or scratched off the film emulsion to create visual images on the film surface.

8 The Thai Short Film and Video Festival is organized by the Thai Film Foundation.

9 Project 304 is one of the organizations running the BEFF. As of March 2009, the building at where About Studio/About Café was located was being used by a collective of young artists and curators called “As Yet Unnamed”.

10 The Thai Film Foundation was established in 1994. Its director, Chalida Uabumrungjit, is also a director of the Thai Short Film and Video Festival.

11 TK Park is located in Central World, one of the biggest shopping malls in Bangkok.

REFERENCES

The Art of ‘Campaign Media’: The Art of Presenting ‘Alternative Media’ in the World of ‘Mainstream Media’

Karn Thassanaphak

Introduction:

Lessons and experiences from working on various art forms and being one of those who produce artistic works that serve and are relevant to the social movements or campaign media in Thailand for over 10 years make me aware that the goal of the social movements should focus on social change in the structural level. However, it should not be limited to the level of public policy, but should encompass the realities of everyday life, inclusive of the changing and unraveling of thoughts, the understanding of, and attitudes to issues. Real change requires real understanding. Its achievement depends on how much the social movements can communicate with the people and how efficiently and persuasively the message/information can be relayed to build new attitudes among the public. Until social attitudes and behaviors are changed, an efficient tool for drawing attention, reaching out, and conveying the message to the target groups is needed. In my opinion, this tool is ‘campaign media’. I also believe that ‘campaign media’ is a solution to avoid wasting the contents/messages of social issues arrived at after long hours of rigorous research and discussions with the public interest in mind. Unfortunately, lengthy presentations tend not to hold the attention of most people, among them the target audience.

Definition:

‘Campaign media’ is sometimes classified as a part of ‘alternative media’, ‘independent media’ or ‘underground media’. Their common characteristic is their role in opposition to the ‘mainstream media’, which extensively means that their producers’ creativity and concepts of production are free of capital and government control, and their achievements are not measured in terms of their commercial/economic impact.

Though there are indeed similarities among those referred to as ‘alternative/independent/underground media’, the fact is that there are some distinctions between them. In terms of goals and functions, for instance, not all ‘alternative/independent/underground media’ can be classified as ‘campaign media’.

In this study, the goals and functions are key characteristics to categorizing what constitute campaign media. Thus, campaign media in this study, I would like to define it as “media which is created to support the social movements’ mission to reach their goals by communicating with people, aiming at conveying issues to the public, and impelling the change to the direction that each social movement has aimed in terms of both rejection/objection and their contribution to/formation of social understanding”. If the materials produced such as books, leaflets, pamphlets, brochures, VCDs, installation arts, etc. and the activities/performances, i.e., music, concerts, theatre, dance, parades, etc. delineate the same goals and functions as defined above, then they, too, are considered ‘campaign media’.

Problems, objectives and methodology

Given my long years of experience in the field of producing ‘campaign media’ in Thailand, I have become aware of its lack of power in communicating with the public in my own country. Most people, and even its very main targets, often disregard ‘campaign media’ because it fails to convey its message/information to the public. As a campaigner and a ‘campaign media’ producer, I need to ask myself why it cannot reach the public and how this problem can be solved.

After a few conversations with some producers like myself, I have noted a common answer: in the information war, campaigns waged by those with more capital often have the upper hand. They have better tools and opportunities for channeling information, unlike the ‘alternative media’ practitioners linked to the NGOs and social movements, who often face financial constraints. ‘Campaign media’ is in no way a serious rival of the capital-intensive mainstream media.

While I agree that the answer I obtained might have a
ring of truth to it, I must also point out that there had been times when the ‘campaign media’ was well received by the Thai public, despite its small budget and its limited distribution. Besides the fact that the production technology and the methods of propagation of campaign media in the past were inferior to what are available now, during several periods in Thai political history, a lot of ‘campaign media’ was deemed ‘taboo’ by the powers-that-be such that their distribution had to be done in secrecy. Likewise, the activities/performances that needed to be presented in the open were constantly interrupted and under threat, posing risks to both the presenters and the audience. That in other countries some ‘campaign media’ is well received by the public is also true. Although this acceptance of campaign media might be an exception, it confirms that ‘capital’ is not the only reason why a particular campaign is successful.

Having found the answer that I had gathered unacceptable, I decided to clarify and find a more valid one, by applying for an API fellowship that would allow me to study the ‘campaign media’ in the Philippines and Malaysia for 11 months total, or for 5 months and 15 days each. The objectives of my work were to learn the art of the ‘campaign media’ in those countries, including the process of creating the ‘campaign media’ to suit the ‘message’, the target groups, as well as the channels of presentation; and to assess its achievements and problems, as well as the solutions for overcoming the obstacles.

I used various methodologies to collect information for this study, depending on the situations and supplementary questions at hand. For example, I used the observation method by being part of the audience. I also interviewed ‘campaign media’ producers and target groups, and directly participated in the process as one of the ‘campaign media’ workers. The participatory observation method gave me a great opportunity to share my views, experiences, and skills with media producers in the other Asian countries, and vice versa.

Besides the intention to answer the question above and the wish to bring back and share my findings and experiences with other campaign media producers and concerned people in Thailand, I also hoped that this study would be a small contribution to the effort to build the network of producers in Asia so that they too could share their views, experiences, and skills amongst each other.

In light of my experience and background, and my quest to find an answer, the manner by which I conducted the study, collected and analyzed data was inevitably personal or determined by my extant point of view. In other words, all throughout my experiences and meetings with a lot of ‘campaign media’ producers in the Philippines and Malaysia, I could not avoid comparing the upside and downside, the similarities and differences with my own personal experiences in Thailand.

Besides giving me the opportunity to learn about various aspects of the ‘campaign media’ in other countries, the journey to the Philippines and Malaysia gave me a great chance to distance myself from my home country and experience something which I could, later on, go back to. My experiences in the Philippines and Asia also helped me reconsider or view the ‘campaign media’ in Thailand from a different perspective.

The Philippines

My less than six months in the Philippines was hardly enough to observe ‘campaign media’ all over the country. The brevity of my stay also made it impossible for me to claim that I well know and understand what the ‘campaign media’ in the Philippines is all about. However, from my perspective and experience, the positive attributes of the campaign media in the Philippines would include the following:

1. **The first priority is the art of presentation, not capital.**

I am aware that like the social movements in other countries, most social movements in the Philippines often face financial constraints. However, I was amazed when they told me that the lack of a budget was not a major problem for them in producing ‘campaign media’ outputs. They also impressed upon me the idea that the lack of budget should never be an excuse for the lack of quality in one’s works.

Many Filipino campaign media producers agreed that as soon as they decided to produce ‘campaign media’, they avoided worrying about how small a budget they had. Instead, they directed most of their attention to the creativity of their work and worried about how to convey the content of the message precisely to the public. The channels of propagation were their second priority.
The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows

Given the producers’ concepts of work, though most of ‘campaign media’ production in the Philippines uses only a small budget, it is obvious that the process and presentation are the producers’ priorities. Some works are simple but impressively attractive, and succeed in communicating the message to the public. Selected black and white photos used appropriately, have simultaneously elicited sympathy and understanding of some issues. Sometimes, messages conveyed in short verses or descriptions that are well prepared reach their targets more precisely and persuasively than those loaded with so much information. Some campaign activities are suitably serious, while others are hilarious. No formulas are used, which implies that interesting ‘campaign media’ with serious content can be produced if skill and creativity are present in sufficient doses.

It could be said that in ‘campaign media’ production, the issue of capital is not top priority. An artist from Quezon City said that the lack of a budget “couldn’t stop us from doing what we want and need to do”.

2. The use of ‘art’ as a ‘weapon’

In particular periods in the past, songs, music, verses, literature, theatrical works, performances, or artworks called ‘campaign media’ were successfully used as ‘weapons’ by the social/political movements in many countries. The combination of cultural weapons and other forms of ‘campaign media’ contributed to the accomplishment of goals. If one focused on content/information or addressed the people’s intellect, another focused on touching their hearts or appealed to their emotions.

Presently, in Thailand, the ‘campaign media’ as defined as above, is desperately becoming a supplementary component on the stage of social/political movements. While some ‘campaign media’ retain their qualities, most of the works of the rest of them do not even deserve a break.

In the Philippines, the campaign media has successfully and continuously retained its function as a ‘weapon’. As expectations and requirements with regard to quality are higher and ever increasing, there is no way but for the campaign artists who seek extensive acceptance to improve. Such a weapon needs to be sharpened in order to get the most advantage; and for this to happen, ‘campaign media’ needs demanding critics.

3. Network and ideology transfer

Social art was once an immensely popular model among artists in several countries. In the Philippines, this model remains so, and its spirit has been transferred from generation to generation. “An artist who has no social consciousness isn’t an artist”, so said a Filipino theater artist, who has used the theater as ‘campaign media’ for over 20 years.

Like the NGOs, the sheer number of ‘campaign media’ artists in the Philippines has succeeded in building powerful networks. Besides contributing to the campaigns, they also help out by promoting young artists. Training activities and workshops are regularly organized. Artists of a particular specialty come from all around the region and, sometimes, from all over the country. With the artists’ dedicated support and attention, ‘campaign media’ activities almost seem like a mission for which every process should be seriously prepared.

The activities are not confined to skills training, but also include the transfer of ideology and of the spirit of social work. Besides imparting knowledge, the training activities give the youth an opportunity to discover themselves. The youth also learn from the experts. Later on, some of the trainees become ‘campaign media’ producers or activist artists themselves, while those who realize that art does not fit in with their goals and talents, become campaigners/activists instead. I was proudly told that the significance of ‘campaign media’ to activists and activist artists in the Philippines lay in their intent: to become effective tools for communicating with the public and to inculcate social ideology among the younger generations that will replace them someday. No matter the fact that only a small number of the thousands of trainees each year become active activists or activist artists afterward, while the rest finally fade from the scene, this is nothing to be disappointed about, the activists claim.

4. Criticizing based on equal standards

Though the mission of promoting young artists is one of their priorities during the training workshops, the Filipino campaign artists never hesitate to criticize the works of the young ones seriously and honestly. They do not believe that youth should be an excuse for mediocrity. The thinking behind this stance is that while compliments could encourage the young artists, they also have the right to know their flaws and learn
The trainers believe that only by applying the same standards on the youth as are applied on the professionals can real improvement occur. To gloss over faults and poor quality, or strike a compromise with the youth because of their very youth will accrue to the next generation’s loss.

5. Criticizing each other

A huge number of social movement groups and organizations exist in the Philippines. Some of them espouse causes that are on the loftier side and have powerfully supportive networks; others are inferior, in a sense, if weighed in terms of their goals, stances or methods. Inevitably, ideological clashes between the leftists and the rightists, and between the Christians and libertarians, for example, sometimes occur. Still, such apparent differences have not gotten in the way of getting work done, harmoniously even; just as friendships have not prevented criticisms from being issued forth, when called for.

6. Turning pressure into space and opportunity

Amidst the political strife in the Philippines, the Philippines has banned ‘campaign media’ and its propagation in public. A number of journalists and activists have been killed or have disappeared throughout the years.

Instead of imposing self-censorship or modifying their works just so government will allow these to be circulated, however, producers of banned ‘campaign media’ have resorted to electronic means and post their output on YouTube with a sign that reads “banned” and “forbidden in the Philippines”.

The most famous and most powerful case illustrating the success of ‘campaign media’ in Philippine history took place in 2001 when mobile phone short messages (sms) succeeded in drawing millions of people to the EDSA Shrine, where they rallied to protest the blocking of evidence in the impeachment trial of then Philippine president, Joseph Estrada.

In the case of killed and/or disappeared activists, their families and artist/activist friends have tried to present their individual tragedies and relayed information to the public via a variety of channels. While the government and related powerful parties have denied their involvement in these tragedies, they could not deny the existence of movements to protest continued disappearances under the Arroyo administration. And given that the petition for the prejudice is legal, how can government forbid the victims’ families from recounting the tragedies, looking for their sons, and seeking the public’s help and attention?

I once had the opportunity to join an exhibit on the ‘disappeared’ or desaparecidos, the term’s Spanish equivalent. We did not only set up many of their large photos, thereby displaying their stories and the emotions of their families; but, even more importantly, we set up a huge installation art created from their clothes at the center of the exhibition space. Those clothes had been kept by their families who continued to await their return. This exhibition took place in the House of Congress in Quezon City.

7. The social and cultural contexts

With its history of struggle lasting over a hundred years and the active political/social movements now existing in the country, the Philippines has become a most interesting field of study, especially for those who want to learn about social movements. Certain characteristics of Philippine society now manifest the significant effects of such campaigns/movements.

The long and continuous struggles in the Philippines explain the people’s motivation to fight for and protect the citizen’s rights and freedoms. Debates and arguments on social and political issues have become a part of the Filipino contemporary culture. The bus stops have become the channels of propagation, not just of commercial advertisements, but also of ‘campaign media’. Campaign activities have matured and grown in number. In Manila, for instance, there are campaign activities almost every day, regardless of the weather condition prevailing.

Over the years, campaign activities in the Philippines have gradually gained acceptance and are now seen as “normal” even by those who disagree with their goals or would never have paid any attention to the campaign in the past. The stimulating atmosphere during several political campaign activities make them appear like a fair or some carnival, causing people to welcome them.

Though the colonizers have long since left, they somehow left behind a deep wound in the Philippine psyche and a significant weapon as well: the majority of well-educated Filipinos frequently use English when they speak or write. As English is a common language in the modern world, the Filipinos’ English facility has
given them the advantage of being able to communicate with people from all over the world.

As with most artists in the other third world countries, especially if their works are of the type relevant to social campaigns/movements, the Filipino artists' financial status has not put them in the ranks of the wealthy. However, the social status of their 'art' is apparently in direct contrast to their financial standing. Any kind of art is well regarded and welcome. The arts also influence and permeate the people's everyday life. This value conferred on art has driven a rise in the number of small businesses such as restaurants, bars, and art galleries willing to host them. These businesses give artists space where they can present and exhibit their works. They do not confine themselves to hosting the album launch of professional artists or hosting concerts in their bar. Instead, they extend a welcome hand to activists and young 'campaign artists' whom they allow to use their space for a photo exhibition, a theatrical presentation, or a movie. The venue owners charge them a small fee, if at all, after agreeing to and promoting their campaign. It is in channels like these where 'campaign media' and its message can be repeatedly distributed.

The positive attitude and taste of people who consume art are not only widening the boundaries of 'campaign media', but are also increasing the artists' pride in being part of the change in their own society, even when they are short of funds. When their works gain wider acceptance, the artists take these successes as a commitment to create better works, not only for the sake of challenging their colleagues or competing with them, but for enhancing their self-esteem.

I am not claiming that all political/social movements in the Philippines are perfect or free of mistakes. On the contrary, I must say that I found out that the 'campaign media' in the Philippines has been facing and continues to face difficulties and obstacles, just like its counterparts elsewhere. A number of 'campaign media' outputs have expectedly failed because of their poor quality. However, as has been pointed out, a presentation's success is not the sole indicator of achievement; learning from flaws and finding are as valuable.

The above seven factors, in my opinion, are the Filipinos' very methods for solving problems and doing away with the constraints to realizing their goals or achieving anything. How I wish other 'campaign media' producers would give themselves a chance to learn from the Filipinos.

Malaysia:

Different political circumstances and social contexts, as well as the difficulty in applying for a research license in Malaysia, affected the methodology of this study, inevitably. However, these same circumstances warranted my asking myself this: how do 'campaign artists' and activists in Malaysia work under such conditions?

Like in the Philippines, majority of the well-educated Malaysians also frequently use English. The government's tourism policy and Penang's selection as a world heritage city have brought in a lot of tourists from all over the world, not only to the city itself, but to the other regions in Malaysia, as well.

Besides, Malaysia is one of the few countries in Southeast Asia where art is well regarded. This is especially true in Penang, where there are more than a thousand painting artists. Their art works are outstanding not only in number; they are also very interesting. The innovations are always well presented. Penang is likewise host to many art galleries, museums, music and art festivals which the government agencies and the private sector promote.

These characteristics seem to indicate an excellent environment and a more advantageous one for artists. More than its several neighboring countries, Malaysia, at first glance, appears to have the correct appurtenances for creating a high quality 'campaign media', just like the Philippines. Unfortunately, I found out that among the large number of artists in Penang, only a few are active 'campaign media' producers. Moreover, violence during demonstrations launched by people's movements is rarely presented as news. The Malaysian government prefers to deal with various forms of opposition in various ways. The political atmosphere is clouded by fear. The country's legal provisions and political circumstances may be the reasons why 'campaign art' relating to social issues is largely disregarded and unpopular in Malaysia.

The aforementioned assumptions were confirmed by most of my informants who agreed that social/political debates and criticism are 'not usual' in their culture. An active human rights activist whispered to me that because of his career as a lecturer in the university, his
role as an activist had to be kept as secret as possible to avoid any trouble which could affect his work.

In light of the previously identified obstacles to expanding the domestic audience of ‘campaign media’ in Malaysia, the solutions proffered below might be roughly divided into three patterns as follows:

1. Still openly campaign but avoid involvement in sensitive issues and sometimes turn to working on the less risky issues.
2. Still openly campaign and staunchly stand by the issues. However, focus on the levels of the international network and the movement only.
3. Be ready and willing to confront violence, force or arrest, should it arise. Those activists who are amenable to this possibility tell me that if, indeed, they are overcome by force or are arrested, they will not consider it a defeat insofar as it will become news and will thus lead the public to find out that there are small people fighting for their society.

Conditions and factors as mentioned above contribute but a small amount to the ‘campaign media’ in Malaysia, in both the material sense and in the matter of activities/performances. And, even if some of these works are really outstanding, others appear disappointed by them. Efforts to connect and build networks abroad for the purpose of eliciting notice and gaining support locally, might yet succeed. Frequently, English skills and information technology, particularly the Internet, are key to promoting success.

Using the Internet as a tool for campaign distribution could generate positive feedback and gain the attention of Malaysian web surfers. But while Malaysia is a developing country where advanced technology is used in many fields, that Internet technology in Malaysia is not as widely popular as it should be and that it is still expensive are apparent.

Though I rarely participated during the production process in Malaysia, my living in Penang for almost six months and learning that its social campaign operated under similar circumstances as its counterpart in my own country eventually drove me to feel compassion for the people, and to feel depressed just like them. I admit feeling uncomfortable being so reminded of the similarity of our state of affairs.

Their circumstances, notwithstanding, the Malaysians were not to be stopped from creating and producing art/campaign works which they believed would benefit their society. Until there no longer remained any space for them to stand on, unless the change they wanted to take place was effected, the Malaysian ‘campaign artists’ needed to keep the faith and their friends’ support and encouragement.

Shared problems and proposals:

Besides the social and political contexts which are regarded as external factors, internal factors in social movements in both Malaysia and the Philippines have also been determined to affect and limit the development of ‘campaign media’. These internal factors include the fact that certain activists have ignored and pay very scant attention to the use of ‘campaign media’ because of the following reasons/conditions:

1. It appears unnecessary to them. Certain activists believe in other methods/channels of movement such as lobbying, applying pressure on the authorities, and providing specific information on the victims/affected groups and authorities pertinent to each case. These same activists believe that the presentation of these issues and concerns through the mainstream media is enough.
2. They forget or never have enough time to think about presenting the issue to the public because of their heavy responsibilities. Certain organizations spend most of their energy, manpower, time and budget studying, doing fieldwork, training or providing assistance to the affected groups.
3. The lack of skilled personnel results to low-quality output which is, in turn, unable to capture the interest or persuade people to take up the cause being promoted. Certain activists that see mediocre ‘campaign media’ output think it is no different from other outputs.

Those who subscribe to the first reason advanced are satisfied with their methodology and believe it suitable. Within certain contexts, issues or circumstances, they do not believe that a public campaign is appropriate. They just might eventually discover the correct method and channel of propagation, even if sensitive issues are involved. What is essential is for all to agree that there is no specific problem that applies to specific groups only; every problem affects or is relevant to the public at large.

Those who subscribe to the second and the third reasons should reveal their thoughts in order to gain...
cooperation and assistance from outside, where there are skillful ‘campaign media’ producers ready to provide these to them.

Conclusions and expectations:

Differences in the political and social contexts which result to some favorable factors as well as certain limitations cause activists and ‘campaign media’ producers in each country to use different methodologies and ways of coping with particular situations/problems. The main characteristic shared by most activists and campaign media producers in both the Philippines and Malaysia is their persistence. In both countries, people continue to work despite a repressive environment and narrowed/limited channels. In both countries, as well, the enthusiasm of the ‘campaign media producer’ and the development of works and methodologies, as well as the campaign to find new methods/channels of presentation and communication to the public and target groups are evident. The aforementioned factors have developed ‘campaign media’ which continues to have a future.

There is no fixed answer or formula for working in the ‘campaign media’ or social movements that can be gleaned from this study and there never should be. The acceptance of a fixed/traditional formula and the adherence to the prior achievements spells death for the movements. In some cases, formulas seem to be effective and successful over the short term, like fireworks; but they will permanently diminish the quality and ability to function simultaneously, as time passes and as the social context evolves.

In my opinion and per my expectations, the study and exchange of experiences, working methodologies, and manner of coping with problems under different circumstances and contexts among ‘campaign media producers’ do not only impart valuable lessons which I could apply within my contexts. Rather, they also spur me to create and develop my craft. Besides building friendships and networks of ‘campaign media producers’ who share a common interest and mission, ‘campaign media’ and ‘campaign media producers’ should have another mission: to inspire activists and the public to be more inquisitive and to keep searching for more new answers.
B A N W A: Asian Composers and the Spaces of Modernity

Jonas Baes

NOTE: Toward the end of the reading of this paper, pairs of pebbles are to be distributed to the members of the audience who are requested to strike them continuously, creating a "rainforest of sounds", while viewing a performance of Jonas Baes's BANWA (Imagined Community, composed and premiered in Thailand in 1997; performed in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam in 2007).

From an Open Window: The Philippines

MODERN MUSIC AND MODERN LANDSCAPES result from human construction. In the Philippines, what might appear to be "modernity" is contained in spaces that lure one away from the reality of material destitution. These spaces are made up mainly, if not entirely, of large shopping malls that seem to deny for its population the existence of a greater sector of society living in sub-human conditions—of makeshift houses and slum areas. These infrastructures give a semblance of "inclusion" to a sector of the population that is virtually peripheral, if not totally excluded from those images of the "modern", which is equated with affluence. In the Philippines, modernity as manifested in the landscape, is made to be an object of desire: a "seduction", to invoke Jean Baudrillard (1979), that attempts to attain an existence similar to the societies it looks up to—those in Europe, the United States, and Japan—even if its lack of industries, its largely agriculture-based economy, its economy dominated by multi- and transnational corporations, its large surplus labor, as well as its corrupt feudal politics, make it among the poorest and most underdeveloped countries in the world.

The responses of Philippine contemporary composers, (i.e., those who, despite having been trained in the Western classical tradition, create a sub-culture that challenges the hegemony of European musical thought) to these conditions vary along the levels of ontology and epistemology. Conflating the structures of society, political economy, and infrastructure in varying levels of a posteriori knowledge and understanding, a small but perhaps significant lineage of composers have created works that present commentaries on such conditions. These works begin with Jose Maceda’s pioneering works opuses or sound murals that transformed modern spaces into the soundscapes that remind one of Southeast Asian rainforests (Maceda 1967, 1971, 1974, 1975, 1978, 1981); followed by Ramon P. Santos’s sound essays that appropriate nature through humanly uncontrollable factors (Santos 1978); and then myself, whose music attempts to confront the conditions of modernity and its resultant alienation of human agency (Baes 1981, 1997, 2003). It is from this gaze at present socio-political-economic and cultural conditions in the Philippines vis-à-vis my praxis as contemporary composer that I embarked on a new project which views the impact of modern landscapes on the works and practice of modern music by contemporary composers in Japan and Malaysia. An analysis of the milieu and some aspects in the life stories of composers from these two nation-states presents significant insights that locate their Philippine counterparts within an even broader landscape of the various levels of modernism in the Asia-Pacific Region. The Philippines, Japan, and Malaysia represent three levels of the construction of modernity in Asia, if viewed from the respective stratum of their economy and infrastructure: the Philippines is an "underdeveloped" nation; Malaysia, a developing "tiger economy"; and Japan, a developed country.

This presentation highlights some of the important aspects of that research work, reflections on which are to be experienced in an interactive viewing of one of my compositions that transforms the environment into a "forest of sounds".

Gravitations: The Spaces of Modern Music in Malaysia and Japan

Maceda’s problematization of modernity and what we may consider as commentary through musical works like Ugnayan (1974) and Ading (1978) is hinged on a perspective that dichotomizes “traditional” and “modern”; “Asian” and “Western”; and “tradition” and “change”. While his epistemology might, even at the onset, present the various ambiguities in the conception of such categories (note that Maceda organized concerts in the 1960s featuring traditional Philippine music, side-by-side with works by avant-garde composers Varese and Xenakis, as well as his own compositions that utilized Asian instruments), the ontology of his praxis remained within a "primitive
imaginary” (after Bayart 2005) that assumed traditional culture to be relatively isolated in the Southeast Asian rainforests and hinterlands. His works, it appears, did not account for an even more powerful impact of the incorporation of these communities in the mainstream, as well as the global order/s already happening when he was active as a researcher (Baes 2006). Plainly, Maceda’s perspective—which actually had repercussions on his music—did not consider the fact that the creation of “modernity” and/or the “Westernization” he was so critical about, had strong leanings toward a larger macro structure of a global political economy. Late modernity has become an “object” that can be appropriated, and whose images can be artificially constructed, contained in spaces that define the socio-geographical “centers of gravity” and the physical movements in day-to-day living. Malaysia can be one case in point.

The most significant icon of modernizing Malaysia is the Petronas Towers: it is the focal point of what has been referred to as the “Multimedia Super Corridor”. The design of the Petronas Towers is, in itself, a significant icon of Malaysia’s deliberate effort to create an image of an emergent Southeast Asian nation-state on its way to becoming an economic giant (in reference to its “Vision /Wawasan 2020”). But, at the same time, it balances tradition and modernity for the sake of preserving its value to its citizens. The roofing of the Towers, for instance, reminds one of a Muslim mosque, only one in a number of other government infrastructures appearing to reiterate the Islam-ness/Malay-ness in its “Malaysian-ness”; and manifesting the cultural imaginary as imagined/envisaged by the state. However, the fact that the state’s brand of Malaysian-ness is visually, if not obviously, grounded on being “Malay”, and therefore being “Islam”, its positive effects and those of other government efforts in the agenda for a “genuine” integration, at least among the “mainstream” races—i.e., Malay, Chinese and Indian—have yet to be seen (see Bunnell 2006 for a comprehensive, analytical study of the social geography of the Multimedia Super Corridor).

In the early 2000s, modernist composers in Malaysia gravitated toward the country’s capital, and into the Petronas Tower’s Cultural Center, for the opportunities afforded them, especially with the institution of the so-called “Malaysian Composer’s Forum”. A rare opportunity, especially for composers who had trained in Europe and the United States, the forum aimed to encourage young Malaysian composers to write new works for the orchestra for a composer’s competition. The winning entries were to be featured in a concert of the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra, a world-class orchestra comprising the best musicians and conductors from around the world. The MPO Forum was very promising at the beginning, as it brought forth the initial works of the likes of Chong Kee Yong, Jonathan Othmann, Tazul Tadjuddin, Adeline Wong, Yii Ka Hoe, and Ng Chong Lim, all of whom are internationally known today.

Following the unsatisfactory developments in the handling of this project, however, among other pressing conditions of neglect and detriment, Malaysian composers bonded to form the “Malaysian Composer’s Collective”, a cyber-based organization that created a community of modern composers and served as a conduit to other similar composer organizations in the Asian region. The shift from the concert hall of the Petronas Towers where the MPO Forum was being held, toward cyberspace, put the nature of the organization in another dimension—the members had common concerns and interests, needed space to promote the performances of their new works, faced common social and political conditions, and generally required a mode of communication and integration that transcended physical boundaries. While their “art music” did not pose any threat on the state, the lack of opportunities provided by the state in the matter of resources of production made them feel marginalized, a shared feeling that was highly instrumental in their bonding with each other. If, according to Benedict Anderson (1983), print media had been the conduit to nineteenth-century “imagined communities”, it was perhaps cyber media that assumed much of that function in the early twenty-first century among Malaysian composers.

Where Malaysian composers suffered the scarcity of production opportunities within their own country, the complete opposite was seen in Japan. Tokyo remains the center of gravity of Japanese modern music, although many performances of modern music happen in other cities like Osaka or Yokohama. Japanese composers claim that at least one concert of modern Japanese music is held everyday, and in several different venues within Tokyo. Thousands of modern composers in Japan are based in Tokyo and in the nearby districts. Two major composers’ organizations, the Japan Federation of Composers and the Japan Society for Contemporary Music, are also based in
Tokyo, each with hundreds of members. While a number of composers are employed as professors in major universities like the Tokyo National University of the Arts (GeiDai), the Tokyo College of Music (ToDai), and the Senzukou College of Music, there are also hundreds more who are not connected with any academic institutions.

Tokyo, the base of the older generation of world-renowned musicians like the late Toru Takemitsu and Yoshihiro Irino, is currently the base of composers like Yuji Takahashi, Isao Matsushita, Masao Endo, plus and an emergent younger generation composed of like Hiroyuki, Harayuki Suzuki, Mazakasu Natsuda and Hitomi Kaneko—are just a few among so many that should be mentioned. Factions between organizations, within an organization, and between individuals seem to indicate the existence of an already complex social organization and internal politics within the sector of composers.

But as modern music in Japan gravitates to Tokyo, Asian and even world economic power gravitates (or once gravitated) to Japan. During the 2009 recession worldwide, Japan’s yen was stronger than the US dollar. Ginza, a district within the city of Tokyo, presently has the highest value per square meter of land in the entire world. Japanese industrial technology pervades the world, and Japan’s reputation as an economic power is the benchmark of emergent Asian “tiger economies” like Malaysia, Singapore, and Taiwan. As I mentioned to my teen-aged daughter while we were in Tokyo, there is hardly, if any, shopping mall in Japan because the entire milieu is the mall; and that it is exactly the kind of milieu which we found in Tokyo’s many shopping districts which is being mimicked by the shopping malls in our country and, maybe, even in Malaysia.

Perhaps it is because of its place in the global political economy that even Euro-Americans explicitly express their fascination for Japan and its people. The “Lolita fashion” for instance, a mode of dressing appropriated from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century Euro-American fashion, has, in the last few years, been very popular in Japan. It is associated particularly with the Harajuku district of Tokyo. It is a fascination to see young Japanese girls dressed like Europeans (“lolitas”), with their hair exaggeratedly blonde or multi-colored. It is even more fascinating to see Euro-American tourists who visit the Harajuku district dress in that same mode. This phenomenon demonstrates how the Euro-Americans have appropriated the Japanese’s appropriation of Euro-American’s late nineteenth century fashion. I see this kind of “ping-pong appropriation” as fascinating as, though perhaps not directly connected to, the outputs of the Pro Musica Nipponia. This group is an ensemble of Japanese traditional instruments structured after a Western orchestra; therefore, its repertoire’s orchestration is akin to European orchestral music. Pro Musica Nipponia is cultivating a repertoire of works by modern Japanese composers like Yasuji Kiyose, who creates in the style of the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century French Impressionist composers like Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel. The fascinating fact is that Debussy and Ravel, who lived during the time of the breakdown of the Western tertiary harmonic system and Europe’s curiosity of cultures beyond it, were also appropriating traditional music from Asia (Japan included), so that we find here another ping-pong appropriation: an appropriation of a European artistic praxis that had already appropriated Asian (Japanese) culture. The creation of an orchestra made of traditional instruments is now being considered by states in the ASEAN region, within their respective agendas and visions in the construction of a “national” culture. This move may have been modelled from such orchestras as the Pro Musica Nipponia or similar efforts in China. I am quite puzzled, though, and tend to think that it might be because of Japan’s stature as a major economic power in the world that has made the world allow spaces for “fascination”, for “tolerance” and for “recognition” of the Japanese appropriation of Western culture; that the mode and manner of appropriation of Western culture by developing economies in the Southeast Asian region might turn out to be a mimesis of Japan’s mode of appropriation.

Hyperreality and Imagined Community: A Video Viewing of Baes’ BANWA (the audience takes part by striking pairs of pebbles continuously)

I sit engulfed in deep reflection as I write in a coffee shop within a large shopping mall, trying to beat the deadline for the submission of this paper. I close my eyes and drown myself in the chaotic soundscape. Speech from hundreds to thousands of people going in every direction around lunchtime seems extra-unintelligible. Loud music from one side of the mall and from the opposite corner, and the vibrations of rushing footsteps add up to become a gigantic drone of sound. The aroma of coffee, pizza, and burgers mix

The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows
with the coldness of the air conditioning. As I keep my eyes closed, I become deaf to the humongous and chaotic soundscape, and my thoughts drift away. Then I begin to wonder: Where exactly am I? Am I in one of the gigantic malls in Manila? Am I in Kuala Lumpur’s KLCC? Or am I in the streets of the Shibuya district in Tokyo? Or had I passed-out and then abruptly awakened from an unconscious state? I could not guess exactly where I was immediately.

And then I reminisced about the time I was in a suburb in Mindanao about twelve years ago, where I saw the physical denudation of the rainforest and the diminishing spirit of an indigenous community, trying to make sense of their inevitable plunge into the mainstream of the national body politic. This was 1997 and I was doing fieldwork with Ramon Santos among a marginalized Tagabawa-Bagobo community living within the peripheral regions of Davao del Sur. The people had temporarily left behind their ancestral domain in the deeper parts of the rainforest to find ways to earn money in the city. We were there for a research engagement, and they wanted to show us their traditional gong playing, thinking we were from a TV program. I found their situation rather unfortunate, just like that of hundreds of disparate indigenous communities I had encountered in the Philippines, previously. They have become virtually excluded from the agenda of “development”. Then I snapped out of that memory to take a look and realize where I was at the moment. I asked myself again who (or what sector of society) becomes excluded by default from the material affluence of this shopping mall, in the process of creating these images of “development”? The engagement with the Bagobo community in Mindanao and then the construction of this hyper-real world around me in the shopping mall “enraged” me to compose a large-scale work, which I have entitled banwa, i.e., place/community.

Like many of my compositions, banwa has resulted from my fascination with socio-political thought; in this case it is Benedict Anderson’s concept of the imagined communities. This now classic work from 1983 explores the origin of nationhood. It advances the concept of nation as “imagined”, where the nature of a people’s “communion” appears as created images in the mind, from which people are able to draw a field of connection with others they consider as their own kind, even without physical contact (1983: 6-7). I however consider the book “unfinished”, as the process of nationhood is dynamic and constantly in a state of flux. How, for instance, will that concept be altered if Anderson were to consider the conditions of “minoritized” indigenous communities or the urban poor, both of which are virtually excluded from a mimicked, “hyper-real” world outside the excruciating socio-economic conditions of the Philippines? Are the peoples and sectors of the Philippines in communion with each other, in terms of the desire for a world outside its reality, where, as a nation, it is confronted by conditions of underdevelopment and material destitution? In composing banwa, I attempted to create a musical work whose mode of performance might provide a glimpse, as well as images in sound that revert the imaginary into spaces of a forgotten rainforest, as a result of a certain “communion” of all those present during a performance. I see it as an antidote to the hyper-reality of, let’s say, a shopping mall, and the resulting “alienation” of people from each other, from their locality, and even from their own selves.

Conceptualized as a framework of musical materials that has the potential to transform itself like a chameleon, depending on where the performance is taking place, the work has had its protean manifestations in Thailand (1997), in the Philippines (2001/2008) and in Vietnam (2007), where in each of those renditions, musicians and musical instruments from the locality redefined the musical framework according to their respective musical languages. The work also highlights a rather simple, Tagabawa Bagobo-inspired vocal solo, so formulated according to structures of vocal music in Southeast Asia, so that it can be easily learned, adapted, and rendered by traditional singers who have cultivated an oral tradition or musical praxis without the use of musical notation. The use of a rather simple and traditional style not only honors traditional music, but also serves as an antidote to the hegemonic structures of Anglo-American popular music cultures that dominate the airwaves. The music was over-determinedly made simple but unique, so that it has the potential of being cultivated by mainstream culture without needing to succumb to the various modes of commercial music production.

In banwa, the audience also becomes integrated into the performance as they create the “forest” of repeated and diffused sounds using stones, which stand as a carpet for the musical events taking place in a sound layer above it. The work’s trajectory consists of the small localities; and their intended performance spaces
are the simpler community theatres or gathering places. The intention of having this work rendered in various locations, especially in the rural areas, banks on the possibility that, perhaps, in the future, and after several generations, this work might be a conduit for an imagined connection between communities with common socio-economic conditions. **Banwa**, an Iraya-Mangyan term that refers to a place or a village, also stands for the people residing in that village, and their collective experiences and histories. Participation empowers all those present in the performance to be part of that imagined "village", and therefore, of that imagined community. Its general structure of simply filling up the performance space with sounds of simple instruments like stones, bamboo bird whistles, and iron-nail chimes, and creating a forest of sounds lies in the spirit of reminiscing about the rainforests in Southeast Asia: seemingly neglected by late modernity’s hyper-real construction of modern landscapes.

**PLAY 7-MINUTE VIDEO OF BANWA PERFORMANCE WHILE PAIRS OF PEBBLES ARE BEING DISTRIBUTED AND CONTINUOUSLY PLAYED BY THE AUDIENCE**

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**ENDNOTES**

1 The revisions in this paper were worked from comments and questions during the API workshops in Osaka, Japan in November 2009. My deepest gratitude goes to Dr. Patricio Abinales for his suggestions on the initial draft. I also wish to thank Dr. Sunait Chutintaranond and Mr. Jose Atanacio Estuar for their comments during the panel sessions. This paper was delivered in Osaka, Japan, just a couple of days after the infamous massacre of more than 57 women, children, and mediamen in Maguindanao province in Mindanao, southern Philippines. This work is dedicated to those who suffer the loss of lives because of neo-feudal structures in the Philippine backlands.


3 It was brought to my attention by Shanthi Thambiah that the roof of the Petronas Towers might also be viewed as a Buddhist symbol, depending on the gaze of the spectator.

4 The 2008 Malaysian Composer’s Forum no longer featured a competition that, on the whole, had encouraged young composers to create works of quality. Malaysian composers further lamented that scarcely one or two Malaysian pieces had been performed during the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra’s season concerts since 2008.

5 Patricio Abinales suggests that it is now China to which the world is "gravitating".

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__________. 2003. **Patangis-Buwaya** (...And the crocodile weeps). Music for four wind instruments from any culture.

Maceda, Jose. 1968. **Pagsamba**. Music for 241 performers (gongs, choruses, bamboo and wooden instruments).

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1978. *Ading*. Music for 100 voices, 100 instrumentalists and audience.

1981. *Aruding*. Music for 40 mouth harps, 3 bamboo flutes and 7 men’s voices.

Video Project: ‘Contemporary Family, as an Involuntary Community’?

Shigeaki Iwai

Introduction

In recent years in Japanese cities, the concept of “family” has been falling apart and the functions of the family have been lost. These communities are now at risk and the negative impact has affected society. In general, this phenomenon is understood as a typical example of negative impact coming from changing societies, such as globalization. However, all families in different cultures, under the influence of globalization, do not experience the same crises that many Japanese families go through. So, how are families affected by society, and how do they maintain their forms as families? This question led me to this project. I visited families in three countries in Southeast Asia whose cities resembled Japanese urban areas, videotaping and recording various aspects of contemporary family lives. The basic concept is “family as an involuntary community”. In other words, a family is “a collective body of separate individuals”. It is a fact that, without any effort to maintain the family’s unity, it can easily fall apart. To admit this fact is to question the essentialist concept of family in Japan. Isn’t this false security, without any basis? This project has been discovering the unique qualities of various families and continues to study the interactive relationships within each member of the families. I tried to clarify how contemporary families overcome the potential tendency of separation and how they maintain their form as a family.

Details of Contemporary Family

The image of family repeatedly depicted in the films of Yasujirō Ozu, after World War II and through the period of rapid economic growth in Japan from the 50s and to the 60s, were filled with feelings of middle class Japanese family lives during that time. Actually, they were fantasies created through the particular creativity of the artist. Still, the image of the “typical Japanese family” was imprinted back onto the Japanese audience. This phenomenon was caused by the elements of cinematic psychology created through compositions and camera angles, based on the movements of Japanese people. These elements were more important than the excellent scripts and attractive actors of Ozu films. The actors’ movements and manners, the movie sets and props used in his films, which were not necessarily part of the story, rendered simple but strong visual effects. For example, Ozu liked to use the image of flapping laundry on lines. In these shots, we can easily imagine the family, their socioeconomic level, and sense of aesthetics. The creative methodology I chose for this project is to pay attention to the effective functions of such cinematic details, and to make a whole image from accumulating them. My interpretation of details varied from shots of “laundry” to short episodes with some descriptions about the families. I tried to show more details of family lives rather than details of cinematic language. In each case, verbal explanations were removed. These attractive details were extracted from many families and edited to reconstruct the contemporary image of the family.

Workshops and Shooting

The process of the project began with recruiting families. Visiting families and shooting their personal events required collaboration among artists and participants under the agreements of the participants’ families. Therefore, the following process was established:

1) In each city I visited, I asked cooperation from groups and organizations such as alternative art spaces, art centers, and art universities to look for the participants for the project. I provided one cycle of a two-to-three-day workshop. At the beginning of the workshop, I introduced the lives of Japanese families described in different moving images, to give fresh viewpoints to the participating families.

2) In the workshop, all the participants took in discussions and interviews by the artist in order to choose details regarding family, in other words, the theme of the video work. I explained that these details are found in the “dislocations” in the families. (The “dislocations” are explained later.)

3) I visited the families of participants some certain number of times. As explained in the above,
I also exchanged opinions with family members of participants to choose the final theme of each family. Based on the decided themes, I made storyboards using effective camera techniques. It is not really a documentary, as the families reproduced the acts of their lives. But it is not fiction, as it reveals the routine of their daily lives. The shooting style has the functions of both fiction and documentary.

4) The shot footage was edited to two to three minutes and shown to participants to review. With cooperation of groups and organizations in the area, I showed video footage as the results of activities and led open discussions including participants in the projects and with audience gathered there.

Findings / Footage

Thailand

I worked in Bangkok, Khon Kaen, and Phitsanulok from July 6, 2008 to September 9, 2008. I found the participants and places for two cycles of workshops with the support of the Jim Thompson Art Center. Gridthiya Gaweewong is the director of the Jim Thompson Art Center and annually organizes the Bangkok experimental film festival with renowned film director, Apichatpong Weerasethakul. Gaweewong has much knowledge in video art and its artistic expression. The participants to the workshop were found through the network of the center. They were mainly art students who study video and young video artists. It was the same situation with Bangkok University. Most participants were students in the Communication Art Department and Film majors. There were twenty-five workshop participant all together in two cycles. I visited homes and shot footage of twelve families among them.

Eg (=Footage Example)-1

The parents were separated and the two sons were now grown up and live away from the family. A grandmother lives by herself in the house where the family used to live together. She lives in the room that used to belong to the second grandson, who was the only person close to her. It is a typical teenager’s room with posters of rock bands and animation characters. It was left as it was since the parents got separated. The old woman sleeps on the bed in that room like a frozen guard of time, giving the impression of absent family with her silence.

Most of the workshop participants are single people in their twenties. About forty percent of them are living with one parent. The nuclearization of the family, and divorce and separation of couples seem to be happening in urban areas of Bangkok. Eg-1 reflects such situations.

Eg-2

Footage shows a mother cutting her teenage son’s hair. She decided to cut her son’s hair at the end of each month in order to have better communication with him because they had stopped talking with each other as he grew older. But she listens to her favorite traditional music on her radio cassette player. On the other hand, the son can’t stand the old music that his mother plays and listens to latest pop music on his iPod. They are living in two different places and the original intention of the monthly haircut has been lost.

Eg-2 is an example of an event that was intentionally set up to facilitate communication, but instead, does not function and the two of them are subconsciously aware of the dysfunction. It is a detail that could be in any family. The effort may not produce immediate results, but the act of trying to communicate might be accumulated in the memory of the family and increase meaning.

Indonesia

The workshops in Indonesia took place in Jakarta and Yogyakarta from February 16, 2009 to April 14, 2009. The workshops of the two cities gathered sixteen participants and I visited nine families to shoot video footage. In Jakarta, the Ruangrupa, an alternative artist-run space, which was established in 2000, supported me to find participants and provided space. Ruangrupa is one of the leading organizations in Indonesian film and video art. It organized the Jakarta International Video Festival (OK Video Festival) for the fourth time. I also became closer to the artist community Forum Lenteng, which records and introduces urban lives in Jakarta through video art. I showed my final report of my project in Indonesia at the forum. In Yogyakarta, a famous performance artist named Arahmaiani offered support so that I could use the Cemeti Art House, an alternative space, established in 1988 to find participants and the space for the project.
These three countries have different well-established religions. Thailand is a Buddhist country, the Philippines is Catholic, and Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world. To record how each religion influences family life was one of the purposes of the project, and I found a very interesting result in Indonesia. Islam has a tendency to be expressed in strong visual statements, such as women’s headscarves and Ramadan. It creates a society that can clearly bring out individual faith and religious standpoints. Most of the themes that I chose with Indonesian participants at workshops had something to do with religion. The stance that the young people take for Islamic religion might be affected by secularism. Even within near generations, there are different attitudes toward religion, and I would like to avoid to generalizing their tendencies.

Eg-1
A father and mother wash their hands and feet in the bathroom to purify themselves and then pray in the bedroom. A young woman, probably their daughter, is reading a book in a balcony next to the bedroom. The camera takes turns shooting the process of prayer and the face of the daughter who is reading.

This simple scene suggests a lot of emotional complexity. The daughter is not denying the religion or rebelling against her parents. She feels a gap between the religious belief and the dramatic acts of prayer. She has not reached the point of praying in the same manner as her parents. This subtle rebellion is a typical attitude among the young generation, but at the same time, many young people of her generation feel opposite from her.

Eg-2
A young father tries to teach the awareness and pride of Islam. He dresses his son and takes him to the mosque every Friday afternoon. The young child, who does not understand the meaning of religion, naturally cannot stay still. He runs and disturbs the service and some people laugh at the child but the father is very serious. He is ashamed of his past when he didn’t have any knowledge of Islam and did not pay respect to the religion when he grew up so he does not want his son to repeat the same mistake.

In the process of conservative philosophy being disseminated in the young generation, there are some phenomena against the global standard of human rights. A new family formation begin with a couple. However, in Indonesia, there is now a trend among the younger generation to explore polygamy.

Eg-3
A man has two wives. The first wife could not get pregnant. The man had an affair with another woman and got her pregnant. He decided to marry her as a second wife while keeping his first. The first wife comes back home from work and watches TV. In another house, the husband holds the second wife while she is playing with their baby. She seemed to be pregnant with their second child. The two photographs in different rooms show the two brides at the weddings with the same groom. The two women, who live different realities, clearly have different feelings shown on their faces.

The people shown in Eg-3 are not direct participants of the workshop, but were found through indirect connections. When I interviewed the man, the husband suggested that he wants to continue the relationship with the two women as the result of his sexual needs. It seemed that he was diverting the Islam teaching to justify the act. This type of rationalization among the young generation is recently increasing. The religious aspects of polygamy are just a matter of formality. Puspo Wardoyo, a famous spokesman for polygamy, justifies the right to have up to four wives according to the teaching of Mohamed. He, on the other hand, is a wealthy businessman who made his fortune in a fried chicken chain, and can provide for all of his wives. However, there are many cases where there are young men who cannot come up to this standard in their relationships. The husband shown in Eg-3 has been unemployed for a long time and is supported by a small amount of income brought by his first wife.

The Philippines
The project was continued in the Philippines from July 1, 2009 to August 30, 2009 in two places: Metro Manila and Santiago City in Isabela province. In Manila, Green Papaya Art Projects, which has been the leading organization in the art scene in Manila since 2000, coordinated the workshop and interviews with students and young artists. I was also invited as a resident-artist by the director, Yuan Mor’O Ocampo at Balay na Santiago, an art center in Santiago City. There were various people with different occupations and age groups. The participants in two workshops totaled fifteen. I visited and shot videos on eleven
families. In urban areas in this country, there are many interracial and intercultural families. Family life there is influenced by Catholicism. It is also said that ten percent of the population works abroad. I explored the theme thinking of the relationships of the workers abroad and the families left in the Philippines.

Eg-1
A man comes home in the evening. He lives with his wife and three sons. The dinner is being prepared in the living room. He takes time washing his hands with soap. The dinner begins. The sons are not of an age to chat with their parents anymore. They stay in silence, moving spoons and forks, making small sounds clicking against the plates. Then, the camera shows the hands of the father. He uses his hands efficiently to feed himself. He is the only one who eats with his hands. Although the man established his home, coming into the land that his wife owned, he clings to the cultural habit that he grew up with.

Eg-2
A young man has a small son and daughter. He appears to be a macho type but he makes sure that he spends time with his children, instead of letting his maid raise them. He bathes them, chooses their clothes, works on their homework with them, and prepares their snacks. Every Sunday, he takes the children to his uncle’s house and converses with his wife, who works as a nurse in the U.S., on live video on the PC. The son talks to the mother but the daughter does not respond to the mother. The mother left the family to work in the States right after the daughter was born. The father raised her and she cannot identify with the mother who smiles on the PC monitor.

Eg-3
This upper-class family lives in a large house. The grandmother is over ninety years old. The middle-aged man, separated from his wife, lives with the grandmother and his college student son. The three generations of this family live together with a maid. Every night the grandmother watches old Hollywood films, while drinking gin tonics by herself in her room. The father spends his time taking care of his gun collection. The son practices his guitar with BB King on YouTube. Three of them separately do their own things until late at night. The three separate rooms are somewhat connected by dark corridors.

Creating Discussion Opportunities Using Video Footage

This project is structured such that the video footage is shown to the audience at different stages in the production process and their responses are fed back to the project.

In the first stage of this process, I edited each piece of video footage of a family into several-minute sequences when I finished shooting in that city. I invited the people in the area and supporters to view the video and they discussed it afterwards. At this first stage, my intention was to report my activities to the supporters and people in the areas and feed the information back to the community.

At the second stage, after shooting the videos, I organized viewing opportunities for the people from these three countries who were living in Japan. This process (which is currently ongoing) was a very important part of the project. I exchanged my point of view as a foreigner living abroad with the people who watched the video footage of their homelands away from Japan. I tried to redefine the standard interpretation by which both sides could share regarding the meanings of each scene. I also showed the footage to groups of Japanese. That was for them to discuss what they could relate to and what they could not and reflect on the ways of their family life in Japan.

The viewing at each stage of production functions not only as a process of creating the final artwork, but also as a communication tool to discuss the ways of videotaped families among different groups of people. For example, I shot footage of a family of five riding on one motorcycle in Yogyakarta? In Indonesia, the people explained to me that it showed the family bond of being literally on the “same boat”. In the Philippines, they spoke of the importance of being physically close to each other. In Japan, the people were critical of the parents who were risking the safety of the children by riding on the motorcycle in such a way. It is interesting to see how cultural differences were reflected by the different nationalities’ interpretations of the same video footage. It is, however, even more important to study relatively how the behavior of each family shown in the videos functions in their family lives. We all hope that the time we spend with our families lasts forever but the time we spend with each family member is limited. In order to share whatever limited time and space
available, what do people accept and what do they sacrifice? Consequently, what kinds of families are formed? It is not my intention to answer these questions, but I would like to prepare a space where the audience can access their own realities through my work. I would also like to prepare a channel where they can share their experiences.

In the third stage I will show the final work, reconstructed combining the original video footage, to the general audience for the first time.

**Dislocations in Families, instead of a conclusion**

Family is fragile. If there is such a thing as a happy family, it is only possible through conscious efforts by each family member. Families in cities in Japan are falling apart so rapidly that they don’t even have time and opportunities to recognize this premise. The families in the three countries had some sense of discomfort within the families. In other words, they had “dislocations” within. This “dislocation” is a feeling of absence, gaps among different generations, revealed difference in the family, or conflicts/compromise with the outer world, brought into the family. There are, of course, “happy” dislocations rather than negative ones. To verify these gaps is one of the effective ways to understand contemporary families. When the contemporary and complex characteristics in these dislocations are clarified not in narrative but in visual expressions, new interpretations will be given to its contemporary and complex characteristics. Such an extensive and daily topic as “family” would seem to be already discussed so much that there is not much to be said. But visual experience leads us to new interpretations of contemporary families and their new appearances. The families I met through the projects had accepted the aspects of dislocations and solved them in their own ways to be a part of everyday life and then formed their own family lifestyles. The will to transform those dislocations into something positive is the creative act and origin of drama that emerges through our daily lives.

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**NOTE**

As I write this text, the project is still in the process and has not been completed. I, therefore, would like to clarify that this text is an interim report after completing interviews executed in the three countries.
Artists and Their Roles in Creating a Living City

Narumol Thammapruksa

Introduction

When we speak of a "city", we usually think of different kinds of buildings structures such as elegant office buildings, beautiful houses lining the sides of the streets, shopping malls, hospitals, schools, etc. All these infrastructure are essential for a place to be a "city", but in creating a city we often forget one element that is the most important of all: human beings with freedom, creativity, imagination, intelligence, desires, and motivation.

When inspecting a development plan for a city or any other similar project, we typically would not consider the happiness of the people as one of the objectives of the plan. Instead, the focus is on constructing infrastructure and buildings, which are like the hardware that are expected to benefit the economy. A city that prioritizes physical structures over the emotional needs of its dwellers typically produces cold, lifeless buildings that eventually cause humans to be confused, anxious, and devoid of happiness. A typical overwhelming townscape would frighten and numb the humans’ senses, reduce their sense of self, make them feel insignificant and powerless to control their surroundings.

The large buildings that come with progress and development have cost the city its identity and uniqueness. They are the reasons behind the city dwellers’ lack of happiness. The sad reality is that cities reduce humans to being treated simply as "labor". Such cities are no longer attractive nor "livable". Those who could afford to do so migrate to a more attractive city, while those who could not remain in the city out of necessity, not out of desire.

What then makes a city "livable"?

One cannot deny that a city needs hardware in the same manner that a body needs a skeleton to hold it up. But a city also needs "software" which functions like networks of nerves and arteries that keep the body alive. One could not exist without the other. For a city, software means understanding how people feel. It encompasses environmental psychology, cultural literacy, sensory appreciation, and a visceral sense of the city. It refers to the city’s artistic thinking and understanding of social dynamics.

Therefore, to create a city one must think of how to integrate hardware and software, and produce creative infrastructure, which incorporate mental or spiritual infrastructure that breathe life into the city.

A survey in England¹ revealed that 80 percent of the respondents wished to live in the countryside, but only 4 percent could actually do so. If we cannot build small villages for everybody, could we incorporate the characteristics of a small village into a city, at least? Wouldn’t these characteristics engender a sense of place and belonging, continuity, safety and predictability? Perhaps, integrating these qualities into a city’s existing characteristics would be the necessary move to make the city "livable".

In many European countries, there are movements to improve the quality of their cities in consideration of the people living in them. For example, the European Creative Cities Research Group investigated and evaluated the cities’ experiences that incorporated the power of the arts and culture, and the people’s participation in reducing social problems, into the development of the city. Such efforts helped recreate a city that is more creative, sustainable, and livable. This group suggested that while hardware is still needed for the city to function, the artistic aspects must also be taken into account. Creativity should not be limited to fantasy or imagination, but should extend to intelligence and innovation.

Charles Landry (2006) translates this into a city with hardware or cultural infrastructure that is a space for artistic and cultural activities conducted with freedom and creativity. It also translates to a city with software, which is a matrix of artworks and cultural events such as public arts, festivals, etc. Lastly, it translates to a city with a human ware of organizations and artists who participate in the city’s creation. There should be space for the artists to create artworks with the community through the artists’ residency programs that are inherent parts of the city’s image development.

¹ The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows
This report is a culmination of the researcher’s experience about “city” and the artists who create its cultural space to make it more creative and livable. It focuses on how artists in Japan and Indonesia try to create originality, meaning, and value in their surroundings. Some also try to apply their artistic ability in reducing social problems at the individual, community, and city levels.

The methodology of this research incorporates open-ended interviews, home visits, and participation in workshops, creative activities, and discussions in focus groups. Participants are not only artists but are also art organizers, educators, NGO workers, researchers, and urban planners.

Creative People (Humanware)

Richard Florida calls groups of individuals who use creativity in their work as a ‘creative class’. He refers here to artists, designers, scientists, architects, and brainworkers, who desire to improve the quality of their living space.

Artists are among those professional groups capable of creating something out of nothing. Moreover, artists also use their ability in various ways: to cultivate their minds, to subtly communicate messages of ethical value, and to elevate spiritual development. Some artists focus their energy on the community and on service to society; some prefer to work in isolation; and yet some choose to work as groups or networks, which they believe hold a stronger power to move society over a wider level. Examples of such artists are as follows:

a. Individual Artists

Misako Ichimura is a visual artist who graduated from the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and has been living out of a blue tent in Yoyogi Park in central Tokyo as a homeless person for the past ten years. Not long after she decided to live in the tent, Misako was able to see the complexity of the homelessness issue. Only 10 percent of the homeless are women who are at high risk of various types of abuse, ranging from physical violence, to rape, even while some of them are unattractive or old.

Misako believes that she could increase their safety by encouraging them to stay as a group in one area. She creates activities to attract them, such as making hand-made sanitary pads with creative materials. She sometimes organizes exhibitions for their artworks. Proceeds from the sale of their works now constitute funds raised for the benefit of these homeless women.

Misako organized a bread party in her tent every Thursday afternoon after Christian group distributed bread among the homeless in the morning. Every weekend, people were invited to bring useful items to the café to exchange with the others. A poets’ club and a drawing class met every Tuesday.

Photo 1: E no Aru Café at Yoyogi Park, Tokyo on Saturday afternoon

Misako approaches the group slowly, gradually trying to be assimilated into it without being forceful or conspicuous. Her neighbors in the surrounding tents, meanwhile, are able to absorb her positive influence in living a sensible life and attracting her artist friends, journalists, writers, etc., to experience another side of life in Yoyogi Park.

The world of the homeless may seem pitiful; but, as Misako has shown, if we could make the surrounding area attractive and organize meaningful activities, even old, shabby tents could become livable once a sense of place is created, and creative people are attracted enough to it to participate in activities using the space together.

Another artist, Setsu Hanasaki uses theater to deal with social problems. A specialist in theater art, she has used the Forum Theater together with students at Waseda University, who go through role plays that would help them understand the problem of sexual harassment in educational institutions. She has also worked with patients suffering from the Minamata disease, and has tried to connect them with other disabled individuals as a way of empowering them and enhancing their self-esteem so that they can assert their rights. In addition, she also tries to help the younger generation understand their community through the
course she is teaching: ‘Community Design’ at the Department of Visual Communication, Musashino University, which has a strong focus on arts.

In the Indonesian city of Yogyakarta, poor people can rent cheap rooms along the banks of the Kali Code River. Each year, the increasing number of migrants who come to the city seeking work end up living with their relatives and acquaintances and turn the community into a crowded and unsanitary place.

The late R. W. Mangunwijaya, a Christian priest who was also an architect, stepped in and helped design houses constructed with bamboo. The owners decorated their new houses with lively colors that made these attractive to live in. People became more fascinated with the construction technique especially after the houses survived a major earthquake that hit the area not long after. Mangunwijaya’s work has inspired a group of younger architects to establish The People Shelter Foundation (Yayasan Pondok Rakyat) to continue his mission after he passed away in 1999.

Samuel Indratma is another artist who worked with an urban poor community without any funding. He taught community members to paint signs in the community by themselves. They became proud of their creative works and after more visitors became attracted to the community, the Yogyakarta Mural Forum (YMF) was established. Samuel also brought art works from the community to display at art festivals nationwide.

From the previous examples, one can see that even a single artist could effectively create changes besides being influential and inspiring to other people by demonstrating to them how they can create artistic and esthetic value out of common objects. Artists also have the ability to see things from different perspectives. They can see abandoned old houses as an opportunity for creativity. The renovation of old towns has become a significant movement in certain areas and has benefited the city considerably.

For example, Takeshi Kohari was a photographer from Kyoto who, during the early sixties, moved to Nishijin. This silk production district used to be famous in the Heian Period over a thousand years ago. But the sixties was the period when Western culture was fashionable and old-style wooden houses called machiya were neglected. Nonetheless, Kohari and his family fixed the house and decorated it so that it became attractive again. They also persuaded their neighbors and friends to improve the condition of their own houses and to turn them into living quarters, shops, and leisure spots under a cooperative management called the Kyo-Machiya Club. Thereafter, old and long-neglected houses in Kyoto became lively and regained their charms once again.

Photo 2: Bamboo houses built by the late RW. Mangunwijaya, Kali Code river, Yogyakarta
b. Groups of Artists

Artists with similar ideas also prefer to work as a group on projects that range from art festivals, to the setting up of art galleries or independent art organizations. They do so because it is more sustainable to work as a group, easier to get funding, and more conducive to greater diversity.

For example, the Ruang Rupa Art Group\textsuperscript{10} in Jakarta focused its energy on art activities, promoting artists in residence, and conducting workshops as well as performance arts, art installations, and video art. They offered seminars throughout the country and also held student forums to showcase the students’ works, which were then published in an art journal called \textit{Karbon}.

The goal of the group was to provide opportunities for artists to interact and involve themselves in projects relating to urban issues. They would conduct research and field study first before drafting a proposal that would apply art to help make the city more attractive (an example was the creation of public arts congruent with community life). One example of their work was the creation of the community chess club through the arrangement of a space under a highway overpass, complete with tables, chairs, and beautiful murals. This was a good model of an art organization’s perspective of urban issues, which tried to fill up the space that the government could not access or had no interest to do so.

The Dora Theater Group\textsuperscript{11} in Tokyo also showed a strong interest in helping disadvantaged individuals such as the \textit{hikikomori} or individuals with social withdrawal syndromes. In Japan there are about 30 schools designed especially for the hikikomori, but there are only two schools that have integrated a theater program in their curricula. One of these is the Roukyou Wakamono Jiritsujuku, which offers a three-month residential program for hikikomori. The program’s activities put a lot of emphasis on communication such as eye contact, addressing people, interacting with body language, and articulation. Participants choose scripts of plays to practice their performance. The goal is to enable them to improve their communication skills and to return them to society.
Working as a group provides a better chance for sustainability than working alone, since one can rest when exhausted, while others continue with the job. And even if some of the artists may leave the group, others could still carry on their activities and their goals.

c. Artists and Networking

Artists, however, cannot do these activities on their own; every urban stakeholder must also lend a hand in the effort to create a living city. Thus, creative bureaucracy such as good governance is also essential. If each party fulfills its function with creativity and collaboration, any problematic issues that arise can be dealt with promptly.

For example, if an artist works alone without adequate knowledge about a city that is being renovated, unknowing errors are likely to happen. Artists who have tried to repair old houses without proper knowledge, e.g., coating wooden walls which inhibits temperature regulation, could unduly create a fire hazard. The bias towards a machiya’s being a high-risk fire hazard would be reinforced and people would be encouraged to build a new, Western-style house instead.12

Since the movement to preserve old houses must involve experts in the field, carpenter groups such as the Sakuchikumi or the Machiya Craftmen’s Group have pooled their resources to educate the public on the methods of maintaining such houses through published booklets on the subject. Another group dedicated to revitalizing the machiya, the Kyo-Machiya Saisei Kengi-kai group, likewise focuses its efforts on management, dealing with relevant legal issues and collecting data, etc., through collaborations with academics like Dr. Muneta Yoshifumi from the School of Architecture, Kyoto Prefectural University, and faculty members from other universities who are interested in the history of the houses and their owners. This joint search for information has helped reveal economic structures of inhabitants during different periods. For example, in a silk making community the structures of the weaver’s house would be different from those that belonged to an ironsmith. Other research projects have focused on architectural structures and experimented on the flammability of walls. The Kyo-Machiya Tomo-no-kai also helps educate people to live in the house with good taste and pleasure through creative activities such as flower and furniture arrangements, interior decoration with fabrics, etc. Some real estate agents (Fudosan in Japanese) also help to connect prospective buyers with homeowners who want to sell their houses.13 These four organizations have formed a network called Kyo-Machiya Net. They make a good example of how multilateral collaboration ensures thoroughness and the ability to deal with social issues on a broad scale.

Moreover, aware of the public interest on the issue, the Kyoto Municipality established the Machi-Zukuri Center, which functions as an office, a library, and a meeting venue for sharing and exchanging knowledge on the machiya wooden house. The municipality also offers financial support for the maintenance of these houses.14

Thus, one can see that to revitalize a city, cooperation from all sectors is essential; and only with knowledge, understanding of the city’s history, and aesthetic appreciation, could it become a living city for everyone.

Kawagoe City is renowned for its kuro or its fire-resistant storage house’s architectural style. The preservation of old structures here was not done on an individual basis, but as a community effort. A group called Kawagoe no Kai (Members of Kawagoe) was established in 1980 consisting of individuals dedicated to the preservation of old buildings. Their major efforts were to educate the public about conservation and create regulations for the construction of new buildings to make them fit in with the appearance of the old city, and not disruptive of the whole landscape. Despite the existence of regulations, the lack of legal authority enabled some people to ignore them and build many tall buildings. Community members continued to pressure the municipality to cooperate with the government sector, mainly the Machi-Zukuri Center that collaborated with local scholars and local residents from the other areas. The regulations for the conservation area were finally established in 1998 with the support of the local community. Soon after, Kawagoe received many awards for its work on the conservation of the city.
Another example of an important collaboration among individuals was the Yanaka Gakko (Yanaka School Group), which consisted of researchers in urban design from a number of universities. Led by Akiko Chihara, they worked together to renovate traditional houses and turn them into artist studios, ceramics shops, and souvenir shops selling local handicrafts. They also lived alongside local dwellers. They transformed a bathhouse into the Scai Art Gallery and an old storage house into a showroom for art works.

When a six-storey, luxury condominium was built in the area, the community protested and tried to find a solution. With support from many organizations, the community negotiated with the owner of the building and a new plan was proposed. Architects from the group offered to revise the design of the building by reducing its height that necessitated a minimum reduction in the number of rooms. The community, for its part, asked to use the ground floor for community activities through the addition of conference or seminar rooms and a community daycare center. The negotiations were concluded to everyone’s satisfaction. Some people who had protested the construction, including Chihara, ended up living in the building.

There have also been changes initiated by the city administrators at the policy level. For example, the Creative City Project of Yokohama emerged out of the plans to celebrate the city’s 150-year anniversary. One of the target areas was Kogane-Cho, which was commonly known as a red-light district. The municipality, with the cooperation of the academics, urban designers, the police, and the local community, tried to change the image of the area by eliminating prostitution and constructing two art galleries, Studio Hidone and Studio Kogane, under the railways. Shingo Yamano, a curator from Fukuoka who was invited to organize the activities for the anniversary, initiated the Kogane Bazaar, which was like a festival that took place at the same time as the Yokohama Triennale. In addition, urban designer Nobuharu Suzuki also organized the Kogane X-Lab to conduct activities related to the community. In the future, both activities were to be developed into a non-profit organization to promote sustainability and independence. That way, there would be no need to wait for government support for development to take place. This ten-year plan was expected to turn the area into a famous art space.
Creative Activities (software)

The idea of art as that which sustains beauty in a city should not be restricted to those gigantic sculptures in front of a strange looking building or a boring cubic structure. Art, in fact, can enliven a city in many ways, beyond simply creating beauty. Art activities, particularly those that are provocative, could challenge those in authority to make decisions and determine policies with a new and transformative perspective.

For example, in 2002, the Government of Central Java worked together with three universities to design the landscape around Borobudur and the entrance and exit areas for tourists. Jagad Java or Java World was initiated with the plan to build a three-storey building east of the temple that would function as a center for selling souvenirs, food, and drinks. However, a tall building of this size might appear obtrusive to the surrounding landscape and the villagers might not be able to afford to come in to do business, even with low rents' being charged. These possible scenarios convinced the community that the project might benefit outside investors more than it would, community members.

Sutanto, a composer, with support from the Lima Gunung community from the five mountains around Borobudur, along with academics, NGOs, artists, and various branches of media, has organized a protest rally encompassing the staging of a picket, to performing a Larung ritual by throwing an effigy of the Jagad Java building into the Progo River and drowning it with rocks. In the latter activity, small fish were released into the river followed by the meat of rats and wild boars. While the small fish tried to eat, the big fish would appear and snatched the food from them. The small fish represented the people while the big fish represented greedy politicians who exploited them.

Photo 7: Larung ritual, part of the protest for Jagad Java project, Borobudur, Indonesia
In early 2003, twenty-two NGOs jointly lodged a complaint to support the common villagers who were to be evicted from their old stalls and shops. The poet, Afrizal Malna, wrote in the complaint statement “The anger from the evicted people will turn into a fire burning every grain of rice that you eat”. Sitor Situmorang, another famous poet said, “Borobudur is a world masterpiece. Showing respect to the place is a reflection of our civilization; therefore, we Indonesians must protect it from such uncivilized commerce”.

In addition, young architects from The Forum of Indonesian Young Architects (AMI) jointly lodged a complaint with the government, saying that building construction for this project would cause architectural damage to the temple as a whole. They sent a letter to the UNESCO, asking the organization to conduct an inspection of the project because the site had been declared a World Heritage site in 1991. The group wanted to prevent the dominance of the business sector and the construction, which would affect the foundation of the temple.

On 22 January 2003, the governor and his staff set up a meeting under the banyan tree near the entrance to the Borobudur, where the protests took place. It was agreed that the art market building might be moved to a more appropriate site, or the construction cancelled altogether, until the surrounding communities approved of the construction.

This incident illustrated the point that many projects involving the building of a city in a top-down manner, without listening to the voices of the local people, but claiming consensus by hiring academics from various institutes, may not be credible after all. It is usually done without objectivity and in favor of certain parties. However, art activities could empower a community and act as their voice, allowing them to express their needs, challenge the government, and eventually force policy change. The power of art, therefore, could drive a consensus, especially for a project that the community sees as tantamount to building an ‘ugly’ city. Without the action launched on 22 January 2003, the community might still have to put up with a strange monster of a building near Borobudur today.

Another art activity that Sutanto Mendut encouraged the Lima Gunung community to initiate was the Festival Lima Gunung. The year 2009 marked the eighth time this festival was held with limited support from donations, prompting the host community to rely on its creativity. The challenge was to prepare decorations without having to spend or obtain materials from outside the community. The result was an entrance gate made from corn stalks, tomato plants, and chili. The streets were decorated with palm leaves weaved into intricate patterns and lanterns made from rice straws. The community joined hands to decorate the village and took the opportunity to clean the moats on the street sides. They made the village look more beautiful and ready to welcome visitors from the other mountains. Day and night there were performances by the people from many villages who came together to celebrate.
These art activities helped to make a living city because they encouraged the community to assume the role of owners of their space, with the freedom of expression and interaction. They raised the people’s excitement, pride, and love of their place and culture, and their desire to protect and create positive and appropriate goods for the community. Furthermore, such activities also changed the city’s image from agricultural to cultural, and stimulated tourism, thereby attracting more people to come and visit.

Another example is the Yanaka community which organized the Art-Link festival by opening the community and its homes to visitors, providing maps to tourists visiting various old houses during their walk, along with artistic creations by artists of all ages who had been local residents for a long time as well as the younger generation of artists who moved in later and now rent space to run their studios. Attractive coffee shops and galleries function as meeting places for local residents and newcomers, insiders and outsiders, and the older and the younger people. Activities in this community are thus dynamic and lively.

And if a city becomes a living city, it draws people who are like-minded to join similar activities, thereby stimulating the economy through investments in different sectors. New business opportunities result, employment rates rise, and activities in other non-arts spheres, e.g., educational activities, are induced.

However, such an opportunity could also be a double-edged sword. There are outsiders who are ready to take advantage of it by exploiting local resources without any thought of giving anything in return. They come and try to generate profits from the beautiful scenery, selling art and culture without appreciating their roots. They take advantage of labor by giving unfair wages. These opportunists may be from within the country or foreigners, who come in and suck out the local identity, leaving behind only a carcass of culture, and then leaving in droves to find another place that is fashionable.

Outsiders who benefit the city would be those who bring in new ideas to improve the existing products and services. They challenge the status quo and initiate a creative dialogue between the locals and themselves. These creative people participate in the city’s development by contributing software, i.e., creative activities, and hardware, i.e., creative space.

Creative Infrastructure (Hardware)

Creative space is an important element of a city. It is a place where people could meet, exchange ideas, learn from one another, and form networks. Space that functions as a neutral meeting place, such as a city centers in the city, could bring about a sense of shared public space which stimulates communication, interaction, connection, trade, and urban buzz. It provides diversity, possibilities, and potential for different cultures. It could provide an escape from the unpleasant noises of the city and offer quiet, relaxing places of beauty that stimulate the mind and the imagination. In practical terms, it could even provide wireless service for communication.

Such a space is important in the sense that it is the third space apart from the home and the office. It is essential for it to have a positive and creative atmosphere so as to avoid negative thoughts resulting from seeing ugly buildings that are massive, mindless, and lead to a reduction in job efficiency.

Public facilities

Public facilities should be both formal and informal meeting places. Some may stimulate the intellect, expanding an individual’s worldview from his or her work and family merely, to a wider expanse that includes adventure, novelty, and the unfamiliar. For example, the Setagaya Machi-zukuri Center (Setagaya Community Design Center) manages a townscape along with a large park with numerous big trees. The center invited various groups of people to plan and design many activities relating to the environment and biodiversity in the park, as well as in an eco village. The goal was to create a free spirit in the town through visions crafted together by community members. A sharing of space resulted which some now use as a place for nature study groups for children. Others use it to conduct workshops for various groups of people. The retired, elderly folk join the many activities as volunteers.

To encourage equal participation and the free exchange of opinions between people and the government enthusiastic creativity must be facilitated. To attract the youth groups, the center organized the One-Day Community Café event to which the residents were invited to discuss how they could make the prefecture special for their group. They also
provided an endowment from the trust funds for the groups that wanted to work for the community. As of the present, more than 200 groups have been granted such funds.

There are many such public places for creativity, for example, cafés, public squares, city centers, museums, cinemas, pubs, restaurants, theaters, libraries, etc., but because of the numerous business investments and many buildings that are inward-looking such as shopping malls that try to disguise themselves as creative space. Although such structures also provide small gardens, theaters and movie s, and coffee shops, they are not genuine creative spaces. Instead of stimulating communication and exchange this kind of self-contained spaces cause people to only turn to themselves.

A public space should focus on encouraging research and education, and on creating communication channels. For example, the **Indonesia Visual Arts Archives** (IVAA) is a digital clearing house for information on art festivals throughout Indonesia. It has a website for people to visit, search for information, and exchange ideas. The group has set up an art library and exhibition space, coffee shop, and art shop. These spaces, unlike libraries in educational institutions, function as informal educational institutions that help people relax rather than become anxious whenever they drop by in search of knowledge.

### Cultural facilities

Culture is a result of the attitudes, beliefs, and lifestyles that are integrate into a people’s identity to distinguish them from the rest. Awareness of one’s own culture helps guide a people in creating its own space, inclusive of the physical aspects such as roads, buildings, furniture, household appliances, etc., which reflect a people’s feelings about itself and its surroundings. For example, in Ubud, a cultural city in Bali, the signs in front of houses and along the side streets are small and made of natural materials like wood and stone. They seem to fit in with the local lifestyle and culture, are unobtrusive and not at all visually offensive. They are in fact quite artistic. They exemplify how people in every society throughout human history have expressed their creativity through their artworks.

Art is the heart of culture, but in modern times, industrial materials such as steel and plastic have replaced natural materials. Ease and comfort have caused humans to neglect beauty. Greed has caused humans to be more concerned about personal gain rather than collective profits.

It is thus important to re-introduce ideas about beauty to a city. Its residents should ask themselves collectively whether their city is still “beautiful” or “good”. It is true that both modern art and traditional art could equally create beauty for a city. The meeting of the two encourages negotiation for proportion of space, challenge, compromise, and evolvement, which in turn stimulate a city towards dynamic exchanges and release it from being frozen in the past.

Cultural facilities such as temples and religious institutions are expressions of a people’s cultural heritage passed down from generation to generation. Art museums and galleries are similarly public spaces that reflect the identity and pride of the local people, showing off their art works, both from the past and the present. They not only allow visitors to admire those artworks, but also provide them with the opportunity to raise new questions and feel that they are a part of the interpretation of the past and the creation of the future.

Furthermore, cultural spaces could also adapt themselves to accommodating a variety of activities, responding to those that affect human development, empower and enhance the capacity for personal creativity, improve skills in different areas, and facilitate collaboration across groups in society. An example of this is the **Setagaya Public Theatre** (SEPT), which is an art and cultural space for community service. Apart from being a theater, it features events that allow the Japanese artists and the audience to experience theater from other countries in Asia. These include many cross-cultural theater projects, for example, *Akaoni, The Island in Between*, and *Hotel Grand Asia*. Another part of the center also functions as a gallery that shows artworks and offers activities that educate the participants about people from other cultures. For example, an art exhibition from Mongolia has been put up in the center. There are meeting rooms for training workshops, such as cross-cultural workshops on Thai cooking, for example. There are four rehearsal rooms where theater workshops are conducted, for example, that of the Forum Theatre by British artists. In addition, other festivals have been mounted, among them street theater and art projects for the youth, under which artists conduct activities in local schools.
Another example of a government institution that facilitates creativity is the **Tokyo Metropolitan Arts Space**. A large building, it has many galleries, four theaters, conference rooms, study rooms, and relaxation areas. The community can rent space in the building for an inexpensive fee. Many creative activities have been organized here, such as the Mekong Art Project that invited international artists to come up with new ideas and dialogue with local artists.

Another way of creating cultural facility is to recycle old space into usable space, for example, renovating an old factory, a school, a rundown area, or an old historical building in order to create value for them. Architectural works that represent certain periods of history now suffer from considerable neglect but could be renovated to revitalize the spirit of cultural heritage once again.

In Japan, many school buildings are left unused because of the decrease in the cities’ young population. These buildings are put to good use by artists who turn them into art galleries, theater spaces, and offices, and rent them out at affordable fees that are lower than local rates.

The **Nishi-Sugamo Arts Factory**, an art organization, has turned a school into an office for four theater groups, as well as host for international performances and festivals. This school had been left unused for five years when the Japan Arts Network proposed the space for creative activities from the local office. In the beginning, the local municipality provided financial support for basic management expenses. But, later on, the four groups began to manage the place on their own, sharing expenses for utilities. They also earned some income from renting out the school gymnasium for film or television companies. They used the income derived thus for their monthly expenses.

For **Kogane Bazaar**, after prostitution was eliminated from the area, the city’s image changed. Over two hundred buildings that used to be brothels were rented out to artists so they could set up art studios, galleries, coffee shops, and souvenir shops, or set up outlets for art products.

Other examples of recycled old spaces were the **Yanaka Gakko** (Yanaka School), the **Kyo-Machiya Club**, and the **Kyo-Machiya Net** that were mentioned earlier. A pitfall that bears watching out for is the fact that although art and culture may bring about positive effects to a city, government’s preoccupation with buildings and facilities. Without any clear objectives or a long-term vision, or its prioritizing economic gains may destroy confidence in the government’s sincerity. For example, some buildings compromise artistic value for a shopping center and a parking lot, consequently, making many artists hesitant to be involved in the management of the place. The top-down decision once resulted in an abandoned building that was not maintained and thus constituted a waste of resources. Therefore, clear objectives are required for the creation of cultural facilities so that the art, culture, and development of a creative and beautiful city may be cultivated and sustained.

**Rethinking – Replanning – Reacting**

When talking about “city builders”, most people typically think about professionals related to creating an urban environment such as architects, surveyors, designers, urban planners, engineers, property developers, and city-related policymakers, meaning, politicians and government officials at different levels. These people alone may not possess the necessary vision nor have the best interest of everyone in the city for them to live happily together thereat.

Planning for building a good city or a living city requires the talent of people from different disciplines. Artists alone do not have a monopoly of creativity. Many people should involve themselves to create a balanced city that could best fulfill the needs of all groups.

This assertion does not mean that artists and other professionals could replace architects, engineers, planners, etc., but it proposes collaboration between formal and informal networks; between government, business, and the private sector. It suggests rethinking, replanning, and reacting to existing conditions, to create networks and a new vision for the city which is holistic and beautiful; has cultural roots and understands human needs, desires, and wishes. The new vision and network should respond to all members without neglecting certain groups such as the elderly, the children, the disabled, and the disadvantaged.
The city and its residents must raise questions about their roles and positions regionally, nationally, and globally. They must ask what their assets are and what the city can provide for its people and institutions. Changes and benefits must result from careful deliberation, planning, and action.

Everyone must collectively take responsibility for those roles because each one is part of the ‘living city’.

NOTES


2 From the author’s participation in Misako Ichimura’s activities from August 2008 to May 2009.

3 In 2005, the Shibuya municipality organized a public arts activity by inviting students from the local art universities to paint murals on the walls of the underground train tunnels where many homeless people lived. During the activity, the space was cleaned and the homeless disappeared. It was long after the project was completed before the homeless returned. Misako raised the question: For whom is a public arts activity? Is it for one group to appreciate and drive away another group?

While living in the tunnel, the homeless used cardboard boxes to cover themselves while they slept. One night a box was burned and caused the old man who owned it to become so depressed that he had to be hospitalized. The homeless group became fearful and moved out of the area. As Misako thought that the burning was a threat to force people out of the area, she tried to reclaim the space by setting up a lone cardboard box in the area. After passers-by kicked her box around, she decorated it and the areas around it with colorful stickers in the shape of a star. But the people left her box alone because it was beautiful. She stayed there alone for six months until the others felt that it was safe again and returned.

4 From the observations of the Forum Theater on the topic “harassment prevention” on Friday, 16 January 2009 by Setsu Hanasaki.

5 From the attendance in a seminar by the Community Design class at the Musashino University, Department of Visual Communication Design, on Friday, 14 November 2008, led by Setsu Hanasaki, who invited Ernesto Cloma from PETA (Philippines Educational Theater Association) to teach about reaching out to a community and producing a performance from the work. Students, who study design, architecture, animation, etc., must also learn community design. Setsu offered to teach this subject because she wanted to expand the students’ worldview for them to learn about the community outside the classroom. This activity involved visiting the disabled, the elderly, a daycare center, and a community garden that was initiated by a single elderly woman who was later joined by her neighbors. After returning from the trip, the students were asked to draw pictures of their impressions and paste these on the wall. Then, they broke up into small groups to present their work. The seminar lasted five days.

Yoshi Fajar Kresna Murti, interview by author, 26 June 2009 and 23 July 2009.

Samuel Indratma, interview by author, Yokjakarta Mural Forum (YMF), 26 June 2008.

Takeshi Kohari, interview by author, 23 April 2009.

9 The ‘eel bed’ row house was deliberately narrow on the street front to avoid having to pay high taxes; but it was elongated and stretched out toward the back, resembling an eel bed. The front was used as a shop and a living room, while the deeper rooms and the upstairs rooms were used as living space. Along the side of the house was a long walkway without a roof all the way to the back of the house, to allow the septic tank cleaners to pass and remove human excrement, when necessary. The space is also used as a kitchen.

Reza Afisina, interview by author, 5 June 2009.

From participating in the workshop for hikikomori at the Roukyou Wakamono Jiritsujuku School, 23-24 February 2009.

Sakuchikumi (the Kyoto Machiya Craftsmen’s Group) which is part of the Kyo-Machiya Net, interview by author, 25 October 2008.

Fusae Kojima, President of the KyoMachiya Net, interview by author, 26 October 2008.

From visiting the Machi-zukuri Center, 24 October 2008.


Sutanto Mendut, interview by author, 21 July 2009.

The mountains in the group of Lima Gunung are the five mountains surrounding Borobudur or “Panja Argo”, the Java – an Indonesian local dialect. They are Merapi, Merbabu, Andong, Sumbing, and Manoreh.

From participating in the activity Art-Link, 11 October 2009.

From participating in the seminar conducted by Asaki Hina from the Setagaya Machi-zukuri Center (Setagaya Community Design Center) at the Musashino University, 14 November 2008.
20 From being a facilitator in the workshop “Thai Cooking at the Setagaya Public Theater”, 6 January 2009.

21 From observing in the workshop “Playback Theater” by the facilitators from Gold Smith College, London, Department of Cross-Sectoral and Community Arts, Sunday and Monday, 14-15 December 2008.

22 From observing the street theater, Sunday, 19 October 2008.

23 The reason artists have the opportunity to run such community activities was that the Satagaya region had funds for the activities from the Education Department within the theater. Two hundred activities were allotted per year for the schoolchildren. There were 64 elementary schools and 35 secondary schools in the area, so the activities were dispersed across schools. Each Theater group had 40 performances in 20 schools upon the request of the schools that said they would subsidize production expenses. Although the cost was not too high, the schools were required to share in the responsibility of hiring artists, and not leaving this task to the government alone. From observing the activity on Tuesday, 19 October 2008.

24 Tagahaki Hiroshi, interview with the author, 14 February 2009.

25 From visiting the Nishi-Sugamo Arts Factory, 25 November 2009.

REFERENCES


Prologue

A man named Henry Spencer is hovering in space. His brain, represented by a rocky planet visible through his head, hovers behind him. Inside Henry’s brain is a man in the planet who pulls the levers that control Henry’s functions, which are coursed through his central nervous system. At one time, in a dreamy Japanese countryside setting, there is a boy and his mother staying together in a house with their faces heavily covered with white powder. The boy is falling in love with the married woman next door, and has asked her to elope with him, thus giving each other a chance to escape the oppressiveness of their village life. The woman agrees. At the moment of their escape, the narrative suddenly ends, and we are suddenly in a place in Tokyo where the director has been showing this film to friends and colleagues. On impulse, the boy in the dream-like world meets the director of the film and takes him to his place.

In October 2008, five days before my first shooting, I received the saddest phone call from my mother who told me that my father, who had been sick from liver cancer, had passed away peacefully. A few days before he died, I talked to him on the phone and he said, “Come back home after you are done with your film. Do your best. I am fine”. I didn’t even go back for his funeral. I decided to continue working on schedule, hoping that this film could cure me of my pain.

There was a naked man shivering in the lonely winter forest. But in another part of the forest where it was still the warm summer, an old filmmaker was walking around with a young girl who lost her father. A moment later, they heard a naked man crying reverberantly. They looked for him and the old filmmaker and young girl eventually found him. The filmmaker came over and hugged him, “It will be all right... It will be all right,” he said.

*A Suspended Moment* is a one-year film project funded by The Nippon Foundation, Asian Public Intellectual Fellowship program, in association with the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum. It was done in cooperation with the Fukuoka City Cultural and Arts Promotion Foundation, the Fukuoka Film Commission, Fukuoka City, Maebaru City, Nijo Town, Shima Town, the Itokoku Historical Museum, the Maebaru Civil Office, the Maebaru Police Office, the Itoshima Fishermen Association, the Japan Coast Guard, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Room#F Fukuoka Independent Filmmaker group, and 78 volunteers.
Globalization has made it possible for cultures to be mutually "translated". The translation I refer to here is not the simple substitution of words from one language to another, for this kind often misses not only words, but leaves some of them behind. In other words, a translation has elements of the untranslatable in it and leads to hybridity in the process. This is because each nation has its own particular culture and an effect of the untranslatable is a difference that shows how incomplete the translation process is, and the forms that the hybridity takes. Therefore, when we try to find a cultural identity which is pure, original, and authentic, we feel some ambivalence about where the "inside" and "outside" intersect, and recognize that tradition allows a partial identification somehow.

Although we tend to miss the actuality and misunderstand that we can translate something completely, the cultural translation of the outside and the inside is ultimately a hybrid of the two with a difference. As a result of the compromise or of negotiation with particularity, hybridity may be produced. There is a "subject of a difference that is the same but not quite" is the usual expression of disavowal.

It has been suggested that there has always been resistance tension and/or negotiation between globalism and localism. Although one might regard the local as a site of resistance against the global, paradoxically, globalization also leads to localism in nations. Indeed, maybe globalization does not homogenize the world, but rather provokes the particularity of the local. This means that the world-space of cultural production and representations is getting more globalized and at the same time more localized. This means that globalism (universalism) and localism (particularity) progress together and are intertwined with each other.

Aesthetic expression through cinema and moving images has always been a significant part of my life. As a Thai filmmaker, I live in a culture that places high value on constraints on emotional expression in the adult maturation process. But I have also experienced how foreign cultures, such as rock'n'roll music, fashion and, especially cinema, have infiltrated the Thai culture quietly. I became interested in cinema and film-making as a way of releasing emotional energy. I also see myself as perhaps a product of the integration of cultures since, for three years, I lived in the U.S. where I studied various genres of cinema but was particularly interested in avant-garde and surrealist films.

Since 2005, I have been practicing film and video art. In the beginning, I was the one looking for individuality, meaning, I tried to find a way to create my own style in film and video art. Then, in 2006, I went to see the modern opera The Ramakian: A Rak Opera by the Thai artist, Rirkrit Tirajanija at the Lincoln Center in New York. Since then, my attitude about making art changed. The opera is a depiction of the traditional episode of the epic tale Nang Loy (Floating Princess), which was based on the 2,000-year-old epic the Ramayana. This epic is considered South Asia's most important literary and oral text by many Thai filmmakers, visual artists, designers, rock and pop singers, and underground DJs.

For some inexplicable reason, whether one calls it "contemporary art" or not, Rak Opera is a perfect portrait of the present Thai culture. The performance did not just remake the traditional tale, but interpreted it using contemporary art forms. The performance has greatly influenced my ideas as an artist. It has led me to question assumptions like "Why do I need individuality?". It has also made me shift my attention towards the importance of "community" instead of "individuality", and of seeing myself as a "conceiver" rather than a "creator".

In 2007, I completed my video project We All Know Each Other, an experiment in collective storytelling which utilises investigation and dialogue about the nature of film as a medium. The open exploration of social issues through the sharing of personal stories was a main concept of the project. The project was filmed in Fukuoka, New York, and Dublin, and depicts interviewees introduced as friends or acquaintances. The process was repeated over and over such that the images and tales in the work all became linked. Through these encounters with people in each city, and through their tales and the links these created, the project explores people's lives, attractiveness, and various aspects of their respective cultures. We All Know Each Other was the first project that showed my identity shifts across "artist", "conceiver" and "observer".

In December 2007, while working on the project at the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin, Ireland, I met two interesting video artists: Mr. Okumura Yuki from Japan and Ms. Yahui Wang from Taiwan. At the outset, I framed my new video project as an interaction the two. After my conversations with Mr. Okumura and Ms. Wang, I broadened my perspective by asking the questions "Do artists really need the identity of
their works? If so, what is going to happen if I integrated their identities? Will my project acquire a new identity or identities, and will this/these be still pure?”. I subsequently produced a new work title, My Image Observes Your Image, if It is Possible to Observe It. I began this work by asking the permission of these two artists to duplicate their works (or identities) as well as styles and techniques, and, in so doing, creating a new work. The concept of my work was not answering the assumptive question, but emphasizing my question.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR KNOWLEDGE CREATION

The questions I ask in my study are “Why do I need individuality?” and “Do artists really need the identity of their works?”. If so, what is going to happen if I integrate the identities of two people? Will it become the bases of a new identity or identities, and will these remain pure? I intend to develop the project—an avant-garde and surrealist film based on these questions. It will be under the theme “changing identities and the social, historical, and cultural contexts of the API fellowships”.

Hypotheses

My project is based on my previous works, which I described in chapter one. It aims to refine these questions rather than seek answers.

A. Changing identities and their social, historical and cultural contexts.

"A suspended moment" was produced by using artistic methods to analyze the film structures of Eraserhead and Pastoral: To Die in the Country. I regard these two surrealist films as the most significant in the histories of the west and east combined, and recreated from it my own self narrative which, I hope would deepen our understanding of the term “hybridity”.

B. Avant-garde and surrealist film

This genre of the cinema is a subject that I am interested in. Surrealism sets out to discover the logic of the unconscious mind in the hope of discovering new and significant relations beneath the mundane surfaces of the all-too-well-organized world. The surrealists throw images together in a spontaneous and often unplanned manner, trusting the promptings of the unconscious to yield juxtapositions of obscure yet startling validity.

In August 2008, during the initial stage of my project, I researched on forms of Japanese film that would teach me about the golden Japanese avant-garde movement in the 1960s and the 1970s at the library of the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum. There I found many interesting Japanese masterpiece movies, not only by masters like Yasujiro Ozu, Nagisa Oshima and Akira Kurosawa, but also some unseen films by Toshio Matsumoto, Nobuhiro Kawanaka, Sakumi Hagiwara and the remarkable Terayama Shuji.

I learned of Mr. Terayama from watching special screenings of his films at the Duang-Kamon Film House, and reading about him in the Thai Film Community Magazine, before I came to Japan. Of all the directors whom I have just recently discovered, I paid more attention to Mr. Terayama. I saw several of his short experimental films as well. Emperor Tomato Ketchup is one of his most challenging works. Lacking a conventional narrative, the film’s gritty, often overexposed imagery resembles a home movie gone horribly wrong. Set in Japan in which children have mysteriously gained control, its revolutionary gaze is as much sexual as it is political. But I also found another of his films that reminded me of Western surrealist films. This was the introspective Pastoral: To Die in the Country, which is a personal exorcism of his past, and is considered by many to be his masterpiece.

After I watched Pastoral: To Die in the Country, I remembered another masterpiece—the American surrealist film Eraserhead by David Lynch.

Discussion on the Two Films

Film Resource

Eraserhead, Year 1976
Country of production: USA
Director: David Lynch

Synopsis: Henry Spencer is a man living in an unnamed industrial wasteland. Upon learning that a past romance has resulted in an impending pregnancy, Henry agrees to wed the mother-to-be, Mary, and moves her into his tiny, squalid flat. Their baby is born hideously mutated—a strange, reptilian creature whose piercing cries never cease. Mary soon flees in horror and disgust, leaving Henry alone with the child. Henry subsequently falls prey to the seduction of a girl across the hall. An intensely visceral nightmare, Eraserhead marches to the beat of its own slow, surreal
rhythm: Henry’s world is a cancerous dreamscape, a place where sins manifest themselves as bizarre creatures and worlds exist within worlds.

**Pastoral: To Die in the Country**, Year 1974
Original Title: Den-en ni shisu
Country of production: Japan
Director: Terayama Shuji

Synopsis: The film is about a young Terayama, who appears with a white face alongside his mother. He has to deal with his sexual hang-ups due to the onset of puberty. In the process, he slowly drifts away from his clinging mother. The village which he lives in is the most delightful sight in the film. There are strange denizens who live in it, the memorable of which is the circus troupe, shown in a spectral, prism filter tone, to add life to their profession. Close to the middle of the film, Terayama has an actor playing himself, interrupting the film and saying that the rest hasn’t been edited. But he soon enters the film he is shooting again, and interacts with his former self. There is also an effort to reconcile the individual with the collective, and the old to the new Japan, through a parade of emblematic images: gossiping women wearing sinister eye patches; an outcast, simple-minded woman who drowns her own baby and later returns as a sophisticated prostitute; and a circus fat lady who yearns to have her fake body inflated by a dwarf. Curious and astounding scenes abound, and all contribute to an overwhelming experience with a creative mind interrogating itself.

I watched both films many times. The most remarkable statement from Mr. Terayama’s film was the following, uttered by one character “If we wish to free ourselves, wipe out the history of humanity inside of us and the history of society around us; we must begin by getting rid of our personal memories”. Perhaps, either because of his confusion with regard to time (he was born in a train and did not even know the exact time of his birth), or because of a deep crack in his memory, he has made this film a tool for further introspection of one’s inner self. Mr. Lynch’s *Eraserhead*, on the other hand, helped him overcome his own fears of fatherhood.

Filmmaking as Psychotherapy

I will never forget the phone call I received on 1 October 2008, while shooting for a film project with the curators of the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum. In that call, my mother told me that she had some bad news—my father who was in a coma had passed away. I was speechless. My family had kept his sickness from me and I only knew about my father’s cancer a few days before he was gone. I went back to my apartment in Fukuoka, feeling distracted and withdrawn, the impact of my father’s untimely death unsettling me. I felt so depressed. It was hard to accept this loss. The last time I had talked to my father was on the phone, when I learned that he was admitted to the hospital. I wanted to go to see him but all he said was, “Come back home after you are done with your film. Do your best shooting. I am fine”.

A short time later, I began to write an extra scene for my film. In the screenplay I added: “There was a girl, Hana-chan, who lost her father somewhere in the forest, and who was found by the mysterious filmmaker, Harada-san, who enjoys filming among the trees. He told her to come with him...”. I didn’t go back to my home in Thailand for the funeral, but continued working on schedule.

The day of shooting was also the first shooting day of the project, which I normally enjoyed doing the most in the past. Although the scene contained sad incidents and story lines, I also felt it to be uplifting. As I reacted emotionally to the film, I felt the burden in my heart being lifted up. I began feeling hopeful about life for the first time since the loss of my father.

But, looking back, I cannot be sure why my depression lifted. Perhaps, it was because I was doing a film that I was dedicating to my father; or perhaps, because all of the crew expressed their sympathy to me. Perhaps, still, my depression abated because I could see my own self-reflected in the character of the film. Whatever the reasons, I came away with the belief that something about the making of this film helped me cope with the death of my father.

CHAPTER THREE: THE MAKING OF A SUSPENDED MOMENT

On 1 July 2008, I arrived at the Fukuoka International Airport. Mr. Matsuura Jin, the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum curator and Ms. Ishimatsu Noriko, both of whom I had worked with together in 2007, came to pick me up at the airport. My most challenging task had begun.

I immediately started settling down in my new environment, with the kind help of the curators. Ms.
Kamachi Masae was especially helpful in finding me an apartment, in opening a bank account, and getting me a cell phone service. As my host institution, the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum also provided me a nice private studio and allowed me access to its facilities.

The Beginning: Early Concept.

July-August 2008

During the meeting with the curator of the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Mr. Matsuura Jin, and with Ms. Kamachi Masae, Mr. Nakao Tomomichi and Ms. Ishimatsu Noriko, we discussed the concept and possibility of the project. After doing my research on Mr. Terayama Shuji, I had intended to make a film using the structure of his work, *Video Letter* (1983). The film follows an exchange of video letters that took place between Shuji Terayama and Shuntaro Tanikawa in the months preceding the former’s death. It can be thought of as a home video produced by two preeminent poets and inter-laid with highly abstract philosophizing, slightly aberrant behavior, and occasionally flamboyant visuals. I planned to make a short film lasting approximately 15 minutes, along with an introduction of the project and myself. After I was done shooting, I planned to send the film in a 16mm film camera that loaded 100 feet of film (duration 2.45 minutes) to some filmmakers to develop or to continue the story, by making their own corresponding film (again with a film-length limit of 100-feet). I wanted to use cinema as a tool for my research about social issues through the perspective of different filmmakers.

The first film message’s story

August 2008

Synopsis: In 2008, Henry Spencer, a 60-year old man, who had been blind for a long time, lives in a remote forest. In the opening scene, he is calling a fortuneteller hotline center and a young girl at the other end of the line, is telling him precise things about his past. She tells him that he will be able to see again this year, and Spence believes her. With this happy news, all his memories of the past gradually return to him and he starts a long journey with his camera, heading to some place. Along the way, he passes through different landscapes across the mountain.

Then, somewhere in the forest, we see him pointing his camera from his eye. In the journey, his eyes are cured and he walks through the jungle. That forest is called “Cinema forest” and the core message of the film was "What is Henry Spencer going to see in the cinema forest from the perspective of a filmmaker?"

Seeking the connection

August-September 2008

Seeking the Connection is the most difficult project in my experience, given that I worked on it in a foreign country. A film production needs people to work together. I met regularly with the curators, looked for a film crew, actor/actress and locations with them, and met with a fellow filmmaker who would agree to be co-responder for the project. Because of the limited budget, we also were forced to find people who could do the work as volunteers.

The curators introduced me to Room#F, a local independent filmmaker group founded in 2007 and based in Fukuoka. That was the first time I met Mr. Nishitani Kaoru, The leader of the group, who later became a producer of the project. Once Mr. Nishitani had set up the meeting with all of Room#F's members I began to visualize the project. The curators, the Room#F group, and I began preparing for pre-production and the project seemed to move forward, although we still needed a lot of people, equipment, etc., include the following:

- A project coordinator who could be my interpreter and main contact person.
- Talents: the screenplay needed two main characters, namely, someone to play Henry Spencer and the 25-year old woman who would play the mysterious fortuneteller.
- Camera and sound equipment.
- Lighting equipment and technician.
- Three different locations: a forest, a house in the mountain, and a fortuneteller’s office.
- Transportation for the equipment and crew.

At the start of September, I hired a coordinator, Ms. Yamaki Kei, who was introduced by the museum as soon as we arranged for casting. The museum cooperated with the Fukuoka City Cultural and Arts Promotion Foundation in finding the cast for the project. I got four actresses to audition for the part of the fortuneteller and chose Ms. Arisa Nasu, a cast
member of a local theater play. The museum also introduced me to a well-known butoh dancer, Mr. Nobuo Harada.

**Encounter with Butoh**  
*September 2008*

Given my interest in avant-garde cinema, I couldn’t possibly ignore a unique Japanese dance called butoh. After I had met and talked with Mr. Nobuo Harada, the Butoh Seiryukai Dance group founder, I felt happy that my project somehow could connect with a part of the Japanese avant-garde movement.

**Location Hunting**  
*September 2008*

I intentionally wanted the film to take place in a natural mountain and was lucky to learn that the former director of the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Mr. Yanagi Yoshihiro, was a great hiker. We went hiking together in the mountains of Abarayama, Homanyama, and Tomboyama. We chose Abarayama as the best location for filming because of its convenience and because it was simply beautiful. I sent a letter to the citizen’s office of the Forest of Fukuoka to ask their permission. We then found the other locations: one was the house of a friend of Mr. Yanagi in Maebaru City and at the Ajibi Hall of the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum.

**Equipment**  
*September 2008*

I had high expectations that the final film would be shown in a movie theater or film festival. The production needed high-quality equipment. I owned a high-quality camera and accessories so I sent for my camera equipment (a big package, approximately 70 kilograms) from Thailand. But I still needed sound and lighting equipment. Ms. Yamaki, the project coordinator, found AND Films, a professional lighting company, and together we contacted them. We explained to them that our film was a non-commercial movie and they gave us a special discount. The museum contacted the Kyushu Visual Arts College’s Department of Film and Video for the sound equipment and technical video recorder. The College kindly provided these equipment for the entire duration of the production. It also asked Mr. Kazuhiro Shibuya, an alumnus, to join as sound recorder.

**Scheduling**  
*September 2008*

In the third week of September, we had the final meeting for the filming and decided to shoot the film on the weekend because it was more convenient for all participants. The shooting was scheduled on 4 October at Abarayam, 5 October at Maebaru City, 8 and 12 October at Ajibi Hall.

**The Workshop with Room#F**  
*September 2008*

There were 10 participants in the 2 day-workshop at the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum and on location in Tenjin. The objective of the workshop was to understand teamwork, the use of the equipment, and basic filmmaking techniques. As workshop conductor, I explained about the technical equipment and fundamental filmmaking, and set up the team for shooting.

**Additional scenes**  
*October 2008*

After the sad news about my father, I wrote an additional scene about a young girl playing hide-and-seek with her father. She walks around to look for her father who is hiding in the forest. I quickly drew the storyboard and intentionally made this the opening scene of the movie. I composed the frame of the opening scene similar to Terayama’s *Pastoral: To Die in the Country*. The scene implied that the forest behind the girl was a cemetery where her father was buried (*In Pastoral: To Die in the Country*, the girl plays hide and seek in the cemetery). I went to the museum with the additional script and met with the crew. I explained the reason why I wanted to have this additional scene. I said I understood how hard it was to find a girl actress in a few days. But my crew was sympathetic, and we found an actress—the daughter of one of the Room#F member the next day.

**Shooting Day**  
*October 2008*

An assembly of the 25 people crew was on hand at 7 o’clock in the morning at the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum (our production base). There were 12 people
from Room#F, 3 curators, 1 project coordinator, 3 technicians from AND Films, 2 actors, 3 volunteers, and I. We then headed to the location and it took us 45 minutes to reach Abarayama. Everyone was excited on the first shooting day, and Ms. Kamachi and Ms. Yamaki prepared food and drinks for the crew.

We completed 32 shots in one day (normally a commercial film would shoot 20 shots a day). It was the most challenging task I had done so far, I said that to my crew. Once we started filming, everyone concentrated on his or her own duties. Those four shooting days in the first period were very amazing and accomplished all the targeted shots. Everyone seemed to enjoy the shooting, and I heard someone among the crew say, “We’re making the film and also making a friend”, I believe so.

**Editing**

*October-November 2008*

After the shooting, I carefully checked all the footages that we shot. I found some technical mistakes, but most of them were fantastic. I then began transferring all the materials to my editing system, my Power Mac G5 dual processor, computer and Finalcut Pro Studio Pro 2, with a 500GB external storage.

**First screening for the crew**

*December 2008*

I spent 5 weeks editing and sound mixing. The first screening was held at the Ajibi Hall with about 40 people in attendance. I had shown two versions of the film: the first one ran for 22 minutes and the second for 10 minutes. The reason that I showed two versions was that I wanted to hear feedback on the film. I also thought our team wanted to see the entire production. I personally preferred the 10-minute version, where I deleted the sequence between Henry Spencer and fortuneteller. Only Mr. Nobuo Harada agreed with me.

**Failure in finding the filmmaker**

*December 2008*

The curators now began to contact to the filmmaker who was to be the co-responder for the project. I also tried to find someone through the help of Ms. Pimpaka Towaree, a well-known Thai director, who had worked and therefore had connections in Japan. I likewise got in touch with some organizations and, directly, with some filmmakers themselves. But time, distance, budget, and communications limitations, plus problems concerning film copyrights became problems. I discussed these issues and we decided to change the plan and structure of the project.

**A new script**

*January 2009*

I revised the entire project after that December meeting. I now focused on the concept which I described in Chapter Two, with the help of resource persons who were available at that moment. But I decided to write the continuing script for the whole film by myself.

*A Suspended Moment’s* synopsis: A mysterious, unnamed filmmaker is shooting footage of the limpid blue sky and lush green foliage in a steamy, summer forest of dappled chiaroscuro light. His camera comes upon a little girl, Hana, who was all alone and crying. He pauses, and then bids her come with him.

A tormented young man is running wildly—distraught, freezing, and shivering violently in a dream-like winter forest of barren trees. He cries out in his pain and loneliness, finally collapsing to the ground in suffering.

Timid, young Shin, drowsy and withdrawn, is on a scenic car journey along a beautiful but desolate Japanese country road. His battered and beaten-down, disheveled and unkempt father, Kenji, is driving, while drinking from a bottle of whiskey. Short-tempered and angry, he stops to pick up two hitchhikers.

Rob is a hideously pockmarked young American boy, and his Japanese girlfriend, Mieko, is heavily made up in white powder. Shin is afraid of the strange couple, but gradually becomes intrigued, and finally became very attached to them by the time they said goodbye at a deserted fishing village pier, where Kenji’s trawler is docked.

Shin and Kenji board the ship for a destination only known to Kenji. But they eventually find out that the engine had broken down, and decided to stay the night on deck. After watching the sun go down over the horizon, Shin falls asleep peacefully. Kenji, lying down next to him, is hugging him tenderly. Shin wakes, now unafraid and angelic, but this would be the last time he
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will see his father. In the morning, Kenji has disappeared, and their journey ends in the sea.

A small boat approaches. On it is Aiko, a sad and grieving. She ties up her boat alongside Kenji’s and scatters ashes from a urn into the sea.

The filmmaker and Hana walk out of the summer forest, into the winter forest. There they discover the cold and suffering young man. The filmmaker wraps his arms tightly around him to warm his naked body. Only this warmth can save his life.

International vs. local actor
February 2009

With the new script, we changed the casting once again, contacting the Fukuoka City Cultural and Arts Promotion Foundation, the local theater play group, and the local talent agency. We even post it on the website and asked friends for recommendations.

After six weeks of looking, we finally found all actors for the main cast:

Nobuo Harada, the Butoh dancer, played the mysterious filmmaker
Ken Westmoreland, a half-American, half-Japanese, played Kenji
Ritsuko Oda, owner of Art space BAKU, played Aiko
Hana Furukawa, the daughter of a Room#F member, played Hana
Robert Morgan, an Englishman, played Rob
Arisa Nasu, of the local theater, played Mieko
Jan Oda, an American, played Aiko’s friend
Yanagi Yoshihiro, the former director of the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, played Aiko’s friend
Oda Kenta Frank, half-Japanese, half-American, played Shin
Kenjirou Sakata, artist, played the role of an artist

Paper work for seeking permission
February-March 2009

As we did not have any location manager for this production, as independent filmmakers, we needed to learn how to work in every position possible. Mr. Nishitani Kaoru, the film researcher who had become the producer of the film, and I drove a car around in search of locations. We went to many sites in Maebaru, Nijyo, Shima, Zuibaiji, and Ito. Initially, we chose locations suitable for the story and discussed how we could access the location. Mr. Nishitani prepared the standard application document and received official permission for the filming from the following offices: the Maebaru City, Nijyo Town, Shima Town, Zuibaiji Yamano Ie, the Itoshima Fishermen’s Association, the Maebaru Police Office, the Maebaru Civil Office, the Itokoku Historical Museum, the Japan Coast Guard, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, the Forest of Fukuoka Citizen, Fukuoka City, and the residents in the location.

Shooting
February-May 2009

We started to shoot on the following dates and at the following places:
22 February, 7:00a. m. – 6:00p. m., Maebaru city
1 March, 7:00a. m. – 6:00p. m., Zuibaiji Yamano Ie
11-12 April, 7:00a. m. – 11:00p. m., Nijo Town
26 April, 7:00a. m. – 6:00p. m., Fukuoka City
3 May, 9:00a. m. – 6:00p. m., Fukuoka City

We completed the shooting in six days, and although there were difficult moments (such as shooting in the rain, cold weather or even on the boat in the ocean), we were able to accomplish a lot.

The first rough cut released only for the crew and the cast
June 2009

The footages that we shot totaled more than 6 hours. The crew and I sat together to go over every single minute of the film that we had done together for 10 months. We talked about how hard it was when we shot each shot. I did the first rough cut: a 70-minute version for screening on 22 June at the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum and a 10-minute trailer version for the people in Nijyo, Maebaru, and Ito towns at the Itokoku Historical Museum on 29 June. But because these were incomplete versions, we insisted that the screening would be for the crew and the Actors only. There were about 80 in the audience. We all sat in a dark room, watching the film that we had done together.

The Work of the 2008/2009 API Fellows
Distribution and Promotion

Our next objective was to be able to distribute and promote the film to all possible. The distribution and promotion plans comprised the following: conventional film screening.

The project would look for regular venues, international film festivals, and film exhibitions to join. We also planned to make the film available to schools, the Internet and the community.

NOTE

Appendix I

Workshop Schedule

The Eighth Workshop of API Fellowships Program
23-27 November 2009, Osaka, Japan

Day 1, Monday, 23 November 2009

1700-1800  Registration for Opening Ceremony and Photo Sessions
1800-        Opening Ceremony and Dinner
              Welcome Remarks:
              Surichai Wun’Gaeo, Program Director of API Coordinating Institution

              Welcome Speech:
              Yohei Sasakawa, Chairman of The Nippon Foundation

              Introduction of the Keynote Speaker:
              Koji Tanaka, Director of API Partner Institution in Japan

              Keynote Address:
              Yoneo Ishii, Director-General, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records

              Dinner Toast:
              Kosuke Mizuno, Director of Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

Day 2, Tuesday, 24 November 2009

0830-1020  Workshop Overview and Introduction of Participants
            Chair: Tatsuya Tanami, Executive Director of The Nippon Foundation
            The API Vision: Tatsuya Tanami & Koji Tanaka
            Overview of the Workshop: Patricio N. Abinales, Workshop Director
            Self-Introduction of Workshop Participants

1020-1040  Coffee Break
1040-1310  Panel I: Economics in Flux
            Chair: Tham Siew Yean
            Discussant: Koji Tanaka

1310-1430  Lunch
1430-1720  Panel II: Lives at the Margins
            Chair: Fr. Jose Cruz, S.J.
            Discussant: Masaaki Okamoto

1830-        Dinner
Day 3, Wednesday, 25 November 2009

0830-1120 Panel III: People’s Body and Health  
Chair: Yoko Hayami  
Discussant: Tan Pek Leng  
1120-1300 Lunch  
1300-1610 Panel IV: Understanding and Reforming Power  
Chair: Kboo Boo Teik  
Discussant: Dicky Sofjan  
1830- Dinner

Day 4, Thursday, 26 November 2009

0830-1140 Panel V: Cultural Shifts  
Chair: Tatsuki Kataoka  
Discussant: Sunait Chutintaranond  
1140-1300 Lunch  
1300-1530 Panel VI: Urban Landscapes  
Chair: Taufik Abdullah  
Discussant: Danilo Francisco M. Reyes  
1530-1730 Concluding Panel: Reflections and Applications  
Chair: Tatsuya Tanami  
Synthesis of Workshop: Patricio N. Abinales  
Closing Remarks: Koji Tanaka  
18:30- Farewell Dinner and Cultural Night (Noh performance)

Day 5, Friday, 27 November 2009

All day Field Trip
Appendix II

Workshop Participants

The Eighth Workshop of API Fellowships Program
23-27 November 2009, Osaka, Japan
(Information at the time of participation)

**FELLOWS**

**INDONESIA**

ANDI FAISAI BAKTI, Professor and Researcher, Department of Islamic Communication, Faculty of Dakwa and Communication, State Islamic University

EKONINGTYAS MARGU WARDANI, Researcher, Center for Asia and Pacific Studies, Gadjah Mada University

NUR INDRAWATY LIPOETO, Lecturer, Department of Nutrition, Faculty of Medicine, Andalas University

SEMIARTO AJI PURWANTO, Lecturer, Department of Anthropology, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Indonesia

SURIBIDARI, Researcher, Research Centre for Regional Resources, Indonesian Institute of Sciences

YONARIZA, Executive Secretary and Research Associate, Center for Irrigation, Land and Water Resources and Development Studies, Andalas University

**JAPAN**

HIROKO AIHARA, Journalist, *The Fukushima Minyu Shim bun*

SHIGEAKI IWAI, Independent Artist

TOMONARI NISHIKAWA, Artists and Film Curator; Visiting Artist, Cinema Department, State University of New York, Binghamton

TSUKASA IGA, Doctoral Course Student, Graduate School of International Cooperation Studies (G6), Kobe University

**MALAYSIA**

MOHD. ZARIAT BIN ABDUL RANI, Lecturer, Department of Malay Studies, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia

SHANTHI THAMBIAH, Lecturer, Gender Studies Programme, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Malaya

TAN SOOI BENG, Professor, School of Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia

TOH KIN WOON, State Minister, State Government of Penang, Malaysia
PHILIPPINES

CRISTINA P. LIM, Director, Professor and Researcher, Ateneo Social Science Research Center, Ateneo de Naga University

JONAS BAES, Chairman, Composition and Theory Department, College of Music, University of the Philippines

JOSE ATANACIO LUBATON ESTUAR, Operations Manager, F.R. Estuar and Associates Development and Management Co., Inc. (FREA, Inc.); President and CEO, Eastern Twinstars Foundation (ETSF)

RUFA CAGOCO-GUIAM, Associate Professor II, Graduate School; Director, Center for Peace and Development Studies, Mindanao State University

THAILAND

KARNT THASSANAPHAK, Freelance Writer and Artist

NARUMOL THAMMAPRUKSA, Theatre Artist

PICHET MAOLANOND, Chairman, Thai Judicialization & Social Health Institute

PHUTTIPHONG AROONPHENG, Independent Filmmaker and Video Artist

UKRIST PATHMANAND, Associate Director, Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University

YUWadee Silapakit, Freelance Volunteer Counselor for Thai Women Living in Japan

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

YONEO ISHII, Director-General, Japan Center for Asian Historical Records

WORKSHOP DIRECTOR

PATRICIO N. ABINALES, Professor, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

KYOTO UNIVERSITY

KOSUKE MIZUNO, Director, Center for Southeast Asian Studies

SESSION CONTRIBUTORS

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Dicky Sofjan, Consultant/Reviewer, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); and Project Manager, API Regional Project (Indonesia Fellow Year 2007-2008)

Jose Cruz, S. J., Dean, School of Social Sciences, Loyola Schools, Ateneo de Manila University (Member of International Selection Committee)
Khoo Boo Teik, Executive Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Developing Economies

KOJI TANAKA, Director, Center for Integrated Area Studies, Kyoto University
(Member of International Selection Committee)

MASAAKI OKAMOTO, Associate Professor, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

SUNAIT CHUTINTARANOND, Director, Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University

TAN PEK LENG, Independent Researcher, Consultant, and Writer
(Malaysia Senior Fellow Year 2003–2004)

THAM SIEW YEAN, Director, Institute of Malaysia and International Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

TATSUKI KATAOKA, Associate Professor, Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University

TAUFIK ABDULLAH, Chairman, Social Science Commission, Indonesian Academy of Science
(Member of International Selection Committee)

YOKO HAYAMI, Professor, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

THE NIPPON FOUNDATION

YOHEI SASAKAWA, Chairman

TATSUYA TANAMI, Executive Director
(Member of International Selection Committee)

MICHIKO TAKI, Chief Manager, International Program Department

SHOTA NAKAYASU, Project Coordinator, International Program Department

SONOKO KINOSHITA, Secretary

KANAE HIRANO, Interpreter

PROGRAM COORDINATORS

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AKIKO KUWAJIMA, Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University (also for CI)

PAPPORTEURS

MARIAN CHUA

CERRY AMOR YAP
Appendix III

Abstracts of Papers

Panel 1: Economics in Flux

Explorations in Financial Services Delivery Innovations for Marginalized Populations and Frontier Areas: Insights from Malaysia

Jose Atanacio L. Estuar, MTM

Financial systems often fail economically-challenged and marginalized sectors. Access barriers to Financial services such as savings, social insurance and credit include high transaction, social and opportunity costs as well as social exclusion. Informal and formal microfinance institutions and approaches have emerged to deliver much needed services to sectors traditionally excluded from the formal financial system. This paper focuses on the innovations or new ways, tools and strategies employed by service providers to reach more marginalized clients, develop new financial products and create sustainable service delivery institutions. Insights are gathered from service providers in Malaysia on initiatives that reach the economically challenged populations and the indigenous people. The reflections will review the innovations by service providers as they continuously face the challenge of financial inclusion for all.

The Effects of the Logging Ban in Thailand’s Natural Forests on Timber Tree Domestication

Yonariza

The logging ban in effect in Thailand’s natural forests is perceived to be a way of preserving the remaining forest. However, this policy has also caused a serious timber shortage since it does not take into consideration the country’s timber needs. This paper examines the effects of the logging ban on timber tree domestication, and analyzes the factors behind this process. It then identifies the organizations and institutions behind timber tree domestication; and, finally, discusses the implications of timber tree domestication as a response to the logging ban in the natural forests in Southeast Asia. Thailand was chosen as a case study since the kingdom country was the first in Asia to adopt a logging ban policy. The findings suggest that the logging ban triggered timber tree domestication outside forest areas. Government, however, continues to regulate indigenous timber tree domestication to prevent illegal logging. Unfortunately, this bureaucratic regulation, to some extent, discourages timber tree domestication. These findings have far-reaching implications on timber tree domestication in Southeast Asia, where plenty of planting materials, as well as land, are still available.

Urban Agriculture in a Developing Country: The Experience of the Philippines’ Urban Agriculture Programs

Semiarto Aji Purwanto

The Philippines offers examples of how urban agriculture has been developed into a national program. It has had cases where the central government, the local government units, a university, NGOs, and the Church plan, establish, and propagate the idea of urban agriculture among the urban populace. The objectives may vary in nature. While most programs aim to sincerely enhance the people’s welfare, there are those geared to scientific research and those that may have political undertones. This paper will describe how urban agriculture programs in the Philippines have been carried out by many agencies. My observations for nearly a year will show you the
reasons behind the program initiated by government agencies, and those by a university, an NGO and the local community, as well as their strategies, implementation and future.

**Coping with Crises: The Survival Strategies of the Terengganu and the Kelantan Family Weaving Businesses (1930s-2000s)**

*Surihidari*

The characterization of Malay weaving vis-à-vis the manufacturing process has rather been skewed given the established notion that the evolution of Malay economic history followed a straight path or moved from simple production systems to the higher levels of economic differentiation. But what the study of the history of the weaving business during a crisis revealed defies the linear scheme. The survival strategies of the weaving businesses in Kelantan and Terengganu, Malaysia responded well to the crises and the dramatic changes around them over a period of time. They highlighted the relationship of the evolution of the material culture in keeping with national and global development. Further, even as the development planners did not include the handloom business in the long-term policies for industrialization, this is understandable given that, on the surface, there are no links between the handicraft weaving sector and other textile subsectors, as the handloom business is thought to be but a small subsector of the entire textile industry. Nevertheless, even if the governments’ policy decisions were not generally made to aid the smaller subsectors, the family weaving businesses in Kelantan and Terengganu managed to cope with and survive the crisis.

**Panel 2: Lives at the Margins**

**From Pain to Power? A Women’s Agency Promoting Social Protection and Gender Equality in Japan, Thailand, and Malaysia**

*Rufa Cagao-Guiam*

For some time now, women, especially in impoverished Asian countries where there are also active armed conflicts, have been portrayed as victims, and as beneficiaries or receivers of the “benefits” of development assistance. Their portrayal, as such have largely contributed to the popular perceptions that their capacities are limited and that, for the most part, they are helpless and hapless individuals needing constant assistance and support.

But as this paper will argue, women themselves have begun taking the initiative to push past their marginal status to initiate changes in society. Their initiatives may not be always successful, as seen in the most rigidly structured hierarchical societies like Japan and Malaysia. In both countries, social norms espousing the women’s acquiescence to national policies and laws that hamper their sense of social protection and initiatives to achieve parity with men, actually persist. In Thailand, on the other hand, while women play prominent roles in almost all aspects of social and political life, they nonetheless have to contend with male-dominated discourses in both the private and public spheres.

Despite differences in the way women navigate across the male-dominated, hierarchical structures, the three countries do manifest similarities. These are evident in the yawning gap between formulating legislations to promote social protection and gender equality, vis-à-vis their implementation. Finally, while women can indeed transcend the pain of occupying subordinate positions in society, this agency still remains a potential that needs to be claimed and reclaimed to attain a more equitable world.
Islamic Religious Learning Groups and Civil Society: How Do Muslims Contribute to Civil Society in Japan and the Philippines?

Andi Faisal Bakti

With the existing social policy implemented in Japan and the Philippines, particularly regarding the Muslim minority and the struggle of its members to exercise their rights to religious belief, economic activities, and education, numerous *dakwah* movements have emerged, as part of the Muslim world’s network movements. These movements concentrate their endeavors on increasing the understanding of Islamic teachings amongst the Muslim communities in the urban areas. Some of these movements are commonly known as *dakwah* groups. The research questions I will try to answer are: How do the learning groups of Moro people in Marawi City and the Japanese Muslims in Tokyo contribute to civil society? In other words, how do their activities reflect the public, state, economic, and private spheres of civil society in both cities? It is not uncommon for individuals to belong to more than one religious learning group, each group having specific characteristics and objectives. Some of these groups are established as formal associations, with a charter. However, many others, although well anchored in the community, do not have a formal organizational structure or legal foundation. Similarly, the means by which goals are achieved differ greatly among the groups. These groups, however, fall into two major categories, divided along social lines in these highly stratified societies (both in Marawi City, Philippines, and in Tokyo, Japan): one is the category of intellectual, middle-class discussion groups; and the other is that of learning or popular groups.

Women in the Fishery Sector in Asia

Cristina P. Lim

This study portrays the life situation of marginalized women in the fisheries sector in Asia and their quest for recognition and better access to opportunities that would allow them to pursue their needs and interests. Using focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and participant observation, this study attempted to understand the situation of the women in the fisheries of Yahataura in Japan, Thung Maha in Thailand, and Melawi in Malaysia. Their access to and control over resources, their activities and time allocation, and their access to political and administrative decision-making processes were assessed. The results of the study substantiate the important role of women in fishing communities and affirm the long-standing social problem of their low status in society, especially vis-à-vis men. The study closes by proposing some ways to improve the women’s situation and increase their level of awareness of the parity between sexes and its benefits to the overall development of the group.

Food for the Ethnic Minority: Maintaining Food Security for the Ifugao Community, in Northern Luzon, in the Philippines

Ekoningtyas Margu Wardani

This ethnographic research focuses on food security for the Ifugao community in Northern Luzon, in the Philippines. Using research methods drawn from social and development anthropology, as well as from economics, agriculture, culture and sociology, it tries to provide answers to the question, “What challenges does the Ifugao community face in resolving the food security problem, without altering its lifestyle and culture?”. The research puts strong emphasis on ethnography as it fosters an exploration of local experiences by the participants, who mirror these in their personal reflections.

The research revealed that the status of food security among the Ifugao remains very far from ideal. Lack of income, the inability to access proper food, a big population, vulnerability to price fluctuations, and environmental problems were some of the major causes behind this phenomenon. An equally important factor might be their interpretation of food security itself.
**Panel 3: People’s Body and Health**

**Who Should Safeguard Illegal Organ Selling in the Philippines? ~ The Informed Consent of Medical Professionals to Kidney Selling and the Brokerage Systems ~**

*Hiroko Aihara*

Organs illegally traded are often disguised as donations, with the organ sellers not correctly informed about the organ sale. Further, after the organ sellers or donors sell or donate their organs, they realize that the remunerative incentives provided to cover their lifetimes are insufficient. The sums paid to the organ donors are so meager relative to the amounts paid by the affluent foreign patients who receive these organs. This trade has been thriving in the Philippines for years.

In a bid to reduce the growing black market in kidneys, the Philippine government has banned organ transplants. In so doing, it has effectively classified the poor Filipino organ “donors” as criminals, although they are actually victims of middlemen who sell their organs in the black market.

During this research, I personally interviewed 116 people using 40-item questionnaires. In addition, I also interviewed about 50 other people, including foreign organ recipients, medical professionals, government officers, congresspersons, non-governmental organization (NGO) staff members, religious organization staff members, university professors, and some key persons who showed interest in the research. A few people, among them government officials and congresspersons, revealed that some medical professionals were personally involved in the illegal trade of kidneys. They set up and gave information about the underground organ sales network that could endanger the lives of many poor people. For this reason, it is ethically and morally imperative to set up an international watchdog organization as soon as possible, to protect the Filipinos, particularly the poor, who are vulnerable to the criminal syndicates or the black market trade of kidneys. In addition, strong governmental financial support for the livelihood of these people should be provided.

**Fertility Decline and the Transformation of Intimacy in Malaysia and Japan: A Comparative Study**

*Shanthi Thambiah*

This study is an attempt to shift discourses on fertility decline from demographic reasoning, to a more human-centered analysis. Gender inequality, the transformation of intimacy, and the value of children are important factors to consider to reverse this trend. There is a need to move away from the demographic transition theory and to give a more nuanced explanation to fertility decline. Three scales were used for this purpose and they measured the value of children, gender role egalitarianism, and fear of intimacy. The survey was conducted amongst young university/college students from Japan and Malaysia. The main interest of this study was to investigate the conditions pertinent to young adults’ future fertility motivation. It is clear from the results of this study that emotional reasons outweigh all other reasons for wanting children. This is a clearer motivation for Japanese respondents compared to Malaysian respondents, irrespective of gender. Besides that, we also see a transformation of intimacy in terms of the young adults’ capacity to form affectionate bonds, which was equally observed among the male and the female respondents in both the Japanese and Malaysian samples. A higher gender role egalitarianism score was observed for the Japanese sample, compared to the Malaysian sample. This shows that the young Japanese adults are more open to value change compared to the Malaysian sample. The effects of these factors on fertility choices in the future would be interesting to observe for both Japan and Malaysia.
Using Literary Works as Teaching Material for Sex Education in Indonesia

Mohd. Zariat Abdul Rani

This research project focuses on the selection of teaching materials for sex education in Indonesia. The choice of Indonesia as a case study is based on initial observations that suggest a significant rise in sexually-related cases amongst teenagers as a result of premarital sex, illegal abortions, and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS. These observations clearly point to the lack of sexual knowledge among young Indonesians, especially with regard to the potential risks of engaging in unprotected sex. This, in itself, underscores the importance of sex education in Indonesian schools, through which vital and accurate knowledge of human sexuality can be channelled to adolescents. In Indonesia today, sex education in schools is incorporated into existing subjects such as science and religious studies. Such an approach has made the teaching of sex education in schools too rigid, especially when it comes to the teaching materials used. It is this problem that has compelled this study to offer a solution: that of using literary texts as teaching materials. After nine months of field work in Indonesia, the study has identified ten ‘teen lit’ novels that are found to be suitable and to have the potential to be used as teaching materials for sex education. This study analyzes the messages contained within these novels, and identifies what these are clearly. The selection of ten texts is only a preliminary step, which can be further expanded upon. Nevertheless, what is important is the very function of these texts, which will not be earmarked as ‘compulsory’ teaching material, but rather as ‘stimuli’ that can initiate more interesting and effective teaching and learning activities.

Food Consumption Patterns and Nutrition Transition in Southeast Asia

Nur Indrawaty Lipoeto

A major shift in the economic structure has changed the lifestyles and health profiles of many developing countries. A nutrition transition, whereby societies begin to suffer health problems or noncommunicable diseases, such as obesity, diabetes mellitus, and cancer increasingly, while infectious diseases remain undefeated, is a universal trend in these countries. Several studies have suggested that changing from the traditional to the modern food consumption pattern is a major part of the nutrition transition. This study was done to confirm the relationship between changes in food patterns and nutrition transition in three Southeast Asian countries, namely, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia. This study was done between August 2008 and August 2009 using three methods: interviews, focus group discussions and analyses of government reports. The results found that Malaysians, Filipinos, and Indonesians have retained many of the aspects of their traditional diets. In fact, most of the participants in this study considered Western style and fast foods franchises as snack or recreational foods to be consumed once in a while only. However, a significant difference was noted between the urban and the rural food varieties consumed. Participants in the urban areas consumed more varieties of traditional foods due to their availability and the participants’ food purchasing power. Further, although traditional food patterns were maintained by most of the participants in this study, more sugar and vegetable oils were consumed and added to the traditional recipes. “Mcdonaldization” has not yet overwhelmed the local food culture in this region. The rapid nutrition transition in this region may be due, instead, to the increasing food availability and food purchasing power, rather than a shift in food preference toward modern western food.
Panel 4: Understanding and Reforming Power

Judicialization in Asia: Resolving Social Justice Issues Through National Human Rights Institutions and the Judiciaries

Pichet Maolanond

This is a study on the contributions of the judicialization of politics to social justice in four Asian countries vis-à-vis Thailand.

Social justice is the foundation of a healthy community moving toward a society where all the hungry are fed, all the sick cared for, and the environment, treasured. Judicialization roughly refers to the casual but progressive ways by which judicial and quasi-judicial independent institutions rule, after moving away from absolute legalism for the sake of social justice. Judicialization can be traced to the constitutionalism concept where judicial and quasi-judicial powers are the guardians of the rights and liberties of the minorities, the weak and the underprivileged against majoritarianism. This propensity naturally leads to the loose rather than rigid separation of powers. The main goal of this study is to review court cases as they pertain to social justice issues, in an effort to test the force constitutionalism in Asia. Its findings are as follows:

Firstly, it found that the contribution of judicial powers to social justice in Asia has been continually growing since the end of the totalitarian era in each country, but has been ongoing in Japan much longer, that is, since the end of World War II.

Secondly, it also found that the structure of national human rights institutions (NHRIs) have been firmly established in all four Asian nations (except Japan) thereby enabling them to conduct their functions that are ‘complementary’ to the judiciary. Sound democratization cannot leave things entirely in the hands of the judiciary.

To conclude, the judicial culture in all five Asian countries seems to constantly be moving away from the legal absolutism of majoritarianism and parliamentary supremacy (though under money-politics elections), toward constitutional supremacy where the rights and liberties of marginal people are also gradually cherished. The comparative study of judicialized court cases in Asian counties strongly reflects these facts.

The Role of the Media and Media Freedom in Democratizing Countries – A Comparative Study of Indonesian and Malaysian Media

Tsukasa Iga

How does free media, one of the most important ingredients in the democratizing process, develop in democratizing countries? What ingredients are important for free media to emerge? What role does media play in the democratization processes? Many political scientists, media researchers and media practitioners think of political liberalization or political opening as the most important factor in explaining the role of media freedom in the democratizing processes. However, as will be seen in this paper, case studies on the media in Indonesia and Malaysia show an amalgam of three ingredients that are important in determining the role of media and media freedom in democratization: political opportunity, economic competition, and the emergence of new journalism.
The Representativeness and Inclusiveness of Democratic Institutions—A Study of the Distribution of Political Rights within the Legislature and the Executive Branch in Japan and the Philippines

Toh Kin Woon

This study looks at the extent of the space provided to the different interest groups, especially the poor, to participate in the electoral, legislative, and executive systems in Japan and the Philippines. In Japan, the legislature and the executive branch are essentially pro-capital, with, however, varying degrees of accommodation of the interests of the lower strata. Such inclusiveness is influenced by the organized strength of the poor. When such organized strength weakens, their interests overall are adversely affected. An absence of genuine ideological contestation also weakens the cause of the poor. In the Philippines, for example, an absence of a strong and stable party system has led to shifting alliances among political leaders and a lack of genuine ideological competition. The capture of the state by big business and the political elite has led to the state’s pursuing policies that are largely pro-capital. However, the hegemony of these democratic institutions by the elite is increasingly being challenged by the left progressive forces, especially since the introduction of proportional representation based under the party list system.

Rights of Stateless Children Born to Asian Women Living Illegally in Japan

Yuwadee Silapakit

This research project examines the current conditions of stateless children born to Asian women (especially Thai and Filipina) living illegally in Japan, in reference to The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Based on my eight-month stay in Japan, I will be describing the Japanese legal contexts, statistics, and current practices pertaining to some social institutions. There continues to be a significant number of undocumented, stateless children in Japan. Several cases of statelessness will be presented from family visits in the central Kanto area where most Asian migrant workers, including Thai women and Filipinas live. Additionally, a four-month long research experience in the Philippines about self-help activities by Japanese-Filipino Children (JFC) and their mothers are described. The study found that more advocacy and networking by NGOs and other social service agencies are needed in Japan to address and solve the problem of stateless children.

From Army Generals to Mama-sans: A Study on Human Insecurity in Indonesia and Japan

Ukrist Pathmanand

This study focuses on human insecurity in Indonesia and Japan. In Indonesia, political activists and the local people had been victimized by the local and the central military chief who used separatist movement propaganda to attack them. On the other hand, Thai sex workers in Japan are exploited by the global sex industry with the Mama-sans actively involved as core facilitators among sex workers, their customers, the sex industry, transnational crimes, and gangs. Human insecurity in both Indonesia and Japan reveals the dark side of globalization and must be seen as a serious concern by all Asian Public Intellectuals.
Panel 5: Cultural Shifts

Participatory Arts and Creative Media in Asia: Engaging Communities and Empowering Youths for Change

Tan Sooi Beng

Participatory arts and creative media have been employed effectively as means to promote social and political change in various parts of Asia. They have been adopted by artists, non-governmental organizations, and educational groups to initiate and facilitate discussion and understanding of critical issues affecting communities. With the aims of networking and promoting future collaboration, this project explores how groups have used the creative arts and other forms of popular media to empower young people to understand and deal with issues that concern them and their communities, and to make positive decisions for change. Based on case studies in Penang, Haebaru, Chiang Dao, Manila, and Yogyakarta, this study compares the issues, participatory approaches, educational models, and types of media used by selected groups. It shows that the arts and popular media are important tools for intervention but cannot solve problems. For greater impact, there must be a high level of involvement of the local community in all aspects of research. In the development of scenarios, analysis, and decision-making, the community must be engaged. Local communities need to use indigenous or other alternative forms of communication to formulate their own development processes.

Experimental Cinema Now in Malaysia and Thailand

Tomonari Nishikawa

In order to establish a network of experimental cinema across Malaysia, Thailand, and Japan, I researched on the experimental filmmaking scenes in Malaysia and Thailand, attended screenings and met people who were involved in these scenes. Although there are several universities teaching cinema production courses in both countries, experimental cinema is not considered a major subject to be taught at most institutions. However, as video equipments and computers have become more affordable, personal filmmaking has become more popular among young artists. The experimental cinema scenes may look small in both countries, but there are several factors that may lead to its growth in the future.

Even though Malaysia only has occasional art-related events that show the works of experimental cinema, there are a few experimental filmmakers who are actively exhibiting their works locally and in other countries. Thailand already has established screening venues that exhibit experimental cinema regularly. It also has filmmakers and curators who work closely to promote such works domestically and internationally.

Establishing a network of experimental cinema in these neighbouring countries will not only promote their works in other countries but will also give the chance for people to see works of filmmakers with different perspectives. I too believe it will enrich and expand the experimental cinema scenes in these countries.

The Art of ‘Campaign Media’: The Art of Presenting ‘Alternative Media’ in the World of ‘Mainstream Media’

Karnt Thassanaphak

The research project focuses on studying and analyzing how the producers of ‘campaign media’ abroad create their work to convey a “message” suitable to the targets, to the social and cultural contexts, and to the channels of propagation. The research also assesses the achievements and problems attendant to campaign media. However, it
does not attempt to discover a fixed formula or answers to questions, but seeks to learn the method that will work in different situations and contexts. The most important thing is to exchange skills, expertise, experiences and lessons among ‘campaign media producers’ in Asia.

**B A N W A: Asian Composers and the Spaces of Modernity**

_Jonas Baes_

This paper is about how the construction of modern landscapes in Asia impacts on the praxis and performance of music, focusing as it does on modernist composers who over-determinedly construct Asia into their work. The initial personal gaze by the author from the Philippines was further reflected in his encounters with contemporary composers in Malaysia and Japan, covering themes of cultural politics and its relationship to infrastructure and the global political economy. The end of the paper recapitulates the initial personal reflections of the author, having as its focal point the creation and performance of his musical composition BANWA for four rasps, a traditional music ensemble, a singer, and pairs of pebbles distributed among the audience.

**Panel 6: Urban Landscapes**

**Video Project: ‘Contemporary Family, as an Involuntary Community’**

_Shigeaki Iwai_

Framing contemporary family as an “involuntary community”, my project recorded video footage of “dislocations” existing in 32 families in three countries: Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The multi-layered process involved workshops, visiting the families, having discussions with them, shooting video, and showing edited footage in the countries and in Japan. Verifying the varying responses from the audience, I have been constructing the image of contemporary families.

**Artists and Their Roles in Creating a Living City**

_Narumol Thammapraksa_

This research aimed to find out how artists in modernized historical cities shape their roles in initiating public activities, not only in their artistic fields of expertise, but also in the other forums that influence the awareness promotion movement of problems resulting from different aspects of development that impact the lives of city dwellers. This research also aimed to find out how they gather ideas to solve problems and revive the spirit of their respective cities and communities. Information gathered from numerous interviews with key persons and visits to their cities led to the conclusion that a living city requires not only adequate infrastructure, but also the active participation of its citizens. Those responsible for such development should include both the artists and the local people who could communicate their wishes and preferences to the local government at all levels. They could work together as individuals, groups, organizations, and networks. Local government, in turn, should reciprocate by providing appropriate public space and facilities for creative activities such as buildings or museums. Meanwhile, the people’s network can influence public policies and guide them in their desired direction.
A Suspended Moment: Embodying Re-Creation of Self and Film History

Phuttiphop Aroonpheng

A Suspended Moment is a 60 minutes experimental film that combines the ideas and stories from avant-garde experimental films, Eraserhead by David Lynch and Pastoral: To Die in the Country by Shuji Terayama into one self-narrative about human subconscious and film as psychotherapy. The purpose of this film is to understand how these two films were conceived from their meaning systems. The use of artistic methods and analyses of archival documents to pursue this qualitative inquiry made it possible for me to understand the films' forms as they embodied experiences intended to be conveyed by these directors.
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