

**Asia Leadership Fellow Program
1997 Program Report**

Culture, Development, and Emancipation:
the search for a new paradigm

International House of Japan
Japan Foundation Asia Center

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Foreword

The publication of the 1997 Program Report of the Asia Leadership Fellow Program (ALFP) marks its second year of implementation. The International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center created jointly this extremely novel program in 1996. The program enables selected Asian public intellectuals (a) to engage in collaborative interactions and intellectual discourses with their fellow Asians in Japan; (b) to conduct their own individual research; and (c) to undertake exchange activities—if opportunities arise—with their Japanese counterparts that further promote mutual understanding and cooperation, and deepen contact-building and networking.

It is the objective of the ALFP, among others, to take the current level of intellectual discourse and dialogue among Asian public intellectuals, including Japanese, to a new horizon: one that will nurture the development of new norms and value-orientation in approaching and analyzing various pertinent issues and in searching for a new Asian paradigm for the future.

As in the first volume of this report, the present one carries the program reports of the ALFP fellows. The 1997 ALFP fellows are: Kuo Pao Kun, Singapore; Goenawan Mohamad, Indonesia; Ota Yoshinobu, Japan; Ishak Bin Shari, Malaysia; and Laddawan Tantivitayapitak, Thailand.

The International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asian Center express their profound gratitude and highest appreciation to all the generous people who directly and indirectly made the 1997 ALFP another resounding success. In particular, the scholars, researchers, and public intellectuals in Japan and other Asian countries who shared their time by serving as members of the screening/steering committee and who recommended superb candidates for the program and who also shared their expertise and views as resource persons in numerous seminars; the Japanese people who acted as 'local hosts' for the field trips of the fellows, and the many others who quietly worked on but contributed tremendously to the program, especially those who labored patiently behind the scenes.

The International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center are confident that the second volume of the ALFP fellows program report will enable its readers to have firmer grasp and better understanding of the program dynamics and its initial accomplishments.

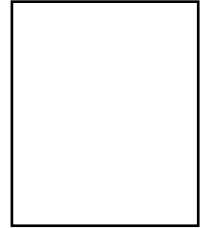
The International House of Japan
The Japan Foundation Asia Center
Tokyo, March 1999

Profiles of the 1997 Fellows

Kuo Pao Kun (Singapore)

Artistic Director, Practice Performing Arts Center Ltd.

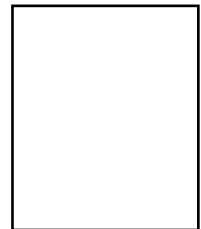
Mr. Kuo is one of Singapore's most dynamic dramatists whose works have been produced and performed at international festivals. Through his works and writings, Mr. Kuo has been arousing serious and deep discussions on various problems and challenges facing Singapore and the Asian region. He is at the forefront of promoting cross-cultural communication and arts education through public seminars, theater projects, and conferences on the arts and society. His most recent play, partly conceptualized during his tenure as a fellow of the ALFP, was a major event at the Singapore Arts Festival in June 1998 and at the Chinese Theater Festival in Hong Kong in November 1998. There are plans to stage this particular play, inspired by the Japanese cemetery in Singapore, in Japan.



Goenawan Mohamad (Indonesia)

Director, Institute for the Study of Free Flow of Information

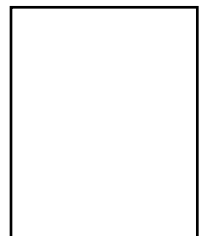
Mr. Mohamad is recognized as one of Indonesia's key intellectuals. He is a journalist, poet, an art critic, and an activist. He is famous as the founder and editor-in-chief of *Tempo Magazine* when it was banned by the Indonesian government in 1994. He is well-respected among civil libertarians in Indonesia as a champion and advocate of people's rights. He has published several volumes of essays and poetry.



Ota Yoshinobu (Japan)

Associate Professor, Graduate School of Social and Cultural Studies, University of Kyushu

Prof. Ota is an anthropologist who has done extensive research in Yaeyama, Okinawa Prefecture. He is currently doing research on Mayan identity-formation in Guetamala. He received his M.A. from Northwestern University and his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. Exploring the political implications of discourses on culture, he is studying the links between tradition and modernity, and their effects on development, nationalism, ethnicity, and gender. His most recent book, *Transposition: Toward a Reimagining of Anthropology* (in Japanese), started in 1994 and finally completed during the ALFP fellowship, was published by the Sekai Shisoshu.



Ishak Bin Shari (Malaysia)

Professor and Director, Institute of Malaysian and International Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia



Prof. Shari is one of the most respected economics professors in Malaysia. He earned his master's from the London School of Economics and his Ph.D. from the University of Malaya. He has served as president of the Malaysian Social Science Association 1990-1994. He is a noted commentator on economic affairs, often interviewed by the mass media.

Laddawan Tantivitayapitak (Thailand)

Co-founder and Assistant Secretary, The PollWatch Foundation



Ms. Laddawan started her career as a human rights worker in 1976 and has since been active in non-governmental organizations' advocacy campaigns. At PollWatch, an election monitoring body created by the prime minister of Thailand through an order, she is responsible for planning, coordinating, administering, and reporting on general elections since 1992.



(From L to R, back row:) Alan Feinstein, Japan Foundation Asia Center; Izumi Koide, I-House; Tatsuya Tanami, I-House; Isami Ikeda, Dokkyo University; Ota Yoshinobu, Japan; Ishak Bin Shari, Malaysia; Kuo Pao Kun, Singapore; Isamu Maruyama, I-House; Goenawan Mohamad, Indonesia; (Front row) Maho Sato, Japan Foundation Asia Center; Mariko Oka-Fukuroi, Japan Foundation Asia Center; Michiko Yoshida, I-House; Naoko Shimamura, I-House; Ibarra C. Mateo, and Laddawan Tantivitayapitak, Thailand

Asia Leadership Fellow Program 1997

Schedule of Activities

- Sept. 2 Introductory Meeting
- Sept. 3 Welcome Reception
- Sept. 8 Workshop I
Presentation by Kuo Pao Kun
(During workshop-presentation, each fellow talked about his/her research interest. Discussion followed the presentation.)
- Sept. 9 Workshop II
Presentations by Goenawan Mohamad and Ota Yoshinobu
- Sept. 10 Workshop III
Presentation by Laddawan Tantivitayapitak
- Sept. 11 Workshop IV
Free discussion among fellows
- Sept. 16 Seminar at the University of Tokyo - Institute of Oriental Culture
- Sept. 19 Special meeting with Dr. Muhammad Haji Salleh
- Sept. 22 Workshop V
Free discussion among fellows
- Sept. 23 Workshop VI
Free discussion among fellows
- Sept. 24 Workshop VII
Free discussion among fellows
- Sept. 25 Seminar on Japanese Media and Asia
Resource Person: Mr. Wakisaka Noriyuki,
Asahi Shimbun, Editorial writer
- Visit to the Japan International Cooperation Agency headquarters

- Sept. 26 Seminar on Asia-Pacific Regional Security
Resource Person: Col. Yamaguchi Noboru, National Defense Agency
- Sept. 30 Seminar with Representatives of Japanese
Non-Governmental Organizations
- Oct. 1 Seminar at Kyoto University - Center for Southeast Asian Studies
Organized by Prof. Shiraishi Takashi, Kyoto University
- Oct. 3 Seminar at Kyoto Bunkyo University
Organized by Prof. Shiraishi Saya, Bunkyo University
- Oct. 8 Seminar on Nationalism
Resource Person: Prof. Yoshino Kosaku, University of Tokyo
- Oct. 10-13 Seminar in Hokkaido
Organized by Prof. Kajiwaru Kageaki, Hokkaido University
- Oct. 16 Seminar on 'Re-appraisal of Development in Asian Viewpoint'
Resource Person: Prof. Nishikawa Jun, Waseda University
- Oct. 17 Seminar on 'A New Look at the Chrysanthemum and the Sword'
Resource Person: Prof. Douglas Lummis, Tsuda College
- Oct. 19-21 Out-of-Tokyo Retreat Conference
Pegasus House, Ito City
- Oct. 27 Seminar on Civil Society
Resource Person: Prof. Sakamoto Yoshikazu, University of Tokyo,
Professor Emeritus
- Seminar on Japanese Foreign Policy Agenda in East Asia
Resource Person: Mr. Katakami Keiichi, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Oct. 29 Debriefing and Evaluation Session
- Oct. 30 Public Symposium on 'Culture, Development, and Emancipation:
The Search for A New Paradigm'

Asian Public Intellectuals: New Millenium, Old Challenges, Same Tasks

Tatsuya Tanami

Public intellectuals, according to social critic Russel Jacoby, is a category hard to define and riddled with complexities. Although, he conceded that a 'public intellectual' must be at least 'an incorrigibly independent soul' answerable to no one and committed not only and simply to a professional or private domain but to a public world—to a wider educated world. The decisive factor to be considered or to be labeled a public intellectual is one's contribution to open discussion: one's influence in enriching public life and revitalizing public culture.¹ In May 1998, eleven years later, another definition of 'public intellectuals' was forwarded by the Social Science Research Council Regional Advisory Panel for Southeast Asia which characterized them as 'individuals articulating and representing novel political presents and futures.'²

In contesting the concept of public intellectuals and their roles in the public life and culture, some are of the opinion that 'public intellectuals who initiate, define and become established as the arbiters of public debate' these days, come not from the ranks of the academe but from among the varied leading political groups and their allies, and that these politically active sectors are complemented by their 'handsomely supported publicists' in shaping the contours of the national debate.³ There are those who are predicting the decline of influence of public intellectuals and had questioned in fact the 'viability' of their existence as a distinctive social faction in the future.⁴ Some had analyzed the 'contradictory' positions of public intellectuals as being both dominated and dominant. They are considered members of the dominant class because of their possession of power and privileges that emanate from their significant cultural capital, and yet they are dominated by the real owners of economic power and by the wielders of political power.⁵

In my seminal writings on the topic, I had tentatively conceptualized the elusive term 'public intellectuals' as people who act in public space, civil society, and think, discuss, and take action outside of the immediate policy concerns. 'Public intellectuals' may also be leaders 'who are keen in articulation, conceptualization, and participation in societal transformation'—beyond the categories which I had termed as *first-track*, meaning those belonging to government circles, and *second-track* or those related to various research institutes and think tanks for strategic and international studies. It must be mentioned that many of these institutes and think tanks have working relations or close ties with national governments of their

respective countries. I had sometimes referred to 'public intellectuals' as *track-three* intellectuals vis-à-vis the first-track and the second-track.⁶

Public Intellectuals in Asia and the Regional Crises

As we approach the new millenium, public intellectuals in Asia are once again being summoned to register their clear dominant voices and prevailed upon to act with a sense of utmost urgency amid the persistent crises that had buffeted the region, resulting in tensions and turmoil accompanying the inevitable contemporary strides of history sometimes called globalization of national economies. Recent political struggles and transformations within the region had also manifested how fragile national consensus are, even under iron-strong leaders who had ruled for decades, leading to violence victimizing ethnic minority groups and politically marginalized factions. Swiftly as globalization became a buzzword and massive international capital flight wreaked havoc within Asia, there are those who warn now of imminent disintegration of the global economic system. At no other time during contemporary history we had witnessed and continue to observe how the foundations of and assumptions governing various social, political, and economic institutions are being shaken profoundly and called into question. Indeed, these are interesting and trying but challenging times for all of us, and most especially to public intellectuals whose exceptional tasks of grasping the 'real social world' have become more pressing than ever.

Public intellectuals in Asia within the academe with their 'researched knowledge' and those outside of the confines of universities with their 'located knowledge'⁷ are being prompted to overcome and cross the deep divides separating them that, together academic and non-academic public intellectuals may become influential actors in these present moments of chaotic public life in various countries in the Asian region. In short, Asian public intellectuals are encouraged—if not pressured by present volatile circumstances—to inspire and to invigorate the current confused public life, sieve through and divine order in the regional mess. As in the past great historical junctures, public intellectuals are urged to be 'passionately involved in the world's work as passionate participants rather than as detached observers.'⁸ Public intellectuals are being tasked to reinterpret the past, reappraise the present, and become instrumental catalysts and potent actors in the future-making processes which are here with us now. Asian public intellectuals must return to their 'real calling'⁹ as intellectuals: provoke, if not stir, honest reflection and candid evaluation which are imperative for renewing various institutions of our public life and culture.

Having enumerated the unenviable demands on public intellectuals for significant engagement and meaningful intervention in public life and culture, it must be explained—for pragmatic considerations—that they have delicate, ambiguous, and ambivalent relationships toward their public: the citizens of their respective countries. Let me quote here in detail a succinct explanation of a Thai

scholar of these rather tenuous links between Asian public intellectuals and the 'people.'

'The peculiar position of public intellectuals in the questions of minorities has to do with their problematic, troublesome, love-hate relationship with their presumed audience or constituency under the name of 'the people.' For, in most cases, public intellectuals are isolated and not-always-understandable intellectual minority within a minority. They can't live without the people who are the public consumers of their ideas but neither can they live in peace with them. Public intellectuals usually have to argue with, cajole and criticize the public who don't always heed their suggestions, and more often than not disappoint and desert them. So many public intellectuals often feel hopeless about and disdainful toward the people, and then feel unconscionably guilty about it.

*The opposite, no less troublesome, attitude is to hold to the cult of the people which regards it as the font of wisdom and final arbiter of all issues, to whom the intellectuals are unquestioningly bound to adhere. Thus characterized, one can say that the public intellectuals' relationship to the people is one in which they try to sell their reasoned arguments to it, or try to buy it with their accumulated and borrowed cultural capital (read resources for argumentation, signification, communication and persuasion available in society's cultural repertoire). Their capacity to win over the people seems to vary with (for want of a better term) the current, given structure of plausibility or cultural opportunity structure.'*¹⁰

However, before any Asian public intellectual can exert substantial influence in the public life and public discourse and actively interact with 'the people,' he must make himself 'socially relevant' and his intellectual's presence publicly felt. Otherwise, his power and intellectual capital emanating from his recognized expertise lose their value. Again, allow me to quote lengthily another Asian scholar who advised any public intellectual to penetrate 'public spaces' where he can become 'an effective intellectual.'

'To become socially relevant, an intellectual must be able to disseminate the alternative ways of thinking that her/his work can create/enable. Indeed, the more public her or his dissemination becomes, the more recognized her or his 'expertise' on the subject; and hence her or his ability to be an effective intellectual. There are at least two crucial kinds of public spaces that an Asian intellectual needs to access: first, conventionally recognized public spaces, particularly those involving mass media exposure; and second, privatized public spaces, the closed door spaces where one enters into discussions with politically powerful experts, i.e., state and government officials. In these secret spaces you can be given 'facts' that others are not privy to. Hence the intellectual can be in the know and yet not have the right to dispense this

received knowledge. In this respect, such a space gives an intellectual a particular distinction which, effectively, can be used to win him/her over and give him/her the legitimacy to make statements without having to fully clarify them...

In sum, the intellectual's public relevance is 'public' because s/he locates herself/himself in given spaces and sites of authority. But as the prestige and influence that follow from being a public intellectual increase, they can and have taken some intellectuals further and further away from the ground whence they first spoke. Additionally, it legitimizes that growing distance because they now know more and more about that which is secret or private—including the personal relationships and hence true character of individuals in power.¹¹

The Asia Leadership Fellow Program

To a large extent, the Asia Leadership Fellow Program (ALFP)—under the auspices of the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center—provides select public intellectuals in Asia a *novel space*, *wider arena*, and a *fertile site* where they are afforded opportunities to spend several months in Japan to conduct their own individual research, while at the same time encountering fellow public intellectuals from neighboring countries as they work on a 'collaborative' project on a chosen topic pertinent to the Asian region. While specific topics vary each year, the collaborative project must revolve around the general theme of 'development and culture.' The ALFP aims to create a close network of public intellectuals in Asia, and to further promote mutual understanding and deepen cooperation and contact among them and their counterparts in Japan. The ALFP offers public intellectuals in Asia an imagined, socially-constructed 'regional space' where they can learn from their fellows and where they can share their knowledge and wisdom to the rest of Asia.¹²

The establishment of the Japan Foundation Asia Center gave an important impetus for the International House of Japan's initial interest to create a new network of public intellectuals from and within Asia and Japan. While fellows are invited to spend several months in Japan, the ALFP is mainly intended to initiate encounters among themselves. The major concerns of ALFP are to keep track of intellectual visions for Asia by Asian public intellectuals and to project developments and foresee future directions of Asia. One of the strengths, if not its main feature, of the ALFP is its experimental nature based on flexibility, open and critical methods of analysis, and the use of an 'Asian' perspective in approaching varied issues affecting the region.

The ALFP Fellows for 1997

The fellows of the ALFP 1997 were: Goenawan Mohamad, journalist, director of the Institute for the Study of Free Flow of Information, (Indonesia); Ishak Bin Shari, professor of economics, director of the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies in the University of Kebangsaan Malaysia, (Malaysia); Kuo Pao Kun, creative writer and theater director, artistic director of the Practice Performing Arts Center, (Singapore); Laddawan Tantivitayapitak, a leader of NGO, co-founder and assistant secretary of Pollwatch Foundation, (Thailand); and Ota Yoshinobu, an associate professor of anthropology in the Graduate School of Social and Cultural Studies in the University of Kyushu, (Japan).

The ALFP program always started with the initial presentation by each of the fellows on his particular area of interest and work. Talking about one's work or professional concerns had proven to be an effective way of drawing out a fellow's life history, philosophies, and beliefs. It also thawed the initial tensions expected when a group of individuals gather for an intensive interaction lasting a couple of months. The contents of the no-holds barred interactions that took place after each of the presentation unfortunately could not be captured by this article. It may indeed be that this entire volume not do justice to the sheer intellectual energies evolved and unleashed, and to the deep camaraderie that had been kindled and developed while the fellowship was in progress.

As if to further stoke the intellectual fire within each fellow into a full-blown intellectual conflagration, **Kuo Pao Kun** urged all present in his initial presentation to heed his 'plea to be totally irresponsible' within the context of the 'unstructured nature' of the fellowship by 'getting away from the confines of institutions and mindset.' His initial presentation focused on his 'journey as an artist' which began during his lonely childhood. Pao Kun said his specialization on theater arts had helped him cope with his loneliness and resolved his frustrations, and in the process, he found companionship and relationship with his people, his audience. He was detained for four years and six months by the Singaporean authorities on suspicions of being a subversive. His detention, he said, was 'a good educational experience' that strengthened him.

Pao Kun described the Singaporean government's policy on the arts as: it should make life more refined and more entertaining; art must not challenge the status quo; and art must be a money-making venture. He also said that Singaporeans 'live in the margins of culture and civilization' since they have 'no nation to revive, no cultural heritage.' However, he said that one positive aspect of this phenomenon was that 'it is easier for Singaporeans to enter a conglomeration of cultures.'

Goenawan Mohamad, started his presentation by narrating the tragedies surrounding his life which coincided with the succession of Dutch and Japanese occupations of Indonesia. He said the series of politically-related violence that marked his life had left a deep impact on his views toward life and death, and more especially on his current activities.

Goenawan invited his co-fellows to 'think on the political implications of the idea of culture' and their influence on artistic and intellectual productions. He said there was 'always a hint of violence in the intellectual effort to understand reality, to control it, and to use it for a designed end.' An accomplished literary writer himself, Goenawan said he had attempted 'to distance' his literary works from the trend to make writings a kind of means or subject to political ends. He said politics do not have to dominate one's life completely. A 'sanctuary' or a 'private space' was necessary to feel and appreciate again the beauty of life, he said.

Ota Yoshinobu, for his part, discussed in broad strokes the three projects he had been working on. First, decolonizing anthropology which is social anthropology as a western discipline and trying to historicize the western discipline of anthropology and looking for possible routes that can be used by anthropology and attempting to locate it within the Japanese context. Second, the formation of identity, and third, understanding culture in anthropological sense: 'the symbiotic mediation occurring in society and the world.'

Among others, Ota questioned the proposition of the progressive narrative of march of history from traditional to modern undertaken by various societies. He refused to concede that societal evolution could be this simple, adding that he was trying to find another model that would deviate from the 'tradition and modernity' model. He said the question of 'hybridization' was a controversial one for it involved the 'authenticity and dilution' of a culture. He said the intrusion of colonialism made culture political.

Laddawan Tantivitayapitak likened herself to a 'theater-maker' in the sense that she managed to move people to change in the same manner that theater arts could transform people. She recalled the February 1991 massacre in Bangkok, saying one of its lessons was that 'there are situations that cannot be controlled as there are always many actors in a (theater) production.' Laddawan said the 'production' ended violently when 'uninvited audience' disrupted the process by agitating other members of the audience.

She said the works of non-governmental organizations were 'difficult and frustrating' because struggling against the powerful is 'burdensome'. She admitted being surprised by calls of Thai nationals that the military seize power from corrupt politicians, manifesting the people's inadequate understanding of the dynamics of politics and political reforms.

One of her major concerns in her work as an NGO leader, she said, was the process of enshrining people's rights in the constitution, while at the same time striking a healthy balance between rights and rules that would govern societies.

Ishak Bin Shari said his interest on the issues of poverty and equitable income distribution stemmed from the impact of the Malaysian riot in 1969. Initially, he was distrustful of the Malaysian government's direct intervention on market forces and of its national economic development policies. However, by late 1970s, he said that his position toward government economic policies changed gradually as the reduction of poverty became evident and income disparity narrowed, leading to the growth of a middle class. He said that from then on, he began doing research on the

important role that the Malaysian government played in economic development and its influence on harmonizing ethnic relations in Malaysia. He said there would always be a need for a mechanism that could 'check' emerging inequality, especially in a setting like Malaysia, which is multi-ethnic and multi-religious.

He said his concern with poverty and unequal income distribution are related to their political and social implications such as the use of politicians of divisive issues within the society. He proposed the following courses of action that could be taken as the globalization of economies proceed: the need for active role of the state again in regulating the market; the recognition of the negative aspects of government intervention such as inefficiency and totalitarian tendencies; and the setting of the precondition that active state intervention on the economy would be premised on 'human development' and 'participatory development.'

Culture, Development, and Emancipation: A Search for a New Paradigm

The ALFP 1997 fellows decided that 'Culture, Development, and Emancipation: A Search for a New Paradigm' would be their main theme, while the following sub-themes were enumerated after three days of initial presentations: multiculturalism and multiracialism; globalization, migration, and uprootedness; role of tradition and ethnicity; role of religion; question of identity/nation-states; role of capital and state in development; role of people's participation in development (civil society); role of the arts; and the role of public intellectuals.

Pao Kun called on the fellows to create 'new words, new terms, new concepts, and new paradigms' to enable them to escape from and be separated from the 'old'. He also cautioned his co-fellows to be conscious of the 'need for equal strength from other participants' in order to avoid domination of some and relegation to the background of the others.

Goenawan exhorted his co-fellows to be rigorous to the point of exhaustion because 'the exercise of asking questions and reflections is good.' He also voiced out the problem that multi-cultural projects such as the ALFP always had the initial difficulties of 'where to start from and what tradition to use.'

Issues such as identity as a tool for survival and as an empowering mechanism, and the friction resulting from the collision between tradition and modernity were also touched upon by the fellows.

Summary of Sessions with Resource Persons

Dr. **Muhammad Haji Salleh** said scholars in Asia work within religion itself such as Buddhism and Islam instead of competing with or rejecting it. He also said that literary works such as poetry are still valid in these times of great industrial change in spite of their seeming irrelevance. In his case, his poetry were his

contributions to human kind. 'In poetry, you play with metaphors, you say things indirectly, this is the Asian way,' he said.

He said Asians have to move beyond comparing themselves with the west and cast away the idea that if they did not measure up to the western standards, they were nothing. He said the breaking down of borders brought about by globalization would mean a 'frightful' future, that of one single global culture. 'Homogenization brings monotony,' he said. 'We have to reconfirm our uniqueness in this age of globalization,' he said.

Salleh said writers have the task of bringing out our uniqueness, but not the chauvinistic kind. 'Identity of colonized people should be seen outside of the stereotyped images, that of the downtrodden and victims,' he said.

Wakisaka Noriyuki, a journalist working for the Asahi Shimbun and in charge of the Asian affairs and overseas development aid matters for the same newspaper company, talked about the general situation of newspaper industry in Japan.

He said Japanese readers had been complaining of the deteriorating quality of Japanese newspapers such as their lack of in-depth analyses and weak editorial opinion and stance. He did not categorically state that his newspaper could influence the general Japanese public's opinion, but said that bureaucrats who make decisions read Asahi Shimbun and other newspapers, allowing mass media to play a role in shaping government policies.

Wakisaka said his newspaper had always advocated that Japan should squarely face its history, apologized about its wrong doings during World War II, and try to emulate Germany's example in handling its past. He said that Japanese intellectuals at present have a weak voice in participating in debates or discussions that could lead to sound government policies.

Col. **Yamaguchi Noboru**, of the National Defense Agency, talked about the importance of Southeast Asian region in the maritime security of Japan, Japan's security policies and projections, and Japan's security roles.

Yamaguchi said the Southeast Asian maritime jurisdiction and borders are not well-demarcated, resulting in increased tension in the region. He said Japan was trying to work within the framework of 'stability through prosperity' in maintaining peace in the region.

He outlined Japan's securities toward the Asian region as: first, multilateral cooperation for regional security—Asian confidence-building measure is positive because it is anchored on cooperation rather than reducing suspicion and securing the economic prosperity of the region; second, the region's need for U.S. commitment since it is the only remaining superpower and this, he said, was directly linked to the U.S.-Japan bilateral defense cooperation; and third, maintaining constructive relationship between Japan and major political actors in the region such as China.

A group of NGO leaders from Japan met with the ALFP 1997 fellows. Among the Japanese NGO representatives were: **Ito Michio**, secretary general of the Japanese NGO Center for International Cooperation; **Hata Tatsuya**, secretary general of the Sotoshu Volunteer Association; **Inoue Reiko**, of the Pacific Asia Resource

Center; **Taniyama Hiroshi**, secretary general of the Japan International Volunteer Center, and **Tsuru Akiko**, former executive secretary of the Japan NGO Network on Indonesia.

The Japanese NGO representatives enumerated problems that beset their operations. Notable among these problems were the perpetual lack of financial base further aggravated the Japanese government's stringent policies toward NGO personnel management costs; the inadequate educational exposure of the Japanese public on NGO activities and their importance in dealing with regional issues; the convoluted Japanese legal system blocking efforts of NGOs, and the lack of individual initiative on the part of Japanese public.

It was suggested that efforts should be made to persuade young Japanese people to visit and learn from Southeast Asia as a way of deepening their social awareness and getting them involved.

Prof. **Shiraishi Takashi**, of the Kyoto University-Center for Southeast Asian Studies, said Southeast Asia was 'created' in 1949 in Washington D.C. when China became communist. Before this change in China, it was always 'China and its vicinities.' He said Southeast Asia is an 'empty notion' and that the term is a conceptual device used by the U.S. for its geopolitics. He said that in the 1950s, there was a clear U.S. hegemonic project to contain Japan and Southeast Asia. He called this 'double containment'—containment of communism and containment of Japan. The political implication of this was the creation of a collection of U.S. bilateral military treaties.

Shiraishi called for a deeper understanding of the experiences of Southeast Asia and Japan. He said that since Southeast Asia is an American hegemonic project, it could be co-opted and the notion be re-oriented by lessening the American influence.

Prof. **Yoshino Kosaku**, a sociology professor from the University of Tokyo, talked about contemporary nationalism in Japan and the *Nihonjinron*, loosely translated to English as 'discussions/discourses on Japanese uniqueness.'

He said nationalism can be categorized into two: political nationalism which emphasizes the nation's collective experience as a political reality by trying to achieve a representative state for its community, and cultural nationalism which is intended to generate a national community by creating, preserving, and strengthening a people's cultural identity when it is felt to be lacking.

Yoshino said there are three general propositions regarding *Nihonjinron*. First, that the patterns of Japanese communication are characterized by silence, ambivalence, emotionality, non-logic in contrast to the West's eloquence, rigid principles and rationality, and dichotomous logic. Second, that the Japanese society is characterized by groupism, vertical stratification, dependence, other-directedness, inter-company ties as opposed to the west's individualism, horizontal stratification, class solidarity, and independence. And third, that the Japanese society is homogenous or unracial as opposed to the west's which is heterogeneous or multiracial. He said that *Nihonjinron* is not unique at all to Japan. He said the British have their own brand or way of expressing their 'Englishness'. He said the British

objectify or institutionalize their Britishness while the Japanese explores cultural ethos or what lies behind institutions. He said the British enjoy reading books written by French or other nationals stereotyping them.

Prof. **Nishikawa Jun**, an economics professor from Waseda University, said economic development in Southeast Asia or East Asia was a project of the government and supported by the idea of nation-state. He said this had led to the concept of development-oriented dictatorship system, state bureaucracy-dictated industrialized policies with the clear idea of income distribution. He said economic development in the Asian region was theorized under the label 'wild geese theory' initiated by the Japanese experts during the 1930s. He said this meant that latecomers can copy the example of the early developed countries at lesser cost. However, he said these experts did not say anything about the future of the early developed economies.

Nishikawa said industrialization and economic growth in the region had led to deterioration of social relations and imbalances in social relations among classes, nations, and with the environment hampering a sustainable development. He said that the globalization of economies is based on modernization theory which holds that all countries would pass through the same stages of economic development. However, Nishikawa said it is difficult to equate 'happiness' with economic development, and that this is the problem with modernization theory: it equates people's happiness with economic development.

Prof. **Douglas Lummis**, of Tsuda College, tackled Ruth Benedict's classic book *Chrysanthemum and The Sword* which sold more than 1.4 million copies, a very rare feat for a 'social science book.' He said the book exerted a considerable influence in viewing Japan by providing a 'model' for Nihonjinron. He said, however, that it would be a mistake to analyze the book as a work of social science because it contains many inaccuracies. And in spite of this widely known fact, the book is still widely read, he said. The fascination with the book, he said, had nothing to do with its inaccuracies, but because it is a work of political literature, and that most of those 'troubled' by the book are the subjects themselves (the Japanese) and not the readers (consumers of information).

Lummis said that Benedict successfully managed to establish a different basis for discrimination: culture not race. He said the sources of patterns in her book were: orientalism (western stereotyping); historical moment in which it was written (from the perspective of the victors and that the campaign against racism was useful in war to justify killings perpetrated by soldiers); and Benedict's own personal way of thinking (fascination with death).

In discovering that Benedict had a Japanese co-author in writing the book, he said this factor explains why the book was 'accurate but not really accurate' and that the work had undercurrents of 'intense alienation.' He said Robert Hashima, an important informant of Benedict, shaped the book in an influential way, reflecting his experiences of being bullied in Japan. Lummis said that Hashima had told him that Benedict was lost and confused, until he started to help her in the project.

Lummis said Benedict's intent was not to describe the whole for she did no field work before writing the book, but instead listened to informants, and that she imagined the situation before starting to write her book. He said he decided to conduct this particular research on the book because of his decision to live in Japan, which according to Benedict, was 'impossible'.

Prof. **Sakamoto Yoshikazu**, a leading exponent of civil society in Japan, talked of civil society as an agent of democratization, which particularly refer to the role of the civil society in humanizing social relations. He said the concept of civil society is geared toward the creation of public space that recognizes the dignity and equal rights of human beings, not a public space that is 'static, timeless, and ahistorical.'

He said the main engines of changes today are the markets and civil society, while the state and international organizations largely perform 'reactive functions.' In post-war Japan, he said civil society developed because of influences from abroad and from 'above' in the form of demilitarization and democratization initiated by the U.S. occupation forces whose aims included the dismantling of the imperial army, police, and to institutionalize democratic rights and abolish semi-feudal political and social structures. Peace issues, he said, remain crucial in the formation and strengthening of the civil society and democratization of post-war Japan. The formation and predominance of the 'middle class' in Japan led to the decline of civil society, leaving the advocates of disarmament and ecology as civil society's major constituents.

Sakamoto said that it may appear that individual groups may seem not effective in making changes, but they generate enormous transformative power upon reaching a critical mass. The problem, he said, is the difficulty of predicting a timetable for attaining the needed critical mass.

Katakami Keiichi, an official from the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said Japanese diplomacy up until recently did not emphasize human rights. He said Japanese diplomacy had a vague policy toward the issue and treated it in a very low profile manner. He accounted for this low priority given to human rights as a cornerstone of Japanese foreign policy as an indication of 'very shallow' awareness among Japanese public of the issue, as opposed to western countries. He said it could also be due to the emphasis in Japan of social stability that would usher in economic development, rather than on individual rights. He said that the effort to skirt the issue of human rights may be an attempt to side track possible complaints about Japanese violations of human rights within Japan and in the international arena. He said Japan had now put human rights issue at the forefront of its foreign policy dealings.

Katakami said no country would deny that there is a universal value called human rights that should be complied with and respected, but the point that should also be considered is the need for flexibility in approaches in complying with and applying this particular value with respect to each country's historical development and stage of economic development. He said Japan is more flexible in handling issues of human rights in its foreign policy dealings which created some problems

with respect to the U.S. and its strong emphasis on human rights. He admitted that one of the difficulties of working within the government and as an official of the government is that officials could not just bypass counterparts in foreign countries or other governments.

Izu Retreat Conference

During the two months of collaborative work, the ALFP 1997 fellows—as a group—had various opportunities to interact with Japanese scholars, researchers, and journalists who made individual presentations to them. The Izu retreat conference was one of the few occasions when the ALFP 1997 fellows interacted as a group with their Japanese counterparts who also went as a group. The Izu retreat conference, as in the previous year, was somewhat like a group encounter and dialogue between Asian public intellectuals and their Japanese counterparts, including other scholars from Asia who were in Japan during the time of the ALFP fellowship.

Initially, the ALFP fellows made individual presentations before the Japanese participants. Much of the fellow presentations was already discussed in the section on 'The ALFP Fellows for 1997.' However, the issues of multiculturalism took a significant and considerable time of the open discussion sessions.

Goenawan argued that Asians should approach the issue of multiculturalism 'cautiously' and avoid being restricted by terms defined by western paradigms. The challenge for Asians, he said, is how to manage differences that would lead to lesser tension in the region, instead of emphasizing national or regional identities in a geographical area as varied and diverse connoted by 'Asian region.' He cited the example of prejudices against ethnic Chinese in Indonesia or ethnic Malays in Singapore. Prof. **Nagafuchi Yasuaki**, of Nagoya Institute of Technology, said multiculturalism in the Indonesian context is a complementary concept to the nation-state manifested strongly in the slogan 'unity in diversity.' He also supported the importance of recognizing that the concept of culture in a multicultural setting carries the burden of 'which among the cultures is the appropriate culture for a nation.' Prof. **Thanet Aphorusuvan**, of Thammasat University, said the construction of western regional identity was an easy project for they had the Greek civilization as a foundation to start with, and the Asian context of regional identity is 'totally different' from the western project. He said the predominant influence of western thinking on Asia is manifested by the existing problem of western-oriented structure in the construction of knowledge.

Aphorusuvan pushed the discussion on multiculturalism further by commenting that the U.S. context of the issue of multiculturalism was meant to give equal opportunities to minorities or the marginalized. He said the unintended effect of making minorities act like 'white' Americans blurs the original concept of multiculturalism. He said legally speaking, all ethnic groups in the U.S. should be treated equally, but in reality and practice, this is not happening.

Pao Kun said the so-called ASEAN project is promoted by the various governments in the region, but for the people of Southeast Asia, the region denoted by 'Southeast Asia' means stronger issues such as a shared history of western colonialism and lifestyle as in rice being the main staple instead of bread.

Prof. **Tsuboi Yoshiharu**, of Waseda University, said that 'multiculturalism' could be likened to a 'jazz fusion' where each instrument could retain its own identity or character while at the same time contributing to the music-making process. Pao Kun said the Singaporean context of multiculturalism means 'different' cultures embodied by predominantly 'monocultured' people.

Goenawan urged that the term multiculturalism be redefined, asking whether culture could be equated to race in the concept of multiculturalism in Asia. To this, Ishak said ethnicity plays a more vital role in defining Asian cultures. Pao Kun, however, disagreed with Ishak, citing the Singaporean national policy of forcing citizens to learn their mother tongue as a second language as a requirement for university entrance. He said people opposed this policy by leaving Singapore. Ota said what seems to be happening now is a kind of denial of a cosmopolitan type of identity or a decline of the modernist type of aspiration.

Turning to the issue of multiculturalism and political struggles, Nagafuchi raised the issue multiculturalism and political struggles, Nagafuchi raised the issue of fundamentalism and identity-formation which appear to down play multiculturalism. Goenawan said the issue of fundamentalism is related to the issue of survival by certain groups. He said people are lured by the appeals of fundamentalism when they are threatened by the complexities of the modern world. He said fundamentalism is a political struggle or a weapon used to attain a certain leverage of power and one of the components of this struggle is the purification of identity. Tsuboi linked the emergence of fundamentalism to socio-political issues, economic disparity, or societal alienation. Ota said fundamentalists use culture to advance certain political agenda such as Bangladeshi nationals in England.

Prof. **Sekimoto Teruo**, of the University of Tokyo, said a good example of dangers that could be caused by the recent resurgence of fundamentalism is the 'Aum Supreme Cult' which resorted to mass gas poisoning of innocent people. He said the cult reflected the loss of legitimacy of the national government and national polity hence, people turn to pure forms of fundamentalism like the Aum Supreme Cult which believe in a certain kind of sacredness.

Among the changes occurring in Japan in relation to identity-formation, according to Tsuboi, is the 'collapse' of the traditional belief that Japan is homogeneous, while at the same time predicting the gradual opening of Japanese society. Sekimoto sounded more pessimistic in assessing the future direction of Japan, saying the sociological 'Other' is met inside the country in the form of juvenile delinquents.

Relating identity to globalization, Pao Kun talked of the social impact of tourism industry on locals. Ota said that in reality, only five percent of the total human population could travel as tourists and behind this profitable tourism industry is a huge economic hierarchy. Laddawan said the case of Thailand shows

how the tourism industry could exert destructive forces on rural villages or spawn the emergence of a well-developed sex industry catering to tourists.

Issues of globalization translated to dominance of very few countries such as the U.S. or Japan, and linking globalization with Americanization or Japanization were also raised. Other participants had pointed out the absence of the socialist concept of 'internationalism' in the current discussion of globalization.

Public Symposium

After two months (September-October 1997) of collaborative research which enabled the ALFP 1997 fellows to meet and discuss with Japanese scholars/intellectuals, journalists, researchers, and government and non-government personnel, a public symposium was held at the International House of Japan on October 30. Theme of the public symposium was 'Culture, Development, and Emancipation: The Search for New Paradigm.'

Noro Masahiko, the managing director of the Japan Foundation Asia Center, delivered the opening remarks where he stated the purpose of the ALFP which was to create a network of public intellectuals in Asia who would facilitate cultural exchanges in the region. He said while economic and political exchanges flourish in the region, cultural exchanges are still inadequate.

Tanami Tatsuya said the ALFP attempts to locate people who work more closely with the civil societies of the Asian countries and bring them together to discuss various issues which are crucial in shaping Asian societies. He said their discussions could be used to seek or create a new paradigm to understand Asia.

Pao Kun said that there is 'a need to fit arts into the development paradigm.' He said he would like to see the emergence of development that would allow the release of creative energies of people. He said that we should 'nurture the spirit of exploration, experimentation, and play,' adding that art is the 'ultimate form' of human play. 'Art makes children adult and adults human,' he said.

Laddawan discussed the roles of civil society in the 21st century, by defining civil society as 'transborder peoples in all circles and grassroots but excluding politicians and state or government agencies.' She said civil society people are the actors that would bring a new world order together with peace, non-violence, and harmony between people and nature. She said power resides in everyone of us, and that knowledge alone is not enough. Knowledge must be combined with goodness, she said.

Ishak linked globalization and human development. He said development should be seen as 'a process of liberation or emancipation of individuals, classes, and society from poverty, deprivation, dependence, and exploitation.' He said that it is important to acknowledge the influential role of culture in development process and not just reduce culture as an adjunct of development. He said that without considering culture and people's control over their destinies and their ability to view the world in a way which reflects their particular experience, development is simply

a global process of social engineering that enables the economically and militarily powerful to control more and to dominate and shape the lives of the weak.

He said development is 'more than the simple transfer' of economic, political, and technological processes from one part of the world called developed to under-developed.

Ota talked about globalization and its impact on identity and culture. He said under globalization, two contradictory social processes are occurring on the cultural planes. First, the emergence of global post-modern, cosmopolitan lifestyle that various metaphors of travel and displacement capture. Second, the strong pull to mobilize by means of culture. He said that globalization had produced neither the cultural homogenization nor the decline of local identity as manifested by the persistence of indigenous movements, Asian diaspora communities in Great Britain, and various ethnic mobilizations in the former Eastern Europe.

He said there is a need to be sensitive to the specificity of discourse such as 'who is saying what to whom.' He said the terrain in which the discussion of identity and culture under globalization takes place needs to be contextualized. He said identity is always formed in relational terms, that is in opposition to the 'other'. He said what is crucial in discussing identity is 'the ability to fathom the power structure of the world in which each identifier moves and the concrete world in which an act of identification occurs.'

Goenawan said development also brings discontents and that the processes of modernization and economic growth are also accompanied by 'a set of dilemmas' that could be simplified into 'liberty and justice.' He said freedom is 'not a luxury good' and that it is deeply related with justice, and that 'there is no way to get rid of dilemma' connected with development.

He said people must know and acknowledge their limitations and that we must be humble before history.

Toward a Summing Up

The following section will attempt to highlight, in very bold strokes, some of the points made by the 1997 fellows in their individual program report which somehow echoed and elaborated the points they had earlier raised during the period of collaborative interactions and intellectual discourses, the focus of which was 'culture, development, and emancipation: the search for a new paradigm.' However, it is always a difficult task to capture—even approximate at its slightest level—the intense discussions and exchanges that took place during a prolonged period, and added to this is the fact that the more interesting and thought-provoking ones occurred outside the seminar halls, when no one was there to take down notes.

In his report, Pao Kun sounded the pressing call for Asians to have a 'moral voice' that will push for the cause of peace and 'balanced development regionally and globally.' Pao Kun was emphatic in stating that this 'moral voice' should be 'people-based' referring to the ever-growing importance of the role of civil society.

In urging his fellow Asian leaders to veer away from western orientation and to create an Asian outlook, Pao Kun said public intellectuals in Southeast Asia are 'faced with an historic task of initiating dialogue on these critically important subjects and issues, and to evolve ways and means to create a network of peoples and ideas—for exchange, debates, dissemination, and prompt action.' He said Asians 'owe it to themselves to run on their own steam in the mammoth task of evolving an awareness of their own, of finding out what Southeast Asia is all about, of identifying its own energies, and of the role it defines for itself for the future.'

Goenawan, probing on the current issues of immediate importance to the region—that of the 'promises and pains' of changing societies, said alumni of the ALFP, who currently compose and will compose in the future, members of a network of Asian public intellectuals are 'essential to generate a cross-national support promoting democratic reforms' within the region. 'A cross-national network of civil societies free from any government control may bring back the belief that there are worthy values to be universally shared by different people with different people with different identities,' he said.

The first-ever Japanese ALFP fellow took a somewhat different approach in looking at the issues raised by his fellow ALFP fellows. Ota said among the most intriguing points during the discussions were as follows: 'Is it possible to enter modernity as Asians?; How does 'modern' individual emerge in Asia?; What does 'culture' do under the strong state control of artistic productions. Ota recommended that the issues of the 'rise of Asian regionalism' and the lure of nationalism in the age of globalization' should be given due consideration by future participants to the ALFP.

The economist in the group, Ishak, forwarded the position that economic development must have a 'soul' and that development should take into consideration 'all the realities' of culture. He said there is a 'real need for building new theories and practices in order to achieve development with emancipation.' He said that his future research will attempt 'to make culture not a servant of 'development objectives, but rather as the social basis of those objectives.'

Touching on the relationship between intellectuals and their audience, Ishak said social mobilization is particularly important for intellectuals since it is only through people and popular movements that ideas can become socially relevant.' He said: 'Without an audience, the intellectual can still play a role, but unfortunately cannot become an agent for social change.'

Laddawan said that while the world has already been transformed into a multi-cultural one, 'mutual relationship and mutual understanding are key words' that do not necessarily translate 'cleanly as they sound in the real world.'

Adding her voice to that of her colleagues calling for further networking, Laddawan said 'if small groups of people throughout the world can organize and link up with another, they can also have a say in how the world is being run by big institutions. We seem to forget the fact that there are more small people than big people. Why do small numbers always have the bigger say?'

Allow me to end this introduction by thanking in behalf of the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center, the 1997 fellows of the ALFP for their participation in the program, and all those who helped and assisted us in making the 1997 ALFP possible.

NOTES

¹ Jacoby, Russell (1987) *The Last Intellectuals: American Culture in the Age of Academe*, New York: Basic Books, pp. 221-237.

² ——— 'Public Intellectuals: A View from Southeast Asia' in *Items* 52:4 (December 1998), p 79. This particular issue of *Items* is worth noting for it featured articles culled from discussions during a workshop sponsored by the Social Science Research Council Regional Advisory Panel for Southeast Asia. Theme of the May 8-9, 1998 workshop was 'History, Civil Society, and Social Change: Public Intellectuals in Contemporary Southeast Asia.'

³ See Kessler, Clive (1998) 'The Abdication of the Intellectuals: Sociology, Anthropology and the Asian Value Debate-Or, What Everybody Needed to Know About 'Asian Values' That Social Scientists Failed to Point Out,' a draft paper presented at the International Conference on Asian Values on Trial—Miracle or Failures organized by the Malaysian Academic Movement, held in Kuala Lumpur on November 28-29, 1998.

⁴ Chaney, David (1994) *The Cultural Turn: Scene-setting Essays on Contemporary Social History*, London and New York: Routledge, p. 3.

⁵ Swartz, David (1997) *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, p. 223.

⁶ See Tanami, Tatsuya (1998) 'New Forces for Social Transformation in Asia: Track-3 Intellectual Network and Civil Society,' a draft paper presented at the International Conference on Asian Values on Trial—Miracle or Failures organized by the Malaysian Academic Movement, held in Kuala Lumpur on November 28-29, 1998. Also see Tanami, Tatsuya (1998) 'The 1996 Program: An Introduction' in *Intellectual Concerns and Critiques in Southeast Asia—Asia Leadership Fellow Program 1996 Program Report*, Tokyo: International House of Japan and Japan Foundation Asia Center, pp. 9-26.

⁷ Reynolds, Craig J., 'Located Knowledges' in *Items* 52:4 (December 1998), pp. 79-81.

⁸ Hall, Peter Dobkin (1992) *Inventing the Nonprofit Sector and Other Essays on Philanthropy, Voluntarism, and Nonprofit Organizations*, Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, p. x.

⁹ Hall, *ibid.* p. xi.

¹⁰ Tejapira, Kasian. 'Questions of Minorities' in *Items* 52:4 (December 1998), p. 82.

¹¹ PuruShotam, Nirmala, 'The Possibilities of 'Asian' Intellectuals' *ibid.*, pp. 86.

¹² See *Intellectual Concerns and Critiques in Southeast Asia: Asia Leadership Fellow Program 1996 Program Report* (1998) Tokyo: International House of Japan and Japan Foundation Asia Center for a comprehensive account of the program for the first batch of ALFP fellows. The winter 1999 edition of the International House of Japan Bulletin also carried a short article on the history and objectives of the ALFP.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Ibarra C. Mateo, who edited this volume and was also the rapporteur for the Asia Leadership Fellow Program 1997, in the preparation of this introduction.

Reports of the Fellows

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

Challenges to Asian Public Intellectuals: Asia Leadership Fellow Program 1997 Report

Kuo Pao Kun

The Program

This is my longest participation in a program away from my theater work since the four months I had spent in the U.S. on a Fulbright Exchange Fellowship in 1989. The intellectual nature of this project in Japan has been inspiringly complementary to my long-time artistic focus.

The Asian Leadership Fellow Program's general theme of 'Culture and Development' is as inclusive as it is provocative, as currently relevant as it is intellectually poignant. The program has a broad spectrum for the free flight of the intellect as it is for the free flow of the senses. It is also broad enough to make each participant's contribution integrally connected. Above all, as an international program, it is a confluencing effort potently related to the fundamental issues and problems confronting almost every nation and people on earth. Although I had planned to spend two more months after the seminar period in and around Tokyo to research and write a new play, I knew the intellectual dimension of the program would continue to dominate my remaining stay in Japan. Indeed it did.

During my personal presentation on Sept. 8, 1997, I spoke of intentionally upholding an attitude of 'total irresponsibility' in relation to my artistic profession, my institution, my country, my people, my culture, even my convictions. Taken somewhat as a joke at first, my colleagues soon realized I was as serious as I could be. What I meant was, I wanted to detach myself as much as possible from the habitual ideas and feelings, and patterns and structures, I have been so used to. As in an acting exercise, I wished to extricate myself as much as possible from my formed reflexes and cliché responses in order to arrive at a state closest to intellectual and emotional 'neutrality'—if ever that was possible—in order to be most spontaneously receptive of new things.

The company I've had the privilege of being part of during the ALFP has been exceptionally brilliant. I wish to express my sincere admiration to the leaders of the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center for their extraordinary ability in identifying such a fine group of dynamic and committed people. Goenawan never failed to inspire us with his erudite, insightful, and passionate articulations—always tinged with wry humor. Ishak's quiet deliberations were always founded on solid scholarship and research. Ota-san soon became my

teacher in modernity theory—ever patiently impatient, his passionate humane concern for the deprived minorities of the world enhanced the moral character of our deliberations. Laddawan, more than anyone else, was the child of the land forever conscious of her mission to speak for the working masses, advocating a philosophy and lifestyle of organic simplicity. In his inimitable subdued way, Tanami-san, our Program Director, was capable of making his omnipresence almost invisible, gave us an intellectual and organizational leadership by his exceptional understatements and insightful, non-intrusive interventions. The care and meticulous support and warm understanding which Maruyama-san and Shimamura-san gave us was of an order I have never experienced before—all my research and living problems were given their serious attention. The staff at front desk and the library made me feel totally at home and forever welcome. And then, I must mention the inspiration of Kato-san. Though always fleeting in our encounters, he nevertheless gave me numerous and significant guidance and inspirations—on sources, references, issues, people, and events. Not to forget Matsumoto-san who played his self-effacing role of 'innkeeper' with quiet modesty. Indeed, the Asian Leadership Fellow Program has had a remarkably deep impact upon me. Much of this awareness comes from the fact that I now need to try very hard in order to make sense of it. In the best sense of the word, my temporary 'disorientation' is the best proof of achievement.

The Journey

My personal journey through the program comprised of:

1. the two-month group seminar in Tokyo;
2. the three-day Aspen seminar in Amagi; and
3. the two-month of personal research spent partly in Tokyo, partly traveling around Honshu, and partly living in Niino, a remote village-town on the southern tip of Nagano Prefecture.

The Two-month Tokyo Seminar

The series of lectures and seminars were very informative most of the time (except those with bureaucrats). The following were exceptionally inspiring:

1. the history seminar facilitated by Prof. Shiraishi Takashi, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University. Prof. Shiraishi's approach to Southeast Asian studies was refreshing and multi-dimensioned.
2. The mangga lecture given by Prof. Shiraishi Saya, Bunkyo University. She introduced to me a cultural phenomenon in Japan (and of the global youths) which had previously escaped my serious attention. Due to her initiation, I later saw

the animation film *Mononoke Hime* by Miyazaki, the model example of the artistic achievement and cultural significance of this art form.

3. seminars in Hokkaido hosted by Prof. Kajiwara Kageaki, Hokkaido University. The unique character of the land and people of Hokkaido presented a diversity and complexity of the Japan nation unknown to me. This is also my first introduction to the Ainu culture. Prof Kajiwara's arrangements substantially broadened my cultural and geographical mind-scape vis-a-vis Japan.

4. the Asian development viewpoints seminar chaired by Prof. Nishikawa Jun, Waseda University. He presented a wide spectrum of indigenous Asian perspectives on development.

5. the civil society seminar given by Prof. Sakamoto Yoshikazu, University of Tokyo who ushered us deep into the potential world of 'down-up' governance and its major current expressions.

6. the East Asian history lecture given by Prof. Hamashita Takeshi, Institute of Oriental Culture, Tokyo University during our pleasantly productive Ito retreat. He threw new light upon the indigenous East Asian forces at work in the Asian modernization process prior to the coming of the western powers.

These seminars gave me seminal ideas vis-a-vis the larger subject of 'culture and development.' It also gave clearer context to the contemporary situation of culture and development in East Asia.

The Public Symposium

Billed as 'Culture, Development, and Emancipation—The Search for a New Paradigm,' our public symposium was presented on Oct. 30 as the group's final collective exercise. It was the culmination of two months of intense interaction between the Fellows and an interim report of our respective research. In a way, it was also a collective exposure of the group's philosophies and major concerns, and a chance to exchange views with the wider Japanese intellectual community. The attendance was good and the discussion showed a degree of depth and openness.

On reflection, the public symposium presented more problems and dilemmas than inspirations and answers. While I have doubts about the degree of impact it had upon those who were present, I detected a committed concern and a passionate desire among my fellow fellows to seek new alternatives confronting the world—particularly in relation to Southeast Asia and the underprivileged peoples and classes of the world in general. Even with Ishak, the economist, the hope of resolving many of the fundamental issues transcended the socio-political-economic

realm. A philosophical strand clearly underlined every paper; a humanistic approach colored every speaker. It could well be described as a macro and organic concern—that the problems of the world cannot be genuinely recognized unless we bring in the moral dimension—a dimension which complements the dollar/price-tagged evaluations with the values of human life, of human feelings, the worthiness of the air, water, earth, plants, and animals. Although the new paradigm was not effectively established, the desire to seek one was unmistakably clear.

My presentation—Creativizing Culture—was an outline report of my intellectual preoccupation over that period in Japan. Raw and fragmented as it was, I can see now that it was nevertheless a very good reflection of the new meanings and relationships I had found by then concerning arts and culture and their inner connections with the new mode of production in the information age. Culture, in this context, was related to sports, leisure and the arts, and customs, folklore, rituals and beliefs. I tried to describe a realm of activities which can be loosely enveloped by the idea of a 'leisure dimension'—a dimension which has experienced an explosion in the more developed world. Affluence and abundance had given energy to a huge proliferation of forms of leisure/pleasure seeking.

They may even be grouped under a more fun-evoking description—Play. Parallel to the *Homo Faber* (humans that work) and *Homo Sapiens* (humans that think), the mode of humans as *Homo Ludens* (humans that play) has come to the fore. Much of the problem of the world can be viewed from the perspective that, suddenly becoming affluent with all these abundant material resources, we don't know what to do with them—apart from intoxicating, dis-enabling, corrupting, maiming, and killing ourselves. We need to learn how to play; how to make human play less destructive, more positive, even creative—from child's play to the arts, the highest form of human play. I am by and large optimistic about the future. In particular, seeing the fact that, post Berlin Wall, the reduction of world armament has been progressing with the increase of investment in leisure/play activities. Although these investments have not all gone to the creative arts and humanities, the trend moving towards humanistic concerns is reason enough for optimism.

The Aspen-Amagi Seminar

At Kato-san's invitation, I reaped much knowledge and insight from this highly energized seminar. With 'Human Values in a Digital Age' as the theme, the unusually articulate group of about 20 Japanese and international participants gave the subject a many-stranded in-depth analysis. Prof Inose, one of the co-chairs, was exceptionally inspiring with his broad-band knowledge bridging the diverse fields of knowledge. Comprising scientists, technologists, educators, business executives, publishers, humanities scholars, artists, media people as well as financial and legal professionals, this seminar exploited the subject in a very thorough manner. The breadth and depth of knowledge, the intensity, commitment and candidness of the two-day seminar was distinctly informative and challenging. It was by far the most

'talkative' group of Japanese intellectuals I have ever met. I must also record the excellence of the three lady interpreters whose bilingual fluency was in no small measure instrumental to the smooth and dynamic conduct of the seminar.

Derivative Activities

The International House of Japan, being the intellectual center it is, has a way of extrapolating its programs into all sorts of unexpected possibilities. In my case, the following off-shoots took place during the Program:

1. Sept. 19 - a panel discussion with Muhamad Haji Saleh of Malaysia and my fellow ALFP comrade Goenawan Mohamad on literature and the arts in Southeast Asia. Held at I-House.

2. Nov. 14 - cultural seminar organized by Shimamura Naoko-san for Prof. Kawasaki Kenichi's committee on comparative studies in arts and culture. I was asked to give a report on the arts scene in Singapore. Held at I-House.

3. Nov. 15 - seminar at the Setagaya public theater after the readings of my two monodramas, namely, 'The Coffin Is Too Big For The Hole' and 'No Parking On Odd Days.' The discussion centered on Singapore theater, my own work, and some general issues concerning theatre.

On Dec. 22, the International House of Japan invited me to give a public report on arts in Singapore and the significance of 'The Substation' which I founded in 1990 and ran it as artistic director for five years. It added to the pre-Christmas festivity.

Trips Away from Japan During the Program

Of the five fellows, I stayed in Japan longest—four months. Within that period, I was absent from Japan briefly on two occasions.

1. Nov. 29. - Dec. 4, 1997: I returned to Singapore to meet with my colleagues and plan work and productions for 1998.

2. Dec. 8 - Dec. 21, 1997: I went to China, firstly to attend a commemorative symposium in Shijiazhuang on Cao Yu, the greatest modern Chinese playwright on the anniversary of his death, at the invitation of the Institute of Hua Ju Research at the China Academy of Arts; secondly, I spent a few days doing research in the province of Hebei for the new play I was writing).

A Month in the Countryside

With unwavering support from Shimamura-san, and through the introduction of Prof. Kawasaki, my request to spend some time in the Japanese countryside was fully materialized. Prof. Ogawa Hiroshi of Kansai University kindly offered me his country house in Niino, Nagano Prefecture, for more than a month. Its was an extraordinarily rich experience which I will elaborate later in the Report.

An Unexpected Epilogue

I concluded my Asian Leadership Fellow Program officially on Jan 16, 1998. Just as I was feeling enormously fulfilled, a bonus arrived in the form of an overwhelming epilogue which took me back to Tokyo less than ten days after the program's completion.

No one who has some knowledge of the post-war Japanese response to the war could have expected Japanese theater director Makoto Sato to do it that way, but he did it. On the very eve of Chinese new year (Jan. 27), Sato-san and the Japan Director's Association convened a week-long Southeast Asian theater conference in his Setagaya public theater. The one theme which most Japanese have shunned for half a century—the Pacific War—was courageously chosen as the conference theme. Here, over one whole week of talking and interacting, the honesty and goodwill of this small group of Japanese artist-intellectuals conducted themselves in a manner I could never have expected in my wildest imaginations. They began to openly and publicly confront the memory of the Second World War.

These are exceptional citizens of Japan whose conscience could not accept the long, deafening silence which Japan as a people and nation have shown concerning the Pacific War over the past 50 years. Struggling in pain, dozens of Japanese friends endeavored during the conference to write a new chapter in their intellectual and spiritual life. They faced the cruelties and atrocities that, for many of the younger conferencees, remain guarded information. And they conscientiously accepted moral responsibilities although they were born many years after such inhumanities were committed by the Japanese militarism. In so doing, they have begun the arduous process of building a channel practically blocked by the conservative forces in Japan for more than half a century. It was a heart-warming event.

On the first day, I was invited to give a keynote address on war. The gist of my speech was that, we must not allow the tens of millions of people in Asia and the Pacific (including the millions of Japanese) die for nothing. We who are alive today must take up the responsibility to talk to each other and hear what the spirits of the dead had to say. To be evasive is the best way to ensure the repeat of such inhumanities.

It was a powerful epilogue, a deepening extrapolation, to four months of rich and solid learning in Japan. It has made a difference in my intellectual and artistic sensitivities. And my understanding and relationship with the people of Japan which for decades have been colored by personal memories of the War. While the program has created a big network connecting me with numerous new Japanese friends, it has also entrenched my belief that the war remains the single most important barrier to a more honest and constructive relationship between Japan and the peoples in Asia and the Pacific, especially between Japan and East and Southeast Asia.

Some Reflections

Exceptional Discipline

Frankly, I have never seen a more courteous people, or a more disciplined nation. The universal internalization of the sense of civility, of respect for knowledge and culture, the non-negotiable respect and responsibility for work and the passion for cleanliness are so arresting that it grew to become something exceedingly difficult to understand. Remarkably, throughout the four months I was in Japan, I had seen no quarrel between people and no parents bashing their children and the policemen I have met never exuded violence or arrogance. How could this be possible and what does it mean?

In the end, it was a film made by an American in Hokkaido focused on a school in a remote village on the northern island which gave me a clue: education. A 'wide-spectrum' education system which was able to mobilize the energies, know-how, and the concerns of principals and teachers in school, parents at home and full municipal human and material support. Theirs seems to be an organic education system encompassing all the major living spaces a child experiences in his/her life as a human being. There is a unity in purpose, attitude, methodology and form in this education system. Generally, a comprehensive set of values almost dominate the entire nurturing process. The degree of 'homogeneity' is awesomely high in comparison to most countries in the world—possibly the most 'homogenous' among developed nations.

There is a curious exception, though. Given this unity of purpose and attitude, it is appalling to see how the Japanese streets are littered with millions of cigarette butts.

Chance Encounters in the Country

Getting an opportunity to stay over a month in the village/township of Niino has been a singular privilege. As with most countries with a substantial non-urban dimension, the heart and soul of the Japanese people is still very much rooted in the countryside.

About six hours by train from Tokyo along the Iida line off the shinkansen, Niino has only a few hundred households. Situated in the remote mountainous region on the southern tip of Nagano, it is surrounded by passionately conserved forests and rivers and streams—they are clear as crystal. Modernization has come upon the people here long ago but almost every household still retains a plot of land for rice, vegetables, orchards, or mushroom farming. Almost without exception, all the dwellings are detached houses. In most cases, their ancestors' graves are part of their habitat.

The affluence of the village folks is incredible. Apart from all the powered conveniences and modern heating, almost without exception, every household owns a car or two, or a saloon with 4WD wagon. And all the necessary mechanized farming tools. Much to my amazement, I found that even the toilet seats are heated throughout winter! Because they have ready access to the national media networks of print, radio, TV, fax, and the Internet, the Japanese country folks are very well informed. But none of these conveniences seem to have blunted their diligent, hardworking traits. Rain or shine, even in coldest snowy weather, they work a full day, sometimes into the night. And as meticulously clean and tidy and courteous as the city folks; if there is any difference, they are more so.

Here, the spiritual dimension is more enhanced than meets the eye in cities like Tokyo. The presence of ancestor graves in the home ground and the omnipresence of Shinto shrines exude a stronger spiritual feel. Niino, like other villages and townships, are rife with festivals deeply marked by religion. I had the privilege of witnessing the well-known Snow Festival on Jan. 14 when the whole village/township celebrated, along with a big contingent of tourists who came specially for this event. From morning, when they called on the gods, to the next morning. In heavy snow, up the hill, about 300 people spent the whole night singing, dancing, praying and merry-making. They expressed a strong sense of unity with the land, the sky, the plants, the animals, the elements and their fellow humans. Children before their teens, dressed in traditional costumes, were patiently initiated into the culture. Teenagers were methodically taught the ceremonial songs and dances, the rituals and the processions. Experiencing that process surrounded by a people so organically related to each other, one could almost feel that they were also celebrating with many more spirits around them—the animistic and their ancestral spirits. The sense of communion is awesomely strong.

Then the most incredible thing happened one day. As I was wandering around the village, the writing on a tablet caught my eye. I could read the kanji there—the young man had died in 1937 in Henan province in China, only a few hundred kilometers from where I was born two years later in the adjoining Hebei province. How incredible! Here I was, deep in the mountains of Nagano, feeling so remotely away from everything I was familiar with, and suddenly something that close to my early childhood exploded right in front of me. Of course, there was the bond of the war which had fatally and intricately tied us together.

The sequel to that story took place the next day when I was invited for lunch in the home of Niino's most respected master-builder. For some reason, they

mentioned that Grandpa, his father, who is semi-paralyzed and bed-ridden, had been to Manchuria. I instinctively sensed something significant dawning upon us. Indeed, again with the aid of kanji, we struggled to communicate more complicated meanings than the food. After the mistress walked in and out of Grandpa's bedroom several times to check the facts, we got it all cleared up: The old man had been soldiering first in Manchuria before being transferred to Pekan. Yes, the town of Pekan in the Malayan state of Pahang! Of course, I needn't have asked, he must have gone up to Pekan by way of Singapore.

On my way down the hill after lunch, I passed by the window of the old man who was looking out of the window, his habitual entertainment after every meal. When he saw me—for the first time—I noticed an extraordinary intensity. He must have known that the man he was looking at—me—had come from two countries where he had waged war with the local people. He knew the outcome of the war and he knew my identity. What was in his mind and how did his heart beat? I can only guess it was something extremely solemn because when I was a fair way down the slope and turned back to look at the house again, all the folks had gone back inside except the old man. He was still looking intensely at me, and he started waving at me with his healthy arm! It was the most poignant moment of my entire stay in Japan.

Probing the Bowing Giant

The Japanese countryside would probably seize my imagination for a long time to come. It is a weird mixture of the traits of modern America and under-developed China. In material affluence, it is as modern as the American countryside in all its power-driven amenities. In behavior, however, the Japanese countryside irresistibly reminded me of the desolate Chinese villages I knew so well. Of particular interest is a declaration certificate proudly displayed on the walls of every home I visited in Niino. It spells out the families' pledge to keep the village environmentally healthy, clean, and generative. The content is as American as the form is Chinese—it reminds me of the party- or state-initiated slogans and quotations in China evoking a strong sense of collective allegiance and personality. Yes, collective. One senses a much stronger collective mind in the Japanese village than in the cities—one that is intrinsically bound to the Shinto rituals, the gung-ho work ethics, the impeccable civic discipline, and the loyalty towards national leadership as represented by the Emperor in supreme form.

However, the Japanese farmers do not seem to have the 'self-interested' consciousness of the Chinese peasants nor the individuality of the American farmers. In this sense, we can understand why so many Chinese who left China since the opening up around 1990 have readily become citizens of other countries and, with fantastic speed and convertibility, become as 'individualistic' as the Americans. This number must be many times greater than all the Japanese who have left Japan voluntarily since the end of the war more than 50 years ago. It remains a highly collectivized community living in a largely homogenous culture with strict

hierarchies in work, articulation, play and worship. What has caused this distinctive sense of solidarity and closeness? Or closedness? The countryside experience has been immensely revealing to me in my understanding of the Japanese character.

If I have come to understand the Japanese better, I have also found them that much more enigmatic. Here they are: hardworking, disciplined, courteous, well educated, having successfully scaled the highest peak of material achievement and civility. Its multi-dimensioned excellence has earned the unquestioned respect of the world. And yet, this is the same people who have committed some of the most heinous atrocities ever towards their fellow humankind—against not only other nations but also to their own people! (Here I must thank Kato-san for introducing to me that remarkable book *Japan At War—An Oral History* brilliantly researched and edited by Haruko Taya Cook and Theodore Cook, published in 1992 by the New Press.)

The Japanese psyche fascinates me. While visiting the numerous museums and galleries, the Japanese public impressed me deeply with their sense of genuine interest and respect for anything that is culturally refined and excellent. And they themselves possess one of the most finely preserved treasures of national arts and culture. And yet, over an extended period of observation, I have come to realize that there exists an extraordinary feeling of insecurity, especially vis-a-vis the cultures of China and the U.S.. On this side of the Pacific is a country which Japan had invaded, partially occupied but never conquered—a nation which gave Japan some of the most seminal ancient cultural enlightenment and nourishments. On the other shore of the Pacific is the nation which Japan had first vanquished but eventually lost to in war—the country which has given Japan significant inspiration and education in most things that are modern and fashionable. From one perspective, Japan had the best of the ancient and the modern. In a sense, it is sandwiched between two powers of genuine greatness. To the Japanese, however, these greatneses seemed as awesome as they were venerable. Somehow, despite all the envious achievements Japan had won, and all the power it carries in its own hand, Japan still swings like a pendulum from extreme feelings of superiority and inferiority, unable to strike a comfortable balance in the face of China's classical splendor and the U.S.'s innovative modernity. The image of a bowing giant looking frustrated and unfulfilled often haunts my mind with deep unease. I have often wondered, and still wonder, how much that paradoxical character, that unique cultural psychology, had contributed to the powerful energy displayed in both its creative outbursts and its destructive explosions. In this respect, the mangga culture serves as a perverted expression of the tortured Japanese psyche, especially the erotic manggas (which stunned me with its spectacular popularity and availability even to young children) that always have a seemingly irreconcilable mix of loving tenderness and cruel violence.

Recently, the leading Chinese philosopher Li Ze Hou published an essay in the *Ming Pao Monthly* (Hong Kong, March through to June 1998) in which he advanced an observation that much of Japan's mixture of the high romantic (as expressed in such works as the *Tale of Genji*) and extreme cruelty (as in Mishima's novels) as well as the mixture of the love for life and worship for death (both

expressed in their passion for the cherry blossom) had their source in Japan's unique cultural character where the sensual and aesthetic outweigh the moral and the rational. Li seems to be saying that, in spite of the tremendous achievements in its modernization, the idea of the absolute supremacy of the Emperor and the irreconcilable greatness of the Yamato race is still very much dominating the inner depths of the Japanese cultural psychology. The primordial dream of an isolated people wishing to be a singularly supreme race remains intact at the core of the Japanese psyche almost one and a half centuries after the Meiji Restoration. Having safely secured the Number Two position of the world in economic might seems to have created no relief on Japan's siege mentality. It seems to verge close to a statement made by Singapore architect Tay Kheng Soon: 'Modernization without modernity,' a comment he coined for his own country Singapore. While this is an indication that the Japanese society is still immersed in semi-feudal culture (as is the case of much of the East and Southeast Asian societies), there are other special Japanese traits which deserve special mention. Such as its self-defined aloofness.

Having come this close to the Japanese people and culture, I feel both a sense of respective admiration and a sense of uncomfortable awe. My perplexity is enhanced when I relate to how the Japanese behaves overseas. In Singapore, for instance, I have been informed by several friends running property agencies who are in one voice when they complained that the Japanese, second only to the Koreans, are his most uncivilized tenants. Many of the Japanese clients dirty their residences; their furniture are often damaged and sometimes completely destroyed. I simply cannot understand how this could be possible given the extreme cleanliness and discipline I witnessed in Japan for four full months. But of course, personally, I would also concede that the Japanese I have met in Singapore and other parts of the world are never as courteous as they were in Japan itself. They always stick together. They always shop in Japanese shops and are always reluctant to speak another language. Why are these so? Why the appalling discrepancy in behaviour between living at home and overseas? On another level, the same questions are being asked by more and more people as the financial situation in Asia worsened: Why Japan, so wealthy and secure, so well endowed in financial resources and security-guaranteed by U.S. forces, is so slow in coming to the rescue of the Asian financial crisis when a country as financially weak as China had risked so much when confronted by the same crisis? Again, the haunting image of the bowing giant feeling frustrated and unfulfilled is flashed before me. Its feeling of insecure solitude exudes multiplied unease far beyond its shores.

Personally, I have never harbored any hatred toward the Japanese as a people. As a young man, our most respected heroes included those Japanese patriots who valiantly fought against Japanese militarism and got themselves killed or maimed. But, as a member of a generation which had personally witnessed the sufferings of the Pacific War, I cannot rest assured of a genuine friendship with Japan as a nation until its people as a whole had squarely faced the war honestly and fully. Having come this close to the Japanese people, I have a gut feeling that it is in the same act of honesty taking due responsibility for the war that Japan will begin to free

itself from that extraordinary complex which has been keeping the giant's head bowed low and its spirit frustrated. It will be a very, very long process. I have a feeling that it will be in that same courageous act of confronting the War Realities which would free Japan from its self-imposed constraints to springboard itself to genuine greatness.

Aspirations for an Earthian Fellowship

As an East and Southeast Asian (born in China and raised in Singapore) I feel our nations in East and Southeast Asia share many similar baggages with Japan—chiefly the semi-feudal culture which impedes our fuller entry into modernity. But our region pervades with a general openness and sense of relaxation while Japan is forever feeling threatened. If Japan feels threatened living between two giants, we should feel ten times more intimidated by high-powered presence of the U.S., China, Japan, and Europe. Because our region had once been colonies to all of them. Going by some of the Japanese scholars' assertion, Southeast Asia had for decades been seen as a vehicle for Japan to balance the might of the U.S. and China. Be that as it may, Southeast Asia had benefited from that strategic consideration. However, after a supposedly partnership for development of more than 50 years, the relationship between Japan and Southeast Asia remains problematic. I wonder how many Japanese realize that there has always been an urge in Southeast Asia, especially among the vast Indonesian intellectual community, to look towards Japan as a source of liberal ideas, democratic inspiration, and liberating support. Much as the ethnic Chinese remain suspicious of Japanese militarism, their fervent desire to re-forge friendly relations which had existed long before the Sept. 18, 1931 (The Manchurian) Incident that preceded the Asian-Pacific War, the Japanese nation singularly focused their efforts on profit-making enterprises. In spite of the increasing number of NGOs with genuine interest to create people-to-people relationship with Southeast Asia, the image of the self-centred Japan remain deeply rooted. In this context, the theme of the Asian Leadership Fellow Program, Culture and Development, exudes unusual significance. It lies in the understanding that unless there is a parallel change in attitude, in value judgment, and in the respect for people equality, talks of development and mutual progress remain veils to camouflage political and economic inroads. Well do we all know how 'aid' has aggravated exploitation of the 'have' nations against the 'have-not' nations.

Before the 1980s, development had always been treated as political, economic, and social issues. The significance of culture had been kept on the periphery, enjoying very low priority. Now we are beginning—just beginning—to know better. The cultural dimension contains deep-set emotional, rational, artistic and spiritual habits, values, and patterns which substantially affect the practical operations of any political-economic-social scheme. The ALFP has introduced many resources, including some seminal ideas which I was never aware of. For me at least, this intense four-month exposure in Japan has given me enough to begin a

comparative understanding between the cultures (or cultural psychology) of Japan, Singapore (and Southeast Asia) and China. I am particularly interested, partly due to my profession, in the expanding 'leisure dimension' which broadly include sports, tourism, fashions, entertainment and the arts (popular and elitist). This is the dimension that reaches the deeper recesses of people's minds and emotions, impulses and desires. It may be seen as simply play. But play is also a significant mode of human expression parallel as important as work and knowledge to our species. Given this, the Asian Leadership Fellow Program well lends itself to be a timely vehicle for the exchange of ideas, for networking and for subsequent practical implementation of new found concepts and practices—to reach for a deep mutual understanding.

I have found a curious affinity with Japan, as I have earlier found with the Southeast Asian countries and peoples. It's a cultural one. Specifically, I feel we are all still, in different degrees, prisoners of semi-feudal culture. We are all still locked in a mode of thinking and behaving subject to the control of hierarchical and patriarchal systems. The leading figures or institutions of these hierarchies still dominate our psyches, restraining us from transcending our narrow ethnic interests and nationalistic views. In cultural terms, they limit our potentials for autonomous thinking and creativity. In economic terms, they limit our potentials for innovation development. In political terms, they accumulate potential elements for war and destruction. But, without doubt, Japan, in Asia, still possesses the resources and potentials for advancing fully into modernity—in the liberation of the self, in the democratization of society and in the realization of the knowledge-based mode of production and exchange. Possibly more so than any other East and Southeast Asian people and nation. If we share anything at all, we share, on the one hand, a demon in our culture and our spirit or psyche which still responds to the conservative calls of narrow feudalistic desires and myopic nationalistic selfishness. On the other hand, we also share a body of rich cultural resources (together described as the eastern culture) which could offer the world now dominated by western culture a treasure of wisdom and experience with the complementary energy to help evolve a global or earthian fellowship, of peace and harmony. That the ALFP has been able to inspire such idealism is a measure of the program's worthiness. For each of us fellows from Southeast Asia, however, there is a personal challenge at hand which is specifically ours.

Toward a Southeast Asian Intellectual Reflection

Many descriptions have been given to the second half of the 20th century. In almost every one of them, the rise of Southeast Asia has commanded special attention. In a way, between the earlier revival of Japan and the recent awakening of China, Southeast Asia's emergence as a substantial, even major, entity has probably been more historic in significance than the other two. If not for any other reason, the very idea and practical working of Southeast Asia as a grouping had never existed

before. Nanyang, to the Chinese Kingdom, was all those islands and peoples south of the sea of China whereas the East Indies, to the western powers, meant that entire vast region between India, China, and Australia which was profitably theirs over centuries of colonial exploitation. For a colossal price exacted by the Japanese aggression, the peoples of Southeast Asia began to write a new page for themselves after World War II. (I was told by a Japanese scholar that this regional name was actually given by the Japanese, its original term being East South Asia—one that the Japanese and Chinese still use today.) Partly aided by the geopolitics of the Cold War, but mainly through the perseverance of the peoples of the region, Southeast Asia has made it to the major league in world economics and politics. But, as Dr. Kwok Kian Woon has been asking in a significant manner: What is the meaning of the 20th century? It is desirable and inevitable that the intellectuals of this region should confront the even more locally urgent question: What is the meaning of Southeast Asia?

At the beginning of the post-war years, Southeast Asia was largely manipulated by the major powers. It served firstly as both a major supply base of critical raw materials for industrialization and war as well as a huge market for export of goods, followed by the export of capital. Later on, despite super power efforts to retain their reigns on the region, when Southeast Asia struggled to gain relative independence and influence, the region was used as proxies for political, economic contests as well as for war mongering. It is only from the 1980s on that Southeast Asia had asserted itself as a major entity in world affairs, enjoying increasing independence. However, on the way, and it's been a long and tortuous journey, few, if anyone, had bothered to seriously study the larger question: What is the meaning and significance of Southeast Asia in the World? Indeed, I am no scholar on the subject and cannot pretend to have the answers, but I do have several concerns.

Firstly, our own experience as weaker nations and subject peoples in Southeast Asia gave us a prolonged and in-depth understanding of the horrors and injustices of colonization, cross-national exploitation, unbalanced development and war. For having been the target of direct aggression as well as battlefields and proxies of other people's wars, Southeast Asians have developed a natural bend for peace. After centuries of total and/or semi-colonization, Southeast Asian nations also deeply understand the often destructive effects of unbalanced development of humans and the environment. Now that the region has come to its own, a moral voice must be evolved to advance the cause of peace and the cause of benign balanced development regionally and globally. I don't think such a Southeast Asian voice has ever been there apart from assertions by the political leaderships such as that of ASEAN. That the voice should be distinctly 'people-based' is critically important now that the international community is already in full agreement that the civil society must increasingly take up a larger role alongside government actions.

Secondly, our geographic-cultural position has naturally awarded us the role of mediator for the major cultures and civilizations of the world. This is a paradox of history: The colonized, in their awakened rise, have turned the table on their former

rulers and are themselves now holding all the ropes, channels, and media which had yoked them for centuries. As contemporary writers of these former colonies 'write back' to their former imperial overlords, intellectuals of Southeast Asia can now utilize all the former imperial cultures for their own good. Seen in a larger perspective, all the cultures which their former colonizing powers had brought to Southeast Asia designed to subjugate and to displace the local cultures have now been absorbed and integrated into a far richer Southeast Asian culture. By its very nature a multi-sourced one, this Southeast Asian culture has the unique trait of having absorbed most of the major living civilizations and cultures of the world—Indian, Chinese, Islamic-Malay, Euro-American, Japanese, and Oceanic. Perhaps nowhere else in the world could one find a living multi-culture existing in such great diversity than in Southeast Asia where each strand is represented by a large identifiable thriving population currently retaining its own language and culture while living, by and large, peacefully with all the other component communities. Recent events, however, particularly in Indonesia, had begun posing a cruelly blunt question: Was this relative peace and harmony perhaps only an accident in history? The question is doubly disturbing when one considers the fact that the period of relative peace and rapid growth largely took place when the superpowers were still calling the cards. Does it mean that, when relative independence becomes a reality, Southeast Asia is proving itself incapable of creating better, more peaceful, more harmonious, more benign and more balanced progress?

Sadly, even those who have given negative answers to the foregoing questions cannot deny that the Southeast Asian 'people' (if it can be agreed at all that there is such a being) has yet to show that there really is such a clear awareness, not to mention the fact that there is definitely not yet an intellectual force engaged in such aspirations. Equally true is that, very possibly, few intellectuals would disagree that such a force should be initiated. Perhaps, more hopefully, such a gathering of forces may have already become a necessity. For in the information age, with knowledge being the most valued factor of production, the idea of retaining and expanding Southeast Asia's multi-cultural/civilizational assets will be the advantageous lifeline for the region's long-term progress and prosperity. The critical question is: Would this former colonized region, on becoming affluent, be able to retain the sense of morality which had inspired many generations and many billions of people to rise first in arms and then in productivity to reach where they are now. The relevance of this question does not stop at the pure moral level. However, unless the larger moral issues underline Southeast Asia's future development principles and strategies, this former region of subjugation and exploitation may in turn become another exploitative power in itself. And there are signs that this is actually happening. Should this become the major trend, all the diverse ethnic, religious, cultural and civilizational resources could as easily become ammunition for an extraordinarily explosive and destructive intra-regional war.

The public intellectuals in Southeast Asia are therefore faced with an historic task of initiating dialogue on these critically important subjects and issues, and to evolve ways and means to create a network of peoples and ideas—for exchange,

debate, dissemination, and prompt action. Historically, and to date this is still true, the center of Southeast Asian networks had always been sited in the west and, more recently, in Japan. As such, much influence and control are also outside the region. Could there be autonomous Southeast Asian networks centered in the region itself? Programs such as the ALFP could initiate such awareness and connections. But to look to Japan for future leadership is a negation of the very task itself. For some time, the way to reach the capital cities of Southeast Asian nations may still go through Tokyo, London, New York, Paris, or Berlin. But once the channels are established, Southeast Asians owe it to themselves to run on their own steam in the mammoth task of evolving an awareness of their own, of finding out what Southeast Asia is all about, of identifying its own energies, and of the role it defines for itself for the future.

In Sincere Gratitude

The benign combination of a number of reasons have unlocked a large amount of life-explaining resources to me during my four months in Japan. The people gathered around me formed a formidable field of energy. Learned and reflective, giving and inviting, challenging and inspiring, warm and sharp, free and disciplined, caring and care-free, the ALFP companionship opened my mind and relaxed my senses. The density and intensity of the Japanese culture, the purity and beauty of the land and people, the provocative dark shadows of the Japanese culture and history, the bizarre mixture of the fragrance of the cherry blossom, the bloody scent of the sword and the crystal clarity of the mountain streams... the combined force of these and numerous other factors have somehow created a state of hypersensitiveness in me. My sense of history vis-a-vis my people was enhanced by graves sited in Nagano. My sense of artistic beauty and tragedy was enhanced by the murals of the Marugis. My sense of tragedy was enhanced by the destruction and deaths of Nogi and wife his sons. My sense of humanity was enhanced by that old man whom I stared at and looked at with wonder and awe, he who had soldiered in Manchuria and Malaya. My sense of human brotherhood was enhanced by having touched, to a depth and an honesty never before experienced, the feelings and thoughts of a sizable group of intellectuals in East and Southeast Asia.

For all of these things (sometimes heartening, mostly frustrating and at times torturing), I wish to put on record my deep appreciation to the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center. For their inviting me to participate in this exceptionally well-conceived program conducted with much warmth and efficiency. If, in my direct and often blunt ways of expression, I happen to have offended anyone in anyway, I wish to seek your understanding and forgiveness. I wish to keep as long time friends all the new acquaintances I have made during the program, so I will be able to continuously learn from all of them and to share ideas of common interest for the development of a better world for the future. I don't exactly know how. I can only hope. The young speakers at the conference organized by the

Japanese Theater Directors' Association gave me reason for hope. They do not number many today, but they are young. Didn't a wise man once say, 'When the young amongst the people begin to take their culture seriously, there is great hope for its future.'

Postscript

The play I did research on in Japan had been staged successfully as a major sold-out event at the Singapore Arts Festival in June 1998. Three Japanese directors and playwrights flew over for the premiere. Afterwards, we celebrated together. The play was inspired by the Japanese cemetery in Singapore. It's simply called 'The Spirits Play.' This production was invited to the Chinese Theater Festival in Hong Kong in November 1998 and played with great success to the Chinese audience there. Four Japanese directors and one producer saw it there and plans are under way to stage the play in Japan in 1999. In this regard, the support of the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center had already borne fruit. I gratefully acknowledge their assistance.

Track-three Intellectuals and the Asia Leadership Fellow Program: Notes From A 1997 Fellow

Goenawan Mohamad

Introduction

In 1989, I went to Harvard as a Nieman fellow. It was a great opportunity to be at an excellent center of learning. I had access to facilities and things that in Indonesia were and still are not generally available: book stores, libraries, great lectures, and seminars. I immensely enjoyed my stay at Cambridge, Massachusetts. I thought I would never find an experience of similar kind. I was wrong. When I was selected to be a fellow of the 1997 Asia Leadership Fellow Program (ALFP) sponsored by the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center, I found my stay in Japan was at least as intellectually enriching and enjoyable as my two semesters at Harvard. It was even better, at some points.

Let me make a brief comparative note.

The Nieman Fellowship is an annual program designed specifically to cater to more than twenty mid-career journalists from all over the world. You meet and talk mostly to people from the same profession. It has its great advantage: we could easily talk shop to each other. The drawback is that gradually you get the feeling that you are never far from your newsroom or your old press club. You would be surprised to meet someone who is interested in, and have a first hand knowledge of, let us say, the theater or research on low-income groups. Of course, the energetic Nieman program director (they call it, curiously, "curator"), Bill Kovach, was instrumental in making sure that there was a good supply of pundits, resource persons, and people with interesting backgrounds. Yet, you could only go as far as picking their brains at professional level. If you want to have more intensive encounters and exchange of ideas with non-journalists at a more personal level, you have to go out of your way and make time for them.

The Asia Leadership Fellow Program and the 1997 Fellows

The ALFP has three strong points. First, the small number of the fellows selected for the program annually. In 1997, there were only five. Second, we came from different backgrounds and professional training, yet shared the same focus of

concern, which largely touches upon issues of freedom, democracy, and development. Third, we were from neighboring countries (Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore, Japan, and Indonesia), with more or less similar patterns of social and cultural problems.

The small number has the advantage of being a more auspicious beginning when it comes to giving enough space for in-depth discussions and congeniality. Living next door at I-House to Ishak Bin Sari, a professor of economics who has done a lot of reasearch on Malaysian public policy dealing with income disparity, and having the chance to talk with him during my free time, I could get a better insight on the dilemma between an idea of justice and a notion of freedom and their practical consequences. From several breakfasts with another fellow, Ota-san, a Japanese anthropologist who does his research in South America, I gained more thought-provoking theses about problems of identity-formation in human societies. Ota-san is an academic versed in the current post-structuralist theories that are helpful also for non-academic, non-anthropological pursuits.

One of the fellows was Kuo Pao Kun, a playwright and theater director from Singapore. To me, he is a gentle embodiment of "the aesthetic spirit" muddling through the confines of a highly modernized non-western society—a free soul against a national obsession for orderliness. Although he is not an academic, he is an articulate man of ideas. Next to his perceptive observations of things big and small is his whole engaging personality. In this case, conversation and companionship, not theories or concept-filled discourse, opened the door for different perspectives of life. The same applied to my friendship with Laddawan, or "Job", another fellow from Thailand. She is not a woman of many words. Unlike the other fellows, she is not an intellectual who writes long academic articles. She is a social activist through-and-through. She stands for the other side of a public intellectual: that which has a strong emphasis on praxis. To me, she did it not by engaging me in a discursive discussion, but just by telling stories of her works in Thailand—a country in transition to a more democratic nation-state.

Track-three Intellectuals and the Asia Leadership Fellow Program

My point is that by just being a member of a "team" consisting of persons from different backgrounds was such a privilege. It helped to stimulate further intellectual probing on current issues of immediate importance—especially because three of my fellow fellows are from ASEAN countries and another one has a good grasp of problems associated with the promises and the pains of a changing society. "Immediate importance" is a keyword in the life of a "track-3 intellectual".

This concept of "track-3 intellectual" is a helpful one if you want to come to terms with the order of things in "old societies, new nation-states." In this respect, the ALFP as conceived by the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center is commendable. It shows a good insight of things and a daring imagination. It fills the gap left by many convenors of seminars, symposia, and

conferences which normally focus on having people of ideas coming from a conventionally defined "disciplines" or having socially defined "professions". The problem is that in countries like the Phillipines and Indonesia you observe a baffling fluidity of institutions due to an abrupt break from a not-so-distant colonial past. No wonder, in these countries, significant changes—both inside and outside the arena of ideas—are to a large extent the works of the so-called "public intellectuals." In my view, these so-called "public intellectuals" are people capable of generating all kinds of alternative discourse, and improving the quality of debate through a good dosage of praxis and of politics.

What is also commendable is the ALFP's unstructured agenda. While the Harvard's Nieman Fellowship gives the fellows freedom to attend any class at the university that suits their liking, classes are classes. They are basically structured by a set of requirements like time, frequency, and certain paper works. Another problem at Harvard which proved to be inevitable was that there were too many classes to choose from. You simply had to rely on others' rating of a class and trust your luck to get something that is to your liking and hopefully, may find "useful" eventually.

The ALFP does not have these problems. You are practically free to do whatever you opt to. You create your own "classes", which are always in the form of seminars and discussions. You do not have to write a mid-term paper. The beauty is that the program always has a limited number of participants. You do not have to worry about bumping into loud-mouthed students who prided themselves in asking bad questions to lecturers. A more intensive, thoughtful discussion is always more conducive to any adventure in the realm of ideas.

Surely, the quality of small seminars/lectures chosen or attended by the fellows was not always great. At the end of my ALFP fellowship, I got invited to a conference outside Tokyo that to me had better food served than the intellectual exchange. Although, it was immensely useful to have met great people during the break. I consider myself lucky that I had, for example, the opportunity to discuss Professor Yoshikazu Sakamoto's famous ideas of "civil society" with the man himself. Prof. Teruo Sekimoto was, to me, another interesting person to meet and to talk with, not only as an academic but also as a wholesome intellectual. He is doing research for a forthcoming book on Indonesian batik industry—a book that I am sure will be of path-breaking quality, both in its wealth of materials and its theoretical thrust. I was fortunate to have met him. We became friends immediately. He allowed me to use his house in Kamakura to do my writing and to return his graciousness, I requested him to give a talk at my place in Jakarta when he visited Indonesia several months ago. Unfortunately, I missed the talk myself.

This brings me to the other plus factor of the ALFP: its approach is cosmopolitan, but its base is regional. I believe that ALFP has a role in shaping ideas of what Asia is to become someday. From my stay in Japan, I could assemble some thoughts that I would like to put in this short report.

The Asian Economic Crisis

Five years before the current crisis, it was a shared belief that in the year 2010 Asia will be the source of 35 percent of the world's wealth, against 18 percent for the US and 17 percent for western Europe (*Financial Times*, 9 March 1993). It is not certain now whether the belief has not been shattered by the economic meltdown of 1998.

The drive for greater economic prosperity was something that sustained in one way or another the idea of "Asia" in the early 1990s. People talked of the "Asian miracle"—which was the rapid spread of wealth in many countries in the Far East. In 1970, the wealth was limited mainly to Japan. Soon the shares of other Asian countries grew. The forecast was that by 2010, Japan's share of the wealth would decline from three-quarters to one-quarter in favor of China, Korea, and the ASEAN countries. There was a sense of pride, even hubris, when people in Korea, or Singapore, or Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia talked about "Asian values." It was the right way not only to pave the way for economic growth, but also to manage internal conflicts of a country, underscoring less individual liberty and promoting "consensus" guided by an enlightened national leadership.

The meltdown has brought us back to the ground. Now, after not much of the old smugness left, there is one major question: what will be the axis of Asian regionalism?

Asian regionalism is in many ways different from the European one. Asia, particularly East Asia, is a wide geographical territory shaped largely more by sea routes than by continental treks. Most of the encounters took place in history as low-intensity conflicts and fragile alliances. It had no imperial centers, imagined or otherwise. Therefore, Asian regionalism has no well-defined border. Its aim has never been to create a single supranational entity or a federal political arrangement.

It is, at present, even more difficult to perceive Asia as an "imagined" order or a common entity. Under the pressure to survive the current economic crisis, even ASEAN nations—the most prominent regional cooperation in the Far East—compete with one another to get the best share of aids, investments, and trades from the US and Europe. Given the current shortage of foreign funds to revive the ASEAN economies, the economic crisis may erode the very basis of this regional association. The basis is first of all political, i.e. the political goodwill of its members to avoid regional conflicts, after the damaged done by Soekarno's politics of "konfrontasi".

The ASEAN *raison d'être* is still valid: no major conflict should take place between and among these neighboring countries. Proximity has its own potential hazards. Half-joking I would like to point out that last year, the haze generated by Indonesian forest fires created havoc that affected Singaporean drivers. But besides the old *raison d'être*, a new impetus has to be introduced to ASEAN in particular, and preferably also to an even more inclusive Asian regional cooperation. This new impetus should not be an ideological outcry against the thrusts of globalized market economy. Like it or not, the current globalized economy is here to stay and it is

marching into the next millenium with triumphant notes. The new impetus should be a more pragmatic one. For example, it should promote the potential benefits of projects like "the growth triangle" of Johore, which brings together southern Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia's Batan Island. The triangle will open more effective and efficient avenues to generate traffic of capital and work force in the countries concerned.

Many people are concerned about the future of Indonesia as a nation-state. Alarmists even talk of a "Balkanization" of this huge archipelago. To be sure, the mismanagement and abuses committed by the Soeharto's New Order regime in various parts of Indonesia had given rise to repressed anger and frustrations at the grass-root levels. Secessionist ideas and movements are gaining ground. However, any kind of secession will create a deep wound in the nation's psyche. It is not inconceivable that it may even lead to a large-scale violence—a greater national tragedy. To prevent or minimize potential damages, projects that give benefits to the local people and at the same time emphasize the positive sides of inter-ASEAN proximity may play a major, if not crucial, role. Projects of this nature may persuade local people to opt for more prudent and farsighted negotiations to reach a better solution to their plight and grievances vis-à-vis the "center", which is the national government controlling and administering the country from Jakarta.

There is also another reason not to undo Asia's regionalist imperative—no matter how vague, fluid, and flexible the concept is. It has something to do with the need to find ways to prevent further damages brought about by currency speculators. Some new regulatory measures have to be introduced in this globalized capital market dominated by hedge funds managers.

There is something worth looking into in George Soros's recent idea to create an international (or supranational?) body that will act like a central bank with a preemptive influence on economic policies in countries which could ultimately turn to it as an "international lender of the last resort." As Soros puts it, "free market fundamentalism"—the belief that markets are perfect—is a "false and dangerous ideology." There should be a set of regulations pressing for more disclosure of how funds are managed internationally. Because Asian countries have unwittingly become accomplices and later victims of "free market fundamentalism," they are the ones that should work together to explore new ways and means to give the market a good guidance. Obviously such a project cannot be accomplished by one country. It should be a joint undertaking of nations with great economic potentials like the ones you see in Asia.

Asians, of course, should not be concerned only with problems and issues related to economic growth. Recent political changes taking place in Taiwan, Thailand, Korea, and Indonesia are the best examples of how authoritarian regimes had failed to manage national economies. The absence of public accountability had brought about the false promise of "ersatz" or/and "crony" capitalism. To prevent a revival of authoritarianism, Asian nations should build a strong network of international and regional "civil societies." The idea of "Asian values" was misleading: it was state repression paraded as voluntary consensus.

However, networking is not only essential to generate a cross-national support promoting democratic reforms. A network of international and regional "civil societies" may also play a positive role in the current erosion of the "nation-state" myth.

Today, national governments everywhere have to deal with increasing explosions of "identity politics." Identity politics are, of course, political struggles waged by people who assume for themselves a definite identity (based on religion, ethnicity, or gender.). There is a risk that such political struggles will create highly conflict-ridden societies. A cross-national network of "civil societies" free from any government control may bring back the belief that there are worthy values to be universally shared by different people with different identities.

I strongly believe that the alumni of the Asia Leadership Fellow Program can contribute to this network in the near future.

Notions of and Questions on Identity: Asian Leadership Program Report

Ota Yoshinobu

I

During the two months—from Sept. 1 till Oct. 31, 1997—I spent with other four fellows in Tokyo proved to be very important in my intellectual personal growth; I only hope I somehow managed to contribute something to others who have interacted with me. Being an academic, working within the limited area of interest, I always felt the need to broaden my vistas; this program afforded me an opportunity to do so. For this I am grateful for the invitation from Japan Foundation Asia Center and the International House of Japan to participate in the program in 1997. I also appreciate assistance from everyone at the institutions mentioned above, who made my stay in Tokyo a memorable one.

II

During the tenure of my fellowship I have completed the draft of the book which I had been working on since 1994: the book was subsequently published from Sekai Shisoshu. I also finished the final draft of my paper entitled "Nation in Doubt, Identity in Question, and Hybrid Society" (later published in *IHJ Bulletin*, 18:1, pp. 11-16). The latter work reflects my own position on such issues as the effect of globalization (the issue that Isak Shari, also a fellow in residence with me, is interested) on local cultures and peoples, the question of identity (the issue that Goenawan Mohamad has addressed). I have benefited from my discussions with other fellows—Kuo Pao Kun and Laddawan—in order to finalize the draft of my paper.

Among the issues that we discussed, the most intriguing is as follows: the question of modernity in Asia. For example, we have discussed—as I understand them—the following concrete questions. Is it possible to enter modernity as Asians? Does this mean that, as some suggests, Asian modernity is characterized by Asian values? How does "modern" individual emerge in Asia? What does "culture" do under the strong state control of artistic productions? What is a nature of civil society in Asia and how is it possible to have global linkages with other nations? Or, is

"nation" already an obsolete category for the purpose of conceptualizing such a linkage.

At the same time we have had some difficulties in our discussions of such key concepts as culture: an anthropological usage of the term, on the one hand, a humanistic usage of the term, on the other. The tension between the two have persisted till the end, and I am not certain if the tension was a productive one or not. While I feel I wanted to have more focused discussions than we had, I also see the good point of more open-ended discussions where unexpected vistas would open up; therefore, I am somewhat divided what to recommend for the future as to the nature of the topic. But, the following topics might be worth investigation within the framework of this fellowship for the future: (1) the rise of Asian regionalism; (2) the lure of nationalism in the age of globalization.

III

Since I was the first Japanese participant, I have no experience to compare mine with my predecessors; however, I have immensely enjoyed an intense experience of living together at the International House of Japan. I still recommend that a local Japanese participant would be added to a group of the internationally invited participants. The weekend retreat as well as a series of visits to parts of Japan other than Tokyo and discussions I had there were all exciting. Even if I have prior contacts (such as Hokkaido University in Sapporo), I think the vistas would provide still important contacts with scholars and activists in these areas.

IV

The following is the text that I have revised and completed during my stay in Tokyo. While the topic of our fellowship dealt with the development and culture in Asia, I repeatedly questioned myself about how the notion of development came to be associated with the western society as a model. What is a shape of modernity not simply reactive to western modernity?: e.g., modernity grew out of "Asian values," whatever these values mean. For the purpose of thinking about such a question, I wanted to discuss the notion of identity based on nationality, since the question of identity has been often fallen into the prey of such a reactive thought.

V

"Nation in Doubt, Identity in Question, and Hybrid Society"

A question of identity—to put rather crudely, "who am I?" or "who are we?"—has been raised in as many different fields as there are in humanities and

human sciences; today, it is the question that has been most often raised, and it is the question whose answers are heatedly debated in those fields. What this question of identity entails exactly depends on some important qualifications that further complicate it. I list, as follows, almost randomly such qualifications: who poses it and to whom, though rhetorically, is it addressed?; in what context is it raised?; when and for what purpose is it raised? To illustrate the importance of these qualifications, I begin this essay by contrasting this question of identity, which was posed from two different positions, one issued from the position of dominance, while the other from that of subordination.

First, the most symptomatic of European imperialism was a literary movement called modernism, the movement which emphasized the irreparable loss and nostalgia for the authentic and organic. Those involved in this movement, including such American figures as Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Ezra Pound, viewed their world crumbling into chaotic jumble, a clear indication of which was World War I; therefore, they all went to various destinations in Europe for the purpose of regaining a sense of self—their identities—something needed to reimagine critically the nature of European civilization. Already in their effort—which I do not uncritically endorse, of course—a question of identity was enmeshed with issues of order, belonging, and displacement, among others.

But, white European males—exemplars of my first position—are not the only ones raising the question of identity; in fact, their displacement was chosen and empowered by the global politico-economic regime of the day, while there were others who had raised the question more forcefully from the position of subordination, the position created by the regime which made Euro-American modernism possible.

*What I have in mind as an example of the second position is that of W.E.B. DuBois. DuBois, an African-American historian and sociologist, stated, in 1903, as follows, prefiguring a question of identity in a surprisingly contemporary manner: "It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in a amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder." (**The Soul of Black Folk**)*

Black identity, according to DuBois in this particular writing, was expressed as the negation of self-identity, that is, "looking at one's self through the eyes of others." Being an "integrationist," (or "assimilationist" might be a more suitable term to describe his position in 1903), DuBois still believed in the ideal of becoming a citizen of the U.S., which had been rejecting "blacks" to the margins of society through its racist practices. It is the duty of black elites so-called "the Talented Tenth"

to lead this process of assimilation, which he thought would eliminate what he refers to in the quotation above the 'double consciousness.'

I have quoted at length from DuBois, not because I naively identify myself with his position vis-à-vis American society, but because I think that it pointed out difficult issues surrounding the question of identity in the contemporary world. Formulating as questions, I enumerate them as follows: is a nation still adequate unit of belonging?; or, is it an ethnic group adequate unit? how do "immigrants" relate to their newly settled countries?; what kind of identities are articulated in this diasporic dislocation?; how is national identity constructed?; at what cost?; what is the role of historical memory in the construction of identity?

Thus, a contemporary discussion of identity needs to include an examination of various modes of "belonging" to community—nation-state and ethnic group—precisely when such communities are made problematic as the process of globalization constantly denaturalizes the legitimacy of nation-state and ethnic community as the original and primary source of identification, something that grounds a mode of belonging; therefore, I discuss in the following section nationalism in two forms: one based in terms of nationality, the other, ethnicity. Then, turning to a critique of nationalism, I examine in the third section the critical notion of hybridity, also divided in two conceptual polarities.

But, how does such a mode of belonging expressed? One cannot simply express one's identification with a community, unmediated, as it were. My answer at this stage is a tentative one, but is as follows: it is representation in a culture that mediates the individual to a community that calls one's identity into being. Thus, in the following section I would like to discuss, with fear of appearing overly pedantic, some key terms such as representation, culture, and identity, as they relate to a debate on a mode of belonging.

Belonging: Nationality and Ethnicity

Answers to a question, "who am I?" might include such individual attributes as name, gender, sexuality, familial relations, and such social attributes as status, "race," nationality, language, religion, and so on. But, to complicate a process of answering this question, I would like to point out that gender, sexuality, nationality, and "race," for example, are not innocent categories; they imply more than what they mean; connotations always exceed denotations. Being "Japanese" can simply be a statement of nationality, while it conjures, depending on to whom this nationality is expressed, historical memories of war, images of economic expansionism, and secretive political body; such memories and images are then translatable into stereotypic ideas of being "Japanese": aggressive, passive, secretive, avaricious, polite, insolent, all of which are necessarily contradictory, as Ruth Benedict pointed out a long time ago.

Certainly, these connotations do not float in the air, but are socially anchored, produced and reproduced in representational practices. Such representations

produce other-representations as well as self-representations, both of which are configured simultaneously; in other words, representations about the Self are inseparable from creating representations about the Other. Furthermore, since representations socially circulate, the meanings of these representations are not immune to re-evaluation by the subjects in different positions, so to speak, the process referred to below as transcoding. This process has historically occurred frequently not only in colonial contact zones but in national urban spaces.

"Who produces these representations and to what purpose in mind?" is a very important question, as it points to the control and deployment of power, yet "who consumes them, and how?" is as important as the previous question, for it also destabilizes the singularly coercive view of power. A representation is interpretable in a sense that its potential for various conflicting meanings is always real; in other words, an act of interpretation plies open potentials for meanings of these representations. For this reason, an identity articulated in representations is actively produced by the power that smoothes contradictory meanings and strives for a unitary meaning to which an individual is invited to identify for a time being. But, the individual in turn negotiates such a meaning, avoiding the final closure to it. Thus, identity is not "being," but "becoming," as Stuart Hall reminds us, a continuous act of negotiation itself.

According to the process of identity formation summarized above, national identity is not simply given. For example, an issue of national identity becomes complicated as soon as it is considered something more than just a legal issue. A question, "who is Japanese?" has been contested historically as a cultural issue; that is, "who is included and who is excluded from this nation?" Okinawan intellectuals, for instance, from Ifa Fuyū to Oshiro Tatsuhiro, have repeatedly raised the following question: "what does it mean to be Okinawan in Japanese nation-state?" To them this question comes from their reflections on experiences and histories of subtle exclusion and marginalization of Okinawan people from Japan. This question raised by Okinawan intellectuals is not simply a question for Okinawans but is also a question for the Japanese mainlanders; since a discussion of Okinawan identity is inseparable from that of Japanese identity at large.

Ifa Fuyū (1876-1947), an Okinawan intellectual of great renown, claimed in 1914 that the incorporation of Ryukyu kingdom, enacted through several stages, had been "a kind of emancipation from slavery." "Emancipation" is a rather shocking term to describe the political process of rendering Ryukyus into Okinawa, the process completed in 1879; this statement comes from Ifa's reading of Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery* published in 1901. To avoid a possible misunderstanding, I should emphasize immediately that by the term "slavery" Ifa meant the condition of subordination without a definite sense of identity: Ryukyuan were suspended in the tension—constructed forcefully by others—between being Chinese and being Japanese, the condition preferable to the Satsuma clan which had siphoned revenues from trade relationships between China and Ryukyu kingdom. Thus, Ryukyuan "slavery" prepared financially for the emergence of modern Japanese nation-state

since it had supplied wealth for Satsuma clan which was instrumental in 1868 restoration.

Ifa considered national identity was something that had been lacking for Okinawans; in this case, Okinawans as Japanese. His desire for winning recognition from the Japanese is something akin, perhaps, to liberating oneself from "double consciousness," the desire for integration also expressed by DuBois. I think Ifa's effort in recuperating *Omoro*, Okinawan courtly poems, was, academic interest aside, to establish a historical link between ancient Japanese culture with the Okinawan counterpart. Regaining a historical commonality with the Japanese as represented in *Omoro* poems was his way of identifying with the Japanese. (Of course, his intellectual trajectory did not end here, and any extended discussion of it remains outside of the limit of this paper.)

Leaving Okinawa for a moment, I would like to discuss another way of formulating identity. This time without relying on the promise of integration, one moves toward the opposite direction, that is, separation. Nowadays, this move has been hotly debated because of its association with nationalism (or, its variant, ethnic absolutism) that empowers members tremendously through proposing a unified value system but creates absolute gaps between its members and non-members. The sharp separation of members from non-members are represented in differences between cultures. I should point out that it is not only minority groups that sometimes resort to this mode of formulating identity but the majority in power does as well. Thus, according to conservative critiques like Arthur Schlesinger, an American historian, Afro-centrism, for example, is a form of tribalism, or Balkanization, that potentially disrupts American national unity, because it privileges a distinctive cultural unity among African-Americans, the unity that results in separation. He is vocal in criticizing it, while he remains silent to such an idea as Huntingtonian "clash of civilization," which is clearly based on the same organic and integrated view of culture. Schlesinger considers natural the logic of cultural separation at the level of nationality, but finds "elitist" the same logic at the level of ethnicity.

I repeat that nationalism has not always been the source of evil in contemporary world; its status is really contingent on historical contexts as any form of politics might be. Nationalism among minorities, the oppressed and the marginalized formulates powerful identities through transcoding: a process of assigning new meanings often opposite of dominant ones to the key terms. For example, the term, "black" in the U.S. was revalued by black activists in the sixties as powerful and positive symbol of identification for blacks—"black is beautiful." In the United Kingdom the same term "black"—which only white British people had used to describe non-white peoples—was mobilized in the seventies to consolidate various urban populations of color such as Caribbean, African, and South Asian.

Nationalism invites people to commit themselves deeply to a community through various powerful representations of sentiment and historical memories. It is local and sedentary since it derives its power from territoriality, which is often represented in such expressions as defending one's "homeland" and, in a case of

diaspora communities, a return to such a place, albeit imaginary. It is a historical fact that (local) nationalism was the driving force behind decolonization movements in Asian and African countries since the end of World War II. I acknowledge well that such movements perhaps remained only reactions to western colonialism; therefore, they retained the logic of Manichean dichotomy which had informed the very colonialism that such movements had tried to overthrow. This is a well-rehearsed point in contemporary discussion on colonialism. Even this might be a case, the logic, I do not think, overrides the power of history; it is incumbent upon us to understand the specificity of historical context in which these movements arose and, certainly, consequences they created, as well.

I present another instance of nationalism from another part of the globe. Recently, I have been studying Maya Indian nationalism in Guatemala, where the Indians (*Indígenas*) are the majority rather than the minority; however, the political power of the country is clearly in the hands of *ladinos* and whites, the minority. The indigenous population is not biologically distinct from *ladinos*; Mayas are distinct from *ladinos* only culturally: Mayas use one of twenty-two native languages, practice folk catholicism, and follow other customary cultural practices in their everyday life.

Often proclaimed in a newspaper is that Guatemala is a country of "*mestizos*," the "race" produced as the result of mixture of Indians with Spaniards: Guatemala as a truly "hybrid" nation. To assert anything contrary is to rub against this national ideology; consequently, this ideology simply reduces Mayas as underclass, which is in need of modernization. Thus, in the dominant national discourse Mayas are represented as "problem," and they are defined by such terms of negative valence as follows: pre-modern, unsanitary, poor, uneducated, and unenlightened, collective, and so on. This discursive construction of Mayas constantly beckons them to renounce their ethnicity, in short, to integrate themselves into the Guatemalan society, a modern nation based on the model of European nation-state. This discursive construct of Mayas gave rise to a unified Mayan identity; until nationalists have rearticulated the notion of Maya for themselves, Mayas conceived themselves of belonging mainly to linguistically separate counties (*municipios*) rather than something like Maya "nation."

Maya nationalism transcodes "Maya" as the storehouse of positive meanings: ecologically conscious, moral, hardworking, knowledgeable, bearers of wisdom of ancient Maya civilization. It represents its cultural heritage in a very essentialized—that is ahistorical—way, in a manner somewhat akin to ethnographic descriptions produced by anthropologists several decades ago. It strives toward opening up a space for Mayas to become subjects of the modern nation-state, Guatemala, without renouncing their ethnic identity by devising strategies of entering modernity: for example, they now have created means of transcribing their languages, creating through vernacular neologism—not direct borrowing from Spanish—vocabularies necessary for modern life, and even lobbying for officialization of four major Mayan languages. At this juncture, I consider Maya nationalism an effective means to combat the power of *ladinos*; without this form of mobilization the Mayas would be

left with nothing to protect themselves from the powerful discursive constructs that affect the actions of all involved.

Now, after defending nationalism not only for its political force but also for its cultural empowerment, I introduce critiques of nationalism and ethnic absolutism because I think there are also historical contexts and moments in which such critiques are needed and effective. It is important to keep in mind that any form of politics remains conjunctural; therefore, to use a felicitous expression of Stuart Hall, again, we need to think of it as contingent and positional, that is, "without guarantee."

One obvious feature of nationalism is its tendency to downplay differences among members within a community which it tries to represent politically, while another is to police the boundary between the inside and the outside for the purpose of keeping the inside absolutely distinct from the outside. The unity is created by emphasizing the historical continuity from the time immemorial, establishing the "sense" of linguistic homogeneity, devising ahistorical cultural essence, if not "racial," shared by all.

This unity presupposed by nationalism has been contested. In the age of "postmodern" and global economy, the localized community, whether in a form of nation-state or in an ethnic group, might appear (but to whom?) oppressive because of its drive for unity. While nation-state and organic community have been declining as the source of stable identity, new representations are produced discursively; in other words, the systematic and organic concept of culture is no longer adequate in analyzing current representational practices that produce meanings (amenable for reinterpretation) because such a concept disregards the non-systemic aspects of society, both internally and externally: these representational practices thrive upon positional variations, internally, as well as exploit permeable borders, externally.

Nevertheless, it might be too rash to do away with the concept of culture entirely, since without it the world of meaning would be lost. By the same token, it might be too problematical to posit a nomadic subject, who feels free of belonging to any community. An alternative is to focus on the representational practices based on such ideas as "import-export, contextual-tactical shifting, local mix-and-match, syncretic recombination" (in James Clifford's phrases), as cultural borders are constantly crossed and recrossed, new technologies invented and marketed as commodities are appropriated creatively for the purpose of making the contemporary life non-identical; thus, emerges a critique of homogenous national time and space. Then, ideas of boundary crossing, syncretism, creolization and intermixture constitute a powerful critique of nationalism that defends the idea of purity: "hybridity," in short, is a key critical term in contemporary discussions of nationalism.

But, as Renato Rosaldo has astutely noted, the idea of hybridity oscillates between two conceptual polarities: (1) hybridity as in-between space of two zones of purity; naturally, the idea of purity is logically prior to that of hybridity (2) hybridity as ongoing condition of all human sociality; for this reason, the idea of hybridity is logically prior to that of purity. Below I discuss these two distinctive conceptual

polarities, the separation of which is, according to some, crucial for reimagining a possibility for new form of sociality that does not fall into the trap of nationalism.

Hybridity as Critique of Nationalism: Two Polarities

First, hybridity as cross between two zones of purity. If, for nationalism, locality and sedentariness are key terms, then, for its critiques, the concept of mobility is a key term, traveling becomes a powerful metaphor, and nomad is no longer pre-modern figure, but a powerful prototype of "postmodern" individual. Exile no longer carries a negative meaning, but positively re-evaluated as one of such "postmodern" metaphors of displacement. Everyone in a sense becomes "crossracial, polylingual, and multicontextual" (in Gomez-Peña's words), in short, a hybrid. Since such a person is a product of difference rather than identity, it might be somewhat misleading to call this form of identity as "identity" at all. In a sense, this notion of hybridity celebrates a concept of nomadic subject, as mentioned briefly at the end of the previous section.

According to this concept of hybridity, it has destabilized the metanarrative of nation-state, as much as the transnational flow of capital and labor power has rendered obsolete an understanding of contemporary economy framed exclusively in terms of national economy: George Lipsitz, a scholar in American studies, has once written that "the power of transnational capital means that all of us must become transnational too."

Although historically important as critique of many taken for granted ideas linked with nationalism, this way of formulating an idea of hybridity, some argues, is a largely self-congratulatory for intellectuals in postindustrial societies; worse, it confuses various modes of movement of people into one grand metaphor of traveling: in what aspects is a position of political refugee from Guatemala living in Illinois under the protection of a catholic priest similar to (and different from) that of privileged intellectual from India, now teaching at a university in Chicago? But, the most notable shortcoming of this facile embracing of nomadism, it seems to me, is its tendency to regard the "community and belonging" non-issue, in other words, its total denial of consideration for developing a possible form of sociality. I find it crucial to keep this critique of "postmodern" nomadism, since I believe that nationalism and its postmodern critique cannot be narrativized in an evolutionary sequence; both remain equally contested ideas.

Second, hybridity as on-going condition of all human sociality. This idea of hybridity is somewhat counter-intuitive because it posits that hybridity is logically prior to purity. According to it, what needs to be examined is the ideological formation of zones of purity, as expressed in nationalism and ethnic absolutism. In a historical examination it takes a form of constructivism, from whose perspective nation-state premised on the linguistic, cultural, or "racial" homogenous structure is not given but historically created; therefore, this idea of hybridity deconstructs nationalism, which emphasizes the historical continuity of nation and its people.

It is also effective in criticizing multiculturalism that simply assumes the relative positioning of various cultures would be a solution to the call for more liberal education, the concept of multiculturalism entrenched deeply in the idea of culture as closed system as if it were language. Since language as naturally given has supplied a model of multiculturalism, as Sakai Naoki clearly notes, it is so easy to slide into accepting a almost ahistorical, structuralist view of language, which is expressed clearly in Levi-Strauss's realization that "language can only have [sic] arisen all at once."

On the contrary, Sakai's argument is that the systemicity of language arises first through the detour of learning another language. Conscious recognition of one's language comes only when one learns another; this means that a conscious understanding of "foreign" language is logically prior to that of one's "mother" tongue, and that the desire to learn another language is an act of establishing some form of understanding—"heterolingual address," to use one of his expressions—where exists no guarantee in conducting successful communication. This, according to Sakai, is an opposite of nationalism, based on "homolingual address," in which affective communication—"communion," in his word—is always secured through the "natural" sharing of language, history and culture.

Similarly, since Sakai does not presuppose the systemicity of language prior to the intervention of power to form it, the concept of translation, according to him, needs to be reconsidered as one of such power. After translation is completed—the act of establishing links between the previously incommensurable—the systemicity of two languages appear, in a sense, after the fact. Sakai's position, in short, prioritizes the hybrid human sociality over the formation of nation-state and its associated assumptions about language, culture, and people.

I consider Sakai's critique of nationalism insightful and powerful; however, what seems to be lacking is the historical specificity in which his argument is developed. Although he does propose the "heterolingual address," characteristic of human sociality open to others, as alternative to closed, exclusionary mode of sociality, I am not sure how he could envision in concrete terms—rather than present an exercise in deconstruction of nationality and nationalism—a non-exclusionary mode of community. For this reason, I regard his critique as conjunctural, effective in certain historical contexts—the U.S. and Japan—but perhaps less so in other contexts.

In contrast, Paul Gilroy's notion of "Black Atlantic" is highly specific and culturally grounded attempt to criticize nationalism of any form—whether European or black—for the purpose of developing a vision of hybrid sociality, which is, also like Sakai's, prior to the formation of organic and bounded view of culture. Below I would like to discuss briefly what Gilroy proposes and to point some implications his work offers for this forum.

Conclusion: Linking and Connecting, or Living Otherwise

Gilroy's magnificent book, *The Black Atlantic*, puts forward two inter-related arguments: (1) blacks are internal to modernity as it developed in Europe; therefore, modernity cannot be a monopoly of European bourgeoisie; (2) modernity cannot be narrativized as a gradual development of nation-states. The agents in his counter-narrative to Euro-centric view of modernity are black intellectuals, musicians, and writers, who crossed the Atlantic from the New World to Europe, a direction opposite to the trajectory of slave trade; through the process of this movement created is the black political culture called the "Black Atlantic," the political conception that privileges "route" rather than "root," which is often the key metaphor for nationalism. The "Black Atlantic" proposes a hybrid form of sociality called "diaspora" as alternative to nationalistic form of belonging. "Diaspora," unlike postmodern nomadism, does not do away with the desire for community altogether, but links and connects differences in a web-like fashion to create relations without suppressing these differences. It also aspires to create relations with its adopted locality, as if it were agents of networking the past, present and future. Gilroy further argues that such linkage is, in the case of the "Black Atlantic," culturally specific: various black musical forms—from gospel, blues, and funk to jazz—contain a characteristic, "call and response"; through this antiphony, the culturally specific form, the performer is linked, while remaining distinct, with the audience. Gilroy states that antiphony arose out from spirituals, the storehouse of memory of slavery, which, as Tony Morrison says, is the beginning of modernity.

I am not in a position of outlining any blue print for developing a non-exclusive form of sociality (or what James Clifford has once referred to as "non-exclusive practices of community, politics, and cultural differences") and I know well that such a blue print, if exists at all, needs to come out of effort to see things with dual vision: one eye toward the specific articulation of local history and another toward the specific vision of future, and the effort in the present is to bring the two together.

Any discussion of identity cannot avoid being political, since identity is contested precisely because a certain type of political subject follows from a certain articulation of identity. Identity is discursively constructed in representations; then, in addition to content, form of representations are also made contestable due to the "multi-accentuality of signs" (as vehicles of meanings) that constitute such representations. Since, culture is saturated with representations, no one can take culture, the bundle of meaningful practices, for granted. These concepts are plied open now; none is privileged in a sense that it can ground all other concepts; all of them open to contestation and rearticulation. Thus, the field of meaning, culture, and identity is political through and through. This political implication of our identity, in a way, creates a sense uncertainty, or a moment of crisis, as Gramsci says, in which "the old is dying and the new cannot be born." This uncertainty, however, is a call for reimagining the nature of community. While a notion of community is predicated on the idea that it is given, taken-for-granted, and assumed; therefore, belonging to a

community presents us a sense of security, the sense which helps in maintaining the integrity of individual. This uniformitarian notion of community is in predicament, as discussed in this essay. But, I suggest that out of the same sense of uncertainty emerges a search for another notion of community, something still in need of construction rather than given and taken-for-granted; consequently, it still calls for our effort in bringing it about. Thus, a discussion of identity is inseparable from this search for a notion of community other than uniformitarian one. A search for one's identity—"who am I?" always entails another search—"who are we?" A question of identity is always social, while that sociality needs to remain open for individual differences.

Asian Public Intellectuals and 'Development with Soul': Report on the Asia Leadership Fellow Program 1997

Ishak Bin Shari

Introduction

I had mixed feelings when I received the letter from the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center inviting me to participate in the Asia Leadership Fellow Program for 1997. On the one hand, I was obviously very happy and greatly honored to be chosen as a participant for several reasons. First, as a student of development economics, the Japanese model of development, which has tremendous influence on the development experiences of the East and Southeast Asian economies, has always attracted my attention. I was keen to learn more about it. One important question that has been raised frequently in evaluating and thinking of the Malaysian development experience, in particular, and developing countries, in general, relates to the argument put forth by Fukuyama. He is well known for arguing that liberal democratic capitalism in the Anglo-American mould is only viable system for the future after the collapse of Soviet communism. This would imply that East Asian mercantilism—state-led and often authoritarian—cannot be a viable alternative. However, there are those who argue that Japanese-style nationalist development offers a far greater challenge to western economic theory than the fallen Soviet system. Hence, my keen interest in investigating whether the Japanese development model could provide a viable alternative development path to other Asian countries as well as developing countries in general. Second, the program would provide me with the opportunity to be away from my usual busy routine and provide the time for me to reflect seriously on many development issues that have bogged my mind for some time. One of the areas of concern for me is on the implications of globalization on the attainment of human development in developing countries such as Malaysia, particularly the pursuit of the goal of social justice. The third reason was the golden opportunity to interact with fellow colleagues from other Southeast Asian countries and Japanese scholars and intellectuals during the duration of the program. Finally, it was hoped that my stay in Japan would allow me to have a better understanding of Japanese society.

On the other hand, I had some apprehensions on my ability to contribute effectively to the program. This is partly due to the broad scope of the general theme of the ALFP, namely 'culture and development.' While I am more familiar with

development problems and issues and increasingly aware that development is a far complex process and cannot be seen as a single, uniform, linear path, still my understanding of the interrelationship between culture and development is vague. In fact, while culture is one of those words that people have used all the time, they however have much trouble defining it. People have very different things people in mind when they talk about culture. On top of this, the AFLP theme related culture and development. Furthermore, my work commitments the months before my departure for Japan happened to be heavy with several research projects and teaching assignment that needed to be completed. This was the dilemma I faced when deciding whether to accept the invitation or not. After some discussions with close friends and getting the encouragement and support from the university (although I was only given a two-month leave to participate in the activities centered at I-House), I decided to fill in the form confirming my acceptance of the invitation. As was pointed out by some friends, the least I could do was to listen and learn from other fellows of the programme. Furthermore, looking at the list of other participants—Goenawan, Laddawan, Ota-san, and Pao Kun—all special people who have accomplished a great deal in their respective fields, I felt I would definitely benefit tremendously from the program if I could share some of their ideas and experiences. I decided that it was time to listen.

The Two-Month Collaborative Activities and Dialogue

The way the fellowship program was arranged during the first two months is rather interesting. Although we were the second batch of fellows to participate in the program, many things were not yet fixed. In fact, apart from some planned programs, our facilitator at I-House provided us with the freedom to determine our own agenda during the two months. We were also given the luxury to decide which Japanese scholars/intellectuals to invite as resource persons in our discussion series. As Pao Kun always reminded us, the freedom to be 'irresponsible' given to us was very much appreciated by the fellows. Furthermore, despite our different backgrounds and interest, we managed to engage ourselves in serious discussion on issues of common interest to us under the broad theme of 'Culture and Development.' Here, I must admit that the capable leadership of our 'Pengerusi' (Chairman) Goenawan as well as the extremely loving and philosophical approach of Pao Kun played a major role in getting all of us together in our 'play'. The efficiency and caring hospitality of our host, the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center, also played a significant role in making the program a memorable experience.

Unlike the first group of ALFP fellows, and most likely as a result of their recommendations, we were more fortunate to have the opportunities of making contact with a wider spectrum of Japanese society. Apart from Japanese scholars and intellectuals, the fellows were exposed to representatives of Japanese NGOs, bureaucrats, and the Japanese media. We were also taken for a visit to the

marginalized Ainu community in Hokkaido. The facilitator also arranged meetings with scholars and intellectuals from other parts of the world, including the U.S. and New Zealand. The two months stay at IHJ has also helped me to have a better understanding of Japanese society as well as the Thai, Indonesian, and Singaporean societies through my regular contact with fellow colleagues.

The fact that all the five fellows stayed in I-House also helped to promote a closer relationship and comradeship among us. One of the most interesting aspects of our daily lives during the two months of stay in Japan was the extended breakfast meetings among the fellows. Although the agenda was not set, the discussions and exchange of ideas during these sessions were intensive and serious. These heart-to-heart discussions also pulled us together despite the different viewpoints and positions each one of us held. Furthermore, such discussions, which also happened during the formal sessions, made the program something special. As I mentioned in my 'goodbye' note to all the other fellows at the end of the two-month stay at I-House, I really cherish the two wonderful and memorable months in Japan and was inspired by my time there.

As for the general theme of the collaborative activities and dialogue, 'Culture and Democracy,' the participating fellows felt that it was broad enough to encompass all our interests. Nonetheless, we did feel that there should be a focus to our discourse. After learning about our respective interests in our earlier discussions, the participating fellows agreed that we should try to focus our discussions on the emancipatory role of culture and development. Hence, it was decided that the theme for our collaborative project should be: 'Culture, Development, and Emancipation: A Search for New Paradigm'. Among the areas of concern planned to be covered in our ensuing discussion series were: the role of tradition, ethnicity, and religion in development; the question of identity in nation-building; the debate on multiculturalism; the role of civil society in development; globalization, migration, and uprootedness; the role of capital and state in development; the role of the arts and public intellectuals. In fact, the resource persons who were suggested to the facilitator of the program were selected based on our interest in the above issues. Nonetheless, as some of the scholars and intellectuals selected were unavailable, I must say that our search for the new paradigm during the two months was just the beginning of a long journey.

On the whole, the two months of intense and thought-provoking discussions held at I-House as well as at various places in Kyoto, Hokkaido, and Ito City were a fruitful period for my own personal development. The various seminars, colloquia, and symposia arranged by the facilitator, as well as those that we had the opportunity to attend during our stay in Japan, brought to my attention many problems and issues that I would have not been aware of had the IHJ and the Japan Foundation Asia Center not provided the opportunity. The continuous dialogue and discussions—both formal and informal—with my fellow colleagues contributed a lot to my understanding of the problems which Malaysia in particular and Asia in general are facing. In fact, the way I approach the issue of my interest—Human development in the Era of Globalization—has been very much altered by the various

discussions on culture and development, creativity and empowerment, and cultural pluralism (see the section on my individual research below).

In addition, the program had also been successful in many ways in attaining some of the objectives of international cultural exchange and co-operation such as the sharing of common values, probing ways for the creation of new values and working together for the understanding and resolution of common issues and problems. In what is increasingly becoming a globalized world, such efforts are definitely necessary and vital to our progress. The importance and the need for working together and promoting solidarity at the global level was nicely stressed by Jacques Delors in the following words: "The world is our village; if one house catches fire, the roofs over all our heads are immediately at risk. If any one of us tries to start rebuilding, his efforts will be purely symbolic. Solidarity has to be the order of the day: each of us must bear his own share of the general responsibility."

Individual Research Project

During the two-month period in Japan, I did manage to continue with my search for a better understanding of some questions that I had confronted during the course of doing my own research. As presented in some of the sessions with other fellows as well as the seminar at Ito City, my main research focus is the implications of globalization on human development and the elusive search for social justice in a world where neo-liberal ideology dominates. I was not able, however, due to time constraints to pursue seriously my other related interest, i.e., to examine the Japanese development experience and evaluate it as an alternative model for developing countries. I must say that the library at the I-House was really excellent for that purpose but I just did not have the time to read the volumes of books and articles on this issue.

Globalization, aided by the development of modern communications, the establishment of free trade blocks, and the use of multilateral agreements such as the World Trade Organization and global financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, had produced an unprecedented integration of the world economy. Proponents of globalization always argue that this growing integration strengthens competition and ensures the optimum distribution of resources. They claim it will bring rapid economic growth and prosperity for all, including the poor and the marginalized.

However, behind the promises of general prosperity, there exists a grim reality. The stark divergence between the promises of globalization and the reality is indeed very worrying. The move towards trade and financial liberalization during the last decade has been accompanied by several disturbing trends. Among them, the world economy is growing too slowly to generate sufficient employment; there is a widening gap between the rich and poor all over the world; the income accruing to capital has gained over labor; trading in existing assets has become more prominent than creating wealth through new investments as finance has gained an upper hand

over industry; job and income insecurity is increasing; and the growing wage gap between skilled and unskilled labor is becoming a truly global problem. We are also witnessing the disintegration of social order, the rise in violence and homelessness, social alienation and the growing fear of the future. Globalization has also brought massive damage to the natural world as evidenced by global climate change, widespread species loss, water crises, and numerous forms of environmental degradation and depletion.

Furthermore, globalization has not even managed to create the so-called level-playing field that it promises. The multi-lateral agreements continue to reflect power imbalances between the powerful North and much-weakened South. Very few developing countries possess the technological know-how and capital to compete within the global economy. Consequently, the competition to attract foreign capital among the developing countries has led to the lowering of the labor cost, lax environmental and safety regulations and the lowering of the tax rate. Thus, what is happening in many developing countries is not development but a race to the bottom.

Coming from a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society such as Malaysia, I was very much concerned with this trend towards increasing disparity in the distribution of wealth and income in our society as it has the potential of generating ethnic conflict. I could just be reflecting the sensitivity to ethnic 'faultlines' that most Malaysians have acquired since the May 1969 race riots, like the Japanese notice even minor earthquakes. But, as events in the last year had shown, such concern is not without basis. The attacks on Indonesians of Chinese origin during the riots in Jakarta and other parts of the country (including raping of women) were the ugly aftermath of the current financial and economic crisis. In my opinion, these attacks have deep roots in the growing disparities of Indonesian society despite its rapid economic growth during the last three decades. In the case of Malaysia, containing ethnic divisions and disparities along ethnic lines has been one of the central objectives of its development policies and programs. The success of such policies, despite its shortcomings, has so far enabled Malaysia to prevent the reoccurrence of ethnic conflicts thus far. It is also interesting to note that the worsening poverty and problems of inequality have been manifested in the rapid increase in the flow of international migration within the region and the authorities in these countries need to address its attendant problems.

There is another rather frightening development accompanying the above trends; the increasing inequality of income and wealth has acquired a new aura of legitimacy. It has increasingly being argued that this development is both inevitable and necessary. In other words, the suffering of hundreds of millions of people throughout the world is considered to be justified as a 'small' price to pay for the many 'blessing' of world capitalism. Proponents of globalization also speak about how all boats will eventually rise with the tide of economic growth and that some people will have to suffer and shoulder the risks in the short and medium term. What all these disturbing trends imply is the fact that the search for real human development and social justice remains an increasingly difficult task for many

developing countries. In fact, with the present financial and economic crisis affecting several countries in Asia—including Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand—becoming worse, the number of the unemployed, the poor, the homeless and the landless in these countries have increased rather substantially. In addition, while the people in developing countries have been encouraged to wait for the unseen rewards of globalization, they are rapidly losing whatever democratic space that has been available to them to voice their opposition to these policies and to seek meaningful and sustainable solutions to their problems.

It has been increasingly recognised in recent years that the accelerated processes of globalization have consequently reorganized the economic, political, and social structures of many societies and countries of the world and that more such changes are expected to come in the next few years of the new millenium. However, our understanding of the process and its implications is still limited and the search for new alternatives is just beginning. As we enter the 21st century, the tasks of seeking a better understanding of the profound changes around us and defining a new alternative vision and dream for the world become increasingly urgent. Based on this understanding, my current research is trying to contribute in a very modest way towards this task.

In pursuing this research, I am increasingly inclined to believe that there is a real need for building new theories and practices in order to achieve development with emancipation. Presently, despite the progress made in the conception of human development, most economists and politicians still take for granted that development merely concerns economic growth, maximized efficiency, increased production and consumption. Underlying this idea, is the implicit assumption that all people share the same destiny, that they are essentially oriented toward the maximization of material goods, and that this is what ultimately motivates them. The goals of development are thus taken as given and development itself has been redefined as the pragmatic art of development management. It is further assumed that development could be achieved simply by transferring economic, political, and technological processes from the developed to underdeveloped countries.

As correctly pointed out by Saburo Okita: "There is no inherent reason why the organized pursuit of material improvements should automatically result in freedom, respect for humanity, and social justice." This is largely due to the fact that the more generally accepted meanings of development do not take into consideration at all the realities of culture—people's control over their destinies and their ability to view the world in ways which reflect their particular experience. In other words, the whole dimension of culture—beliefs, ideas, meanings, and feelings—are excluded from consideration. Consequently, as shown by the experience of many Asian countries in the last two to three decades, what has been achieved is rapid economic growth without soul.

What I plan to stress in my future research is the need to make culture not a servant of development objectives, but rather as the social basis of those objectives. For example, a healthy, well-educated, skilled, and motivated labor force is definitely a productive asset for development. However, it must be remembered that human

beings need to work together and cooperate and interact in many ways. It is in this context that culture plays a crucial role. Culture helps men and women relate to each other and makes the development of the individuals possible. Similarly, culture also defines how people relate to nature and to their physical environment as well as how they express their attitudes to and their beliefs in other forms of life. It is in this sense that human development is ultimately determined by cultural factors. Indeed, we must recognize that development and the economy are part of, or an aspect of, a people's culture.

As for the struggle for social justice, my research will also emphasize the importance of the expansion of civil society. Given the worldwide political and ideological shifts which have so privileged the market economy, individualism, and competition on the one hand and the downsizing everywhere of the state sector on the other, people need to look for other options in their struggle for equitable and sustainable human development. One response to the growing anxieties generated by globalization is the demand to restore a bigger role for the state in protecting its citizens against some of the risks of competition. However, critics of the interventionist state level two convincing arguments against restoring the greater role for the state. First, the experience of our century reveals a propensity and a capacity of the state for totalitarian regulation and repression not only of people but also of institutions, social practice, and the very fabric of ordinary life. Second, the state is a strikingly inefficient economic agent. It is in this context that it is of vital importance to recognize the critical role of civil society. Specifically, civil society will be able to play an effective role in at least three major areas, namely to check both the state and the market, encourage the empowerment of the people, and to promote new ideals. In fact, it has been asserted that equitable and sustainable development can only be achieved through the democratic initiatives of civil society itself. For example, the solution of the problem of environment degradation requires the voluntary participation of every member of civil society in a change of lifestyle geared to equitable and sustainable development in opposition to the model of a dehumanized consumer culture.

Furthermore, in our endeavor to build a better world, cooperation between peoples of different cultures—either within a particular society or among nations—will be facilitated and kept within acceptable and constructive limits only if these peoples can see themselves as bound and motivated by shared commitments. Therefore, it is imperative to look for a core of shared ethical values and principles. Its efficacy will depend upon the ability of both the people and the government to transcend narrow self-interest and to agree that the interests of humanity as a whole will be served by the acceptance of a set of common rights and responsibilities. As pointed out by the World Commission on Culture and Development, the search for global ethics will involve culture in a number of ways. Moreover, any attempt to formulate a global ethics must draw on cultural resources, people's intelligence and their emotional experiences, historical memories, and spiritual orientations. Culture, unlike scarce physical resources, will through this process be invigorated and enhanced rather than depleted.

The task ahead is going to be a very difficult one. I am really looking forward to future collaboration with researchers from the region who share the search for new alternatives to globalization as defined by the neo-liberals' agenda.

Follow-up Activities

During one of the discussions among some of the ALFP participants and other intellectuals from Southeast Asia, it was strongly felt that the idea of bringing together intellectuals from the region for intense people-to-people dialogue has brought tremendous benefits to the participants and their societies. Thus, it was agreed that efforts should be made to develop similar programs in the Southeast Asian region to enable more participants, including young public intellectuals, to be involved. In order to minimize cost, it was suggested that the participants could just meet in one of the countries in the region. It was also suggested that I should take the initiative to consider the possibility of planning and implementing such a program.

As a follow-up to the suggestion, the Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS) at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) has submitted to the university's management a proposal to set up a fellowship program at the institute. The purpose of the fellowship is to invite a group of selected scholars and people of intellectual distinction from Southeast Asian countries to come together and pursue collaborative discourse and writing in a stimulating milieu.

A major part of this collaborative work is to address some pertinent human development issues facing Southeast Asian countries in the next century. In an increasingly globalized world economy, intellectuals from the South must consider playing their respective roles in two ways. First, an analysis of social transformations and disruptive changes of any country in the region can no longer be addressed separately or on its own without taking into consideration the pace and consequences of changes globally as well as those taking place regionally. A good example is the recent currency and financial crisis faced by the East and Southeast Asian countries (and the increasing likelihood of it becoming a world crisis). Clearly, a comparative and regional perspective enhances one's understanding of the problem.

Second, all such efforts require close co-operation and collaborative work among the region's scholars and intellectuals. This kind of co-operation is especially helpful to countries of the South as they share common problems and interests in confronting the multi-faceted processes of globalization.

The program has been planned to include scholars and intellectuals who work in the fields of culture, society, politics, economics, international studies as well as globalization studies. In particular, the objectives of the program are as listed as follows:

(a) to provide an opportunity for a number of scholars and intellectuals from each country in Southeast Asia to pursue joint or collaborative work at IKMAS. We

hope to provide a conducive and stimulating milieu for these individuals to undertake their collaborative projects;

(b) to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experience among the scholars and intellectuals thus providing greater impetus for further research and publication in regional and international studies;

(c) to promote an understanding of specific problems and comparative perspectives on various development issues in Southeast Asian countries. The fellows will also be invited to present their views and analyses in seminars and lectures which will benefit the academic community at UKM in particular and Malaysia in general; and

(d) creating a network among Malaysian intellectuals and those in the Southeast Asian region in order to strengthen the collegiality among them and thereby strengthen cooperation between peoples in this region.

This proposal has been approved by UKM's management board and IKMAS is now working to get financial support from various possible sources for the program. If the planned financial contributions from various parties is finalized soon, this fellowship program could be implemented at the end of 1999. It is hoped that the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation Asia Center could also provide financial assistance to this program so as to hasten its realization.

Suggestions for the Future Program

I have no major suggestions to make regarding the future programs. What can be said at this juncture is that the fellowship program has indeed succeeded in encouraging an intensive person-to-person exchange of ideas and opinions among the participants during the two-month stay at I-House. The regular meetings and contacts had also enabled the participants to develop a better understanding of issues relating to the theme of the program and developed into a base for a new solidarity among them. However, as was mentioned by a member of the pioneering batch of fellows, understanding is only the beginning and should not be the end. The issue that needs to be addressed by all participants in the future is how to develop this new close friendship into a network of solidarity among Asian intellectuals so that the intellectuals in the region could also contribute in a meaningful manner towards strengthening global civil society. This work of solidarity-building could play a significant role in promoting freedom of expression and communication among Asian intellectuals, as well as defending their rights to organize and advocate for the betterment of their respective societies. The importance and the urgency of efforts towards promoting solidarity is increasingly obvious given the regional nature of many problems facing Asian countries. The recent financial and economic crisis that so quickly engulfed the whole region is a good example of such problems. To face these new challenges requires regional cooperation between all sections of the societies, including public intellectuals, in these countries.

For intellectuals, their main role in society is to produce, evaluate, reproduce, and propagate ideas and knowledge for the betterment of society. Given the seriousness of the current financial and economic crisis in many Asian countries, Asian intellectuals have a big role to play in looking for new ideas and a new vision to resolve the problems facing millions of people in the region. So long as this is an unequal world of the poor and the rich, the concept of one world and one planet cannot be realized. The joint responsibility for the health of a global common can only materialize when there exists a shared global prosperity. In short, without global justice, global sustainable human development will always remain an elusive goal. As many have pointed out, the continuous transformation of the concept of global justice into effective concrete policies will indeed be difficult. It is in this particular area that our role as public intellectuals is most crucial and needed. And the first and the foremost task for us is in education. Education empowers individuals and groups by sensitizing them to the various forms of power structures that exist in our respective societies. In addition, intellectuals can also function as a synthesizing force to generate collective action. Social mobilization is particularly important for intellectuals since it is only through people and popular movements that ideas can become socially relevant. Without an audience, the intellectual can still play a role, but unfortunately cannot become an agent for social change.

Asia Leadership Fellow Program Report

Laddawan Tantivitayapitak

Introduction

I always like adventure. Life is an adventure for me. My first adventure was in the Philippines during 1983-1984. My purpose in going to the Philippines at that time was to have a break after six years of human rights work which started in 1976 when the military staged a bloody coup in October 6, also in the same year. My retreat was originally intended to study social work, but it unexpectedly changed one month after my arrival in Manila when former Sen. Benigno Aquino was brutally shot down at the Manila international airport. The event had angered thousands of Filipinos who spontaneously marched down the streets everyday to protest the rule of former President Ferdinand Marcos. I joined the protest actions, while also attending my social work classes. This way, I came to know the Philippines as well as social work theories.

My second adventure was in Japan. It was the second longest break I had from my work life which had continued for more than 12 years after I returned from the Philippines. The excitement offered by my Japan trip was different from that of the Philippines. In Japan, I gained an entirely different perspective and was exposed to intellectual debates. Fortunately, there were no political upheavals that matched the scale I had experienced in the Philippines.

The invocation of fellow fellow Kuo Pao Kun on irresponsibility did not make the rest of my trip to Japan less eventful. In Thailand, reading is considered to be a form of leisure, especially when the reading materials have nothing to do with one's work. I was so delighted to have a lot of time to read. There were so many articles, books, and materials to read, that I ended up without successfully finishing any single book that I had carried in a large travel luggage all the way from Thailand. Instead, I had learned other invaluable things.

The documents we had to read before the group discussions were useful, however, I felt that we did not discuss deeply as it should have been the case. The discussions were rather too broad and general. The strength of our group discussions was not only in the subject themselves, but also the process that they offered us in getting to know each other's perspective better. It was actually important to understand each individual's viewpoint before we could work as a group for the symposium as well as do networking in the future. We had spent a lot of time discussing before we could really settle down and identify what we were aiming at. I

think this was an attempt in 'fine tuning' our waves of interests and expertise to come up with some thing novel like a new paradigm. Perhaps, we may be compared to an orchestra or a stage play that needed rehearsals to put all varieties of tunes or characters in a cohesive package before a performance. The 'group intuition' took time to be felt and a lot of efforts were exerted before we could overcome factors that blocked our creativity. I personally was happy with what we had done and accomplished in our workshops as well as the symposium. It did help me in my reflections on my unruly concepts of transparency and highlighted questions to be further discussed or worked out.

I think I should end my report here so I will not be much of a bother to the International House of Japan and Japan Foundation Asia Center by making them read a long report. On second thoughts, I had decided to change my mind. The above was only a preamble, the real and serious stories are contained in the following paragraphs.

Japan Becomes An Interest

Japan did not interest me before. Among the countries I did like to know deeply were mostly in Southeast Asia and Indochina, Burma in particular. I am also interested in India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan, etc. However, gradually my fascination with Japan developed. It caught me when I went to Kyoto and Hokkaido. I had to express my gratitude to two materials that I read while I travelled to Kyoto. One is called "World View of Japan" which was translated into Thai. The other was a special magazine feature written by Prof. Nithit Aiewsrivong, a Thai professor who had spent some time in Kyoto. The professor's article was called something like "Kyoto, the shadow of Doi Suthep." (Doi Suthep is a famous tourist spot in Chiangmai province of Thailand). The two materials gave me better a better grasp of Japanese history of development, its culture, as well as its pattern of behavior. They also have helped me afterwards in framing my thoughts, while I was in Japan. I had been wondering for almost a month before I could put my thoughts to rest. As for my fellow fellows, though we did have many things in common, we also had different expectations in relation to one another. The feeling of being relaxed is stronger when one knows exactly where to put one's feet firmly without annoying others. As my knowledge of Japan deepened, I began to appreciate my stay. The images of being 'miserable' while in Japan and the ideas of 'unreachable' Japanese people had gradually been erased, and Japan became a fascination.

The places I visited in Kyoto were so impressive. Among the places I visited, Ryoanji Temple and Shugakuin Imperial Villa were the most impressive places I would like to mention. The impression I got from reading Prof. Nithit's article on Ryoanji, a rock garden, prepared me before the visit. I had been interested in Zen for a long time. I like the way the masters taught his students, which are simple, brief, and precise with its meaningfulness. I had intended to spend more time there for meditation. Before going there, I bought a small book about Zen with the hope of

reading it there. I arrived at around 3 o'clock in the afternoon. I was quite surprised and a little bit disappointed as it was too crowded. However, the visitors tried to observe silence though it was interrupted from time to time when tourist guides brought in some visitors and gave explanations. I then found a corner to sit down and did my observation with an 'empty mind.' The time passed so fast and before I realized it, the officials were already urging visitors to leave as it was closing time. It was already five o'clock in the afternoon. I did not realize that I was sitting there for almost two hours doing nothing and was totally absorbed by its beauty. It was very simple, but very beautiful. On the way out of the temple, I pictured heaven in my mind. Was that the way people could imagine heaven? The images of the garden had been implanted in my mind and I had peace. I went back to the Japanese inn where we were staying with happiness. "May peace prevail on earth." The Shugakuin Imperial Villa's garden surrounded by natural forest and mountains was so wonderful. While walking behind a Japanese guide, I wondered what was the stimulation in creating this small beautiful garden within a wild jungle. Then suddenly, I was reminded by our discussions on modernization and my insistence on a philosophy of development through the concept of "small is beautiful." And Shugakuin did confirm to me that small could be beautiful even in this wild world of competition. Each woman/man could change this wild world and make it beautiful to live in as did the prince who created the Shugakuin villa. The beauty of small things was in contrast to the large natural jungle, and it just fit perfectly. Small things could be easily managed and handled. When Schumacher invented this idea of "small is beautiful," he also worked for it. He established an institution called "Intermediate Technology Development Group" (ITDG) which supported and encouraged small enterprises based on ethical and environmentally sustainable principles using small-scale technology that could be managed and owned by community-based organizations and groups.

Modernization has been accompanied by consumerism and competition. Consumerism stimulated greed and unnecessary wants through advertisements and all kinds of stimulations, while competition created hate and mistrust. Would we allow our world to develop this way? Women/men are created with instincts of good and bad as well as strength and weakness. If the bad side would over power the good side, what kind of world will we have in the future? I do believe a good world can be created, that the good will of people can be strengthened by giving, replacing greed, and confidence replacing mistrust.

The turmoil of the Thai economy followed by Malaysia and Indonesia and the collapse of Japanese big financial institutions, the bankruptcy of Hokkaido Takushoku Bank, the ruin of Sanyo Securities, and the fall of Yamaichi Securities Co., the oldest and the most vulnerable of Japan's 'Big Four' Brokerages, followed by South Korea's appeals for help from the International Monetary Fund had given significant warnings to the world's development. The reinvestment cycles of surplus gained from certain business had never meant prosperity for the world's majority and it only showed that the unlimited pursuit wealth which could translate to greed, had brought the collapse of the system (especially in the case of financial institutions

which are the backbones of capitalist system). I call this financial institutions as a "eat and sleep tigers" since they do nothing, produce nothing, but earn and make profits from other's efforts. As big companies collapse, the effect will be firstly on labor sector which will inevitably mean unemployment. The rich may suffer some inconveniences, the poor will be poorer, and the poorest of the poor will be the most affected. This uncontrollable system of development in the hands of the few can never be sustained. It may even self-destruct.

The strength of being small lies in its easy-to-organize nature. If small groups of people throughout the world can organize and link up with one another, they can also have a say in how the world is being run by big institutions. We seem to forget the fact that there are more 'small people' than 'big people.' Why do small numbers always have the bigger say?

The prince of Shugakuin Imperial Villa may never know that what he created had inspired people like me to adore the beauty of small things. Shugakuin was created by a prince who had transcended the beauty of wilderness. I think this is one of the strengths of Japanese culture: its ability to create something new from old, to seek strength from weakness.

This is very true when we try to recall Japan's association with China. For centuries, Japan had imported Chinese writing characters, customs, beliefs, traditions, arts, etc., but they have never become 'Chinese' or felt inferior to China. They had the creativity to fashion something that can be called Japanese from Chinese culture.

Before World War II, Japan had sent many people to study abroad and to learn about the world, come back, and contribute in the building of their own country. I believe this had prepared the basic structure for Japan to be Japan today. There could be no doubt how efficient Japan could adopt certain technology to meet its own domestic need. In the political system, Japan had no hesitations in adopting a system of governance that would only give a semblance of democracy.

Hokkaido Visit, Asian Values, and Child Labor

My visit to Hokkaido had brought me another impression of Japan. It was rather strange and sad. The time I visited Hokkaido coincided with the changing of the colors of the leaves as the fall season approached. The mountains of Hokkaido were covered with falling leaves while the new, fresh, and young ones were growing replacing the fallen old ones. The phases of passing away, being born, and growing are what comprised a life cycle. However, what happens in real life is not always as clear cut as each phase would suggest. In a civilized society, the dead should be buried. Burial is one way of paying the dead their due and respect. It is one of the most important ritual we could accord the dead ones.

Allow me to relate here stories I had heard. It is saddening to know that the dead of the Ainu people are being treated as objects of scientific studies, like animals in a laboratory. I can feel the pain of an Ainu who had told me this particular story.

As tribal customs and traditions are viewed as exotic by modern men, they become subjects of study or objects of interest by tourists. This had also happened to the hill-tribes in the northern part of Thailand. The long-necked tribes were paid to stay in special villages created as tourists spots for tourists to visit and take photos. On the other hand, officials say this practice is one way of preserving culture, but this could also be interpreted as a way of destroying culture, of taking away the pride of the living.

In this multicultural world, mutual relationship and mutual understanding are key words among people living together harmoniously. These concepts do not necessarily translate cleanly as they sound in the real world. The idea of discrimination has been deeply rooted in one's mind. It is common for people from different cultures treat to each others differently. It is not acceptable to have one culture be treated as superior to other cultures. It is unfortunate that this exists in our society nowadays.

Discrimination is consciously and unconsciously rooted in and will never be solved if no serious measures are being taken to deal with it. The more important thing is that these measures have to be implemented with great care and sensitivity. In these way, rights and equality could be observed and maintained. When I mention rights, it would be inevitable for me to say something about Asian values. I cannot subscribe to the concept that rights should be nationality-specific or values should be according to region such as Asian values and western values. Rights as in human rights are always universal.

One of the two key arguments is that Asian values puts more emphasis on economic rights before political rights. In other words, people need to be fed first before they can have rights to voice out or choose what they want. For me, this argument is illogical, to give priority to economic rights over other rights. Why would the Burmese people want to have huge hotels for tourists, while they have no homes to stay?

The other argument is about internal affairs, meaning, one country should not interfere another country's affairs. I have doubts whether in this modern world of sophisticated communications technology and complicated economic interdependence we can have a nation which we could call as completely sovereign on its own? The fall of the Thai baht had been said to cause the economic turmoil in the region. The interdependence among countries has been deeply enhanced during the last several decades. It is hard to reject that problems in one country will not have impacts on other countries.

Human rights violations in Burma therefore inevitably affect Thailand, when hundreds of thousand of children and people flee from oppressions in their motherland, immigrate to Thailand seeking asylum politically or economically, even at the time when Thailand is facing its own severe economic crisis. How can one live in peace while his neighborhood is on fire? The badly performing Thai economy had not stopped children from neighboring countries from coming to Thailand to work. In fact war and poverty in the neighboring countries had increased the number of displaced people seeking refuge in Thailand.

Sanphasit Koompraphant, director of the Center for the Protection of Children's Rights, which was awarded the human rights award from the Foundation of Human Rights in Asia, Japan, said the children were desperate for a better life and were so poor that they were barely affected by the regional recession. Employers took advantage of the children by cheating them of their wages or calling the police to arrest them before their wages were paid. The highest daily wage that these children could earn in Burma was the equivalent of 15 baht. In Thailand, they could earn up to 50 baht. Most children risk working in Thailand, even though it is hard because in their country it is even more difficult to find work. If they have 10,000-20,000 baht back home, they could live comfortably for years. In Burma, child labor was used to build roads and pipelines without pay. Others were conscripted. Nevertheless, the children worked in Thailand like adults, up to 10 hours a day and 28 days a month. Many worked as petrol pump attendants, in restaurants, and resorts, as maids and sales representatives, in the flesh trade and in the fishing industry.

It is estimated that apart from the 740,000 adult laborers registered with the Interior Ministry, there are about 100,000 foreign child workers. Academics concerned with foreign labor had estimate that there are about one million foreign workers in Thailand, of which 20 percent are children. Burmese children and minorities such as the Tai Yai, Mon, and Karen worked in Chiang Rai, Kanchanaburi, Samut Sakhon, Mae Hong Son, and Bangkok.

Lek: A Thai in Tokyo

The fate of many poor people who are seeking better fortunes in Japan may not be different from those across the border sneaking into Thailand. I met Lek in Ban Sala. Ban Sala is a shelter that provides assistance to female foreigners who either have legal or illegal status in Japan. They give legal advice and provide temporary shelter for women who are in need. Many of those who come to them are women who were abandoned, badly treated, physically and mentally abused by their Japanese husbands. Lek is a Thai who speaks some Japanese. She came to Japan eight years ago. Before she came here, she was told that she will work in a restaurant. Like many others, upon arrival, she was forced to have sex with her Japanese clients. Lek can be considered remarkably good-looking at her age. She met her husband and decided to stay with him. They have three children. Her husband is a laborer. He frequently quits his job, and sometimes disappears from the house. Last year, Lek and her two children were thrown out of their department because she had no money and her husband was nowhere to be found. The Thai embassy had asked Ban Sala to help her as she was pregnant at that time. Through Ban Sala's assistance, Lek gave birth, the husband came back and looked for her. They reconciled and stayed together. But it did not last long. Her last baby died of suffocation from milk sucked from her. The husband left her again. Tai Gung, her eldest son, is about four years old. But he cannot speak. It seemed that he has some nerve problems. But from my

observations, he could understand well if he is treated properly. Since Lek speaks two languages, Thai and Japanese and she keeps switching from one to another. This might be the cause of the speech problems of Tai Gung who tries to follow her and ends up confused. Lek is confused also. She feels alone in Japan with no friends to really talk with. She does not know of any Thai community where she could find help with regard to her problems. Her two children are giving her heavy burden that she is immobilized emotionally and psychologically. Her second daughter is about one year old. I felt sorry for her and for her two children. I met her husband briefly. According to Lek, he is a few years older than her. The staff in Ban Sala said that he always shouts at her and blames her for everything. I believe that he has never listened to her.

I wonder how many people in this borderless world are facing this circumstances. They are ill-prepared to deal with cross-cultural relationships, their children bear the brunt of the tragedies, ending up as victims. What would happen when these children grow up? Are they going to blame their parents or the society for its inability to help them? As the world is transformed into a borderless one, the present system does not accommodate, but rather obstructs nurturing relationships among people. The attempts of a certain state to control its citizens as well as foreigners had not facilitated mutual respect and understanding between the local citizens and foreigners. When we look back into the history of people's migration from one country to another, we would see that law and order have had impacts on people's personal relationship. Problems range from children without citizenship, illegal immigrants, etc.

In Thailand, we treat people differently if they come from poorer countries like Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, or Burma in particular if they have illegal status. Some think that it is simple logic that if they have illegal status, they could be treated without dignity. As the world develops, the poor and those who do not benefit from this development are looking for better opportunities in other countries. They end up being exploited.

Foreigners in Japan and Election Processes

It is then through this mutual respect of rights and equality with understanding and cooperation that people could live in harmony and peace. I am so happy to learn from the newspapers today (Nov. 27) that the Governor of Tokyo, Mr. Aoshima Yukio has chosen 25 non-Japanese from 16 countries to form the Tokyo Foreign Advisory Council with the purpose of giving foreign residents a voice in Tokyo's administrative policies. They held their first meeting on Wednesday 26 November where several serious issues were raised for the council to discuss including education, discriminatory practices, public support for international schools, welfare and insurance systems, counselling services for foreigners, and foreign residents' right to participate in local elections and assemblies. By nationality, the council consists of four Koreans, three Chinese, two Filipinos, two Americans,

two British, two Brazilians, and one each from Thailand, Burma, France, Iran, Australia, Bangladesh, Germany, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, and Colombia. About 260,000 people from 170 countries are in Tokyo and are registered as foreign residents.

This is a good program that other countries like Thailand may choose to follow. If Japan could be a leader in an attempt to accommodate and accord equality to people living and contributing in a particular society, I would wholeheartedly support it. I have indeed learned a lot from Japan. Apart from many other things, I was able to utilize my time to enrich my knowledge on political exercises such as elections. It is crucial not because of the subject matter, but also the timing when Thailand is in the process of drafting new laws on elections, commission on elections, and political party laws under the new constitution. Several important points that I had learned are as follows:

1. Organs for election management composed of Central Election Management Council (CEMC) for proportional representation, Prefectural Election Management Committees (PEMC) for single constituency and local (prefectural) election, and Municipal Election Management Committees (MEMC) only for local (municipal) elections and the Elections Department of MHA.

2. CEMC directs and supervises PEMC concerning elections only on proportional representation. MHA is empowered to direct and supervise PEMC concerning election on single-member constituency system for Diet members and local authorities. Also PEMC can direct and supervise the MEMC on its local election.

3. CEMC is responsible only for proportional representation while it supervises and not controls the PEMC in its management on proportional representation.

4. There are 17 officials at the elections department of MHA. I am not quite sure whether there are still elections department at the prefectural and municipal levels. As the PEMC and MEMC are considered special employees of local administration, I suppose during elections they will include more people to do management work for elections e.g., like superintendents of the poll or ballot counting, observers of the poll or of ballot-counting, elections meeting, elections sub-meeting, etc.

The most powerful authority during general election is the Ministry of Home Affairs' elections department and the PEMC supposedly representing political parties in a way as they are chosen by the assembly from each prefecture. This can be a certain level of check and balance whether the PEMC is doing its work properly. Unlike in Thailand where politicians do not pay much attention to monitoring the irregularities of their competitors during elections.

5. One professor said that CEMC is nothing, but just a 'paper tiger.' For general elections, PEMC and MHA have significant roles.

6. Election campaign period for general and local election is very short (say, 12-17 days and five -17 days, respectively). There are a number of restrictions on election campaigns like public-speaking, street rallies, broadcasting, campaign

literature (postcards, handbills), poster, banners, lanterns, sign-boards, newspaper advertisements, etc.

7. Financial Control. There are conflicts of statements between two documents I have read. One is from the election system in Japan, the other is from MHA. I think I should rely on MHA document. It states that "for the purpose of eliminating inequalities in campaigns due to economic factors and also to alleviate the economic burden, the expenditures for election campaigns are limited to a certain amount (art. 194)". They show table of limits on expenditures for candidates on single-member constituency for both houses, members of assemblies, gubernatorial and mayoralty elections. They do not apply this in elections for both houses under the proportional representation system.

The candidates are required to appoint a person to be responsible for the revenue and expenditures for election campaigns (campaign accountant). A campaign accountant must keep the records of all revenues including contributions and expenditures and report on the status of receipts and disbursements to the election management committee. A summary of this report is to be made public. There are several restrictions of contributions.

There are separate regulations on financing of Political Activities which is under "Political Funds Control Law." Political parties, political funding organizations, and fund management organizations, etc. are considered as political organization under this law. A political party may designate one organization as its 'Political Funding Organization' where it gives financial support to a political party and has the privileges for the receipt of political contributions. At the same time, a politician or a candidate may designate one organization as "fund management organization" in order to administer political funds as well as having privileges for the receipt of political contributions.

Political organizations must submit annual financial reports of their political activities to the PEMC or MHA. This report is published annually in the official gazette of the national or prefectural government.

There are also subsidies for political parties under the "law for government subsidies for political parties" effective 1995.

The restriction on election campaign and financial control is very relevant to the Thai situation, however, the only problem that might be raised on how feasible its implementation can be. Japanese police system is much more effective than our police system. In financial control, the tax system is a significant gauge, while our system is not yet fully functional nor effective.

8. Guilt-by-association. The involvement is up to the level of organized election campaign manager and not including canvassers because of the problem of decoys, entrapment, etc. They have no mechanism in monitoring this. It is the duty of police. The voter in certain areas can file a case in court.

Vote buying is our major problem when politicians invest huge of amounts of money to buy their way to power, and the policemen are under the influence of politicians.

9. Absentee-voting. First, the absentee-voter has to inform the municipal

authorities of his/her residence where he/she wants to vote and inquire about election documents such as ballots. The municipal authorities will then give the voter a certain document and inform his/her of the municipality where the voter has to submit the ballot. During the campaign period before election day, the voter can go to the designated municipal office and submit the ballot. The voter must put the ballot inside an envelope and seal it. The voter has then to put the sealed envelope into another envelope and again seal it and then sign it. On the second envelope, a witness from the municipal office will also have to affix his/her signature on the envelope. The second envelope will have to be put into a third envelope before it is finally dropped into the ballot box. The ballot has to be placed inside three envelopes. In case of absentee-voting by mailing, this is strictly regulated and allowed only in cases of sickness. In the case of absentee-voting by mailing, the third envelope will have to have an address. (Note that Japanese residing abroad have no voting rights.) The election officials will then check the voter's signature by comparing it with the registered absentee-voters' list and if it is correct, the envelope with the ballot will be put in a separate ballot box for counting afterwards. Sometimes, the absentee voters are required to affix photos in the second envelope, but this varies from one area to another.

Thailand will employ the absentee-voting procedures for the first time under the newly-drafted constitution.

10. It is quite complicated to explain how they drew the lines for constituencies. But they had a 'constituency committee' which was empowered to work on this delicate matter before it was enacted into law by the Diet.

"The plans of demarcation of the single-member constituencies are made by the Deliberative Council of Demarcation of Constituencies for the House of Representatives and then proposed to the Prime Minister who reports to the House. Based on the proposal of the plan, the revision of the Election Law is legitimated to amend the boundaries of constituencies.

At the time of the planning, the Council must primarily consider that the maximum disparity in the number of people among the constituencies be under two. In addition to this, the council has to take into account the border of administrative areas as well as the geographical and transportation situations (Art.3 Par. 1 of the Law for Establishment of the Deliberative Council of Demarcation of Constituencies)."

According to one Japanese academic, the representations of the constituents are not fairly distributed with regard to population. This is politics.

Civil Society

My report will be glaringly incomplete if I did not mention civil society. I would like to conceptualize civil society and incorporate with it the basic principles of 'SACRIFICE'.

civil society = Sincerity + transparency
Altruism + sensitivity
Compassion + mindfulness
Responsibility + confirmative
Intuition + creativity
Fearless + courage
Information + technology
Consistency + continuous
Empowerment + networking

These basic principles will enhance and strengthen movements geared toward creation of a regional society which links people to local self-governance. The story of People's Agricultural Plan for the 21st century (PAP21) can be an example of the empowerment of civil society between Japan and Philippines. I met Muto Ichiyo who introduced to me Rev. Fr. Ben E. Escrupulo, the executive director of PAP21, and Sr. Norma G. Mugar, the general manager of Alter Trade Corp. in Philippines. They had related to me the exciting story of PAP21 which I later saw in video.

PAP21 is an integrated socio-economic and ecological plan which ultimately is aimed at transforming the Negros island's economy dominated by sugar industry into a rich, organic agriculture-based economy through the empowerment of the grassroots communities supported by local and Japanese NGOs. It is a long-term program aimed at creating a regional society where popular governance, economic independence, and self-reliance of the people as well as conservation of nature are simultaneously pursued in a single process. This process is promoted independently from, while interacting with, the dominant systems through the revitalization of agriculture based on eco-cycles.

Peasants, farmworker, urban poor, and other sectors of the local population have collaborated to enter into mutually complementary material linkages, and worked out their integrated plans. For instance, fishing people provide unmarketable small fish as compost materials, while urban poor communities launched new business collecting raw materials from city garbage that can be made into compost. They receive farm products in return. Integrating animals husbandry into this process is essential as the key element to ensure the circulation of organic materials. Compost centers, pig centers, and other cooperative-managed facilities are introduced as nodes of the socio-economic network. In this sense, it is differentiated from mere popularization of organic farming, or development projects aimed at increasing household cash incomes. Co-operatives form the basis for this process, ensuring multiple cycles of materials at the level of each farming household, village, province, and the whole island.

Four major people's organizations in Negros, DKMP for peasants, DALO for farmworkers, KIMA for fisherfolk, and KAOSA for the urban poor act as the core of PAP21 center which is set up together with local and Japanese NGOs to promote the island-wide socio-economic transformation process. The bilateral partnership between Negros peoples and Japanese NGOs has been actively functional since 1986

when an emergency appeal came from Manila to the Japan Coalition for Philippine Concerns (JCPC) to provide emergency relief for Negros sugar workers and their families suffering from mass unemployment and widespread starvation following the world sugar market crash. Since then, they have been developing this partnership by stages and through trial and error.

Civil Society is a way of life where people have committed themselves not for power but for what they believe is the best for their community and for their society. It is like a nest where 'mother-bird' and 'father-bird' fly from one tree to another tree bringing stems to build nest for their baby-birds. It is a nest of the world where all creatures are living together in peace and harmony.

I would like to end this report with the "country song of popular rights" as a reminder on the spirit of Japanese people who had struggled for rights and democracy, which I believe, will never die from the hearts and minds of the Japanese people.

"Country Song of Popular Rights"

(Minken inaka uta)

by Ueki Emori, an influential thinker who subscribed
to the western versions of natural right doctrine, in 1879

*Man is free.
The head thinks and the heart feels;
The body moves and runs;
Man surpasses all other wonderful creatures.
The heart and body are
Comparable to the universe.
Man's freedom does not allow a dearth of liberty;
We are free; we have rights.
The people of Japan must claim their rights;
If we do not, then our companion is shame.*

*Though the birds have wings they cannot fly;
The caged bird can see the outside.
Though the fish have fins they cannot swim;
They netted fish sees the sea beyond.
Though the horses have hooves they cannot run;
The tethered horse sees the grass out of reach.
Men are endowed with arms and legs,
We have hearts and minds
But today we have no liberty or rights,
If we calls ourselves men
Then each person must himself stand up and say,
"Man has rights."
The mind must think and the mouth must say,*

*"Whether freedom continues or ceases
We all hear and feel its calls.*

*The rights of freedom are possessed by everyone;
Freedom is a gift of heaven.
Men have both intelligence and strength;
There is no gain in not using them.
Living without freedom, not having freedom
Is the same as being dead.*

*Think of the salt; salt is salt because it is salty;
If it's not salty then it is the same as sand;
Sugar is sugar only because it is sweet;
If it's not sweet it might as well be dirt.
Man is man only if he is free.
If he is not free, he is like a puppet.*

*From ancient times government has been
oppressive and tyrannical,
It destroys homes and kills people
It suppresses speech and prohibits discussion.
Does it do anything that is good?
For this kind of government
The granting of rights and liberty is seen
As swallowing a bitter mixture of salt and sand,
Not sweet like the earth.
Whether rich or poor, strong or weak,
All men are the same under heaven.
No one is above another and no one is beneath another.*

*The people of Japan call for the extension of rights,
But there are no methods to extend our rights,
Because the law allows us no freedom.
If a government is evil,
If it checks the freedom of the people,
If it checks their wealth and takes their money,
If it does these wicked things without good reason,
Then it makes a great mistake.*

*The people's welfare is unobtainable.
Let's resolve for constitutional laws
And for the early popular election of an assembly.
Onward! Onward! People of our country.
Let's push for the rights of liberty.*

*Work diligently, thirty million people,
All together;*

*Rise up, be prosperous and go forward.
A political system of constitutional freedoms
Is the pressing need of today.
Cultivate wisdom and pursue scholarship
Become enlightened people and
Let's make brilliant the majesty of our country.*

Research Papers

The following papers were written by three of the fellows during their period of residence in the International House of Japan. These papers of Goenawan Mohamad, Ishak Bin Shari, and Ota Yoshinobu supplement their final reports for the fellowship which appeared in the previous section. The International House of Japan Bulletin 18:1 Winter 1998 edition printed these three articles.

Baldwin's Garment: Identity and Fetishism and Other Issues of Difference

by Goenawan Mohamad

An identity is questioned only when it is menaced, as when the mighty begin to fall, or when the wretched begin to rise, or when the stranger enters the gates, never, thereafter, to be a stranger.—James Baldwin, *The Price of The Ticket*

In the beginning are our differences. The words are from Hélène Cixous, the French philosopher, whose writings on feminism speak eloquently on "The new love [that] dares for the other, wants the other."¹ But the words might as well be a line from any writer commending the dominant trend of contemporary intellectual and political movements. One may point out that today we are observing a kind of rebirth of the late 18th century European reaction to the Enlightenment as claim of universalism. Yet the current emphasis on differences has a greater variety. It can be a legitimate insistence on developing a space for diversity and change; but it can also be a violent rebuke to any assumption stemming from both Marxist and liberal ideals—both in a deep crisis—of shared human destiny. There is a remark about the end of the 20th century, attributed to historian Eric Hobsbawm, that says, rather pensively: "What holds humanity together today is the denial of what the human race has in common."²

The first encounter with difference requires a myth, and we have the story of the fall of Man. If one believes in the Bible's tale of creation, it was Adam's wish, in his first pang of solitude. And God created woman. And then the serpent tempted her, and she tempted Adam in turn, and both ate the forbidden fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. Thus difference was born as an epistemic moment. As the Bible describes it, it was a highly upsetting incident, or even an act of sin. God banished Adam and Eve from Paradise because of it.

My impression is that in this part of the Bible God shows His preference for a state of pure innocence that ensures an undivided mode of being. The text gives the image of a Supreme Being who is always more willing to repress any claim of discord in an image that is probably the ultimate paradigm of our own age-old anxiety. This is the kind of dread that regularly surfaces, in the famous words of Michel Foucault, "as if we were afraid to conceive of the Other in the time of our own thought."³ However, it is also the same God, at least in His later appearance in the Koran, who claims that He created different people so that they could understand

each other, and that Adam's departure from Paradise was not actually a punishment, but a mandate to represent Him on earth.

Hence, the persistent ambivalence towards the Other. Modernity is referred as one of its narrations. The disenchantment of the world is both a farewell to innocence and a first step to comprehend (which means also to "grasp") various realities outside the cogitator, in a Cartesian protocol of knowing. This business of grasping has something to do with the praxis of emancipation; man and woman being freed from a condition of ignorance and dependence—but also with the rapacious process of colonizing life, the unpredictably plural. Centuries of imperialism, a child of modernity, had brought different people to one big arena of contest. It was a conquest over heterogeneity by setting up categories (and hierarchies) of civilization before, and after, eliminating the weak. At the same time, it put a particular condition referred by Marx as "Asiatic mode of production," or "rural idiocy" if you will, in its various forms, under a system secured by modern powers of money and weapons.

Unlike imperialism of the past, today's appeal of globalization rests on its promises of equal opportunity. And yet globalization is a game mostly played by transnational financial markets, movable capital and high-tech information businesses. The movement of immigrant workers, cosmopolitan intellectuals, technocrats and refugees of all kinds may also be a portent of eroded national boundaries. But for better or for worse, there is no single border. On that account, no global village, open and unsuspecting—ever exists. The majority of people remain physically attached to a particular geographical site, and besides, an encounter with the Other often gives rise to an even more acute sense of territorial imperatives, both in terms of space and of "culture." The Tree of Knowledge gives fruits of sundry tastes. Some are nice, others bitter.

This is, of course, an old story. In the 19th century Japan there were two books about *hizakurige*, "a journey on foot instead of horseback, and thus a journey of people with considerably less than aristocratic means."⁴ The first story, told by Jippensha Ikku, (*Tōkaidōchū Hiza-kurige*, published in 1802, became an instant bestseller), is about two characters, Yajirobei and Kitahachi, who took a trip from Edo to Settsu and beyond. It is a kind of travel writing focusing on local dialects and customs in various places in Japan, with a certain purpose to endow its readers, in the words of Mertz, "with the fundamentally unifying identity of nation." The opening passage of Ikku's narrative suggests a praise of the peace the present enjoys, and also an appreciation of the glorious, albeit violent, deeds of "our warlike heroes" of the great age. By linking the nation's identity with the historical past, Mertz argues, "the narration avoids the problematic politics of how individual readers are diversely subject to the contemporaneous powers of the state." Interestingly, at the end, because of the way the *Hizakurige* develops, the reader is no longer invited "to take on the identities of distant co-nationals." Instead, the narration "encourages the reader to enjoy their many differences." In other words, the nation, for this reader, "is always outside the individual, and the individual is eventually restricted to

occupying only a single point within its kaleidoscopically variegated cultural network."⁵

The other *Hizakurige* is written by Kanagaki Robun almost seventy years later, or in 1870, less than three years after the Meiji Restoration. Designed to draw on the commercial success of Ikku's story, Robun's *Seiyō Dōchū Hizakurige* has two main characters presented as the grandsons of Yajirobei and Kitahachi. However, both members of the new generation, instead of pursuing their grandfathers' trek, left Japan and went by steamship to visit places outside their country, on their way to The London World's Fair. Again, Mertz's research and insight are helpful in interpreting the story in the perspective of identity and difference. In contrast to Ikku's story, the result of Robun's narrative is "a radically rarified and internalized view of nation and, ultimately, race, that pervades both self and other." The voyage is like a metaphor of moving up, treading "the path of civilization." Based on a linear idea of progression, it provides "a mapping of international hierarchy," with the line framed in terms of military and economic power.

No wonder that Yaji and Kita find foreigners in places like Suez unappealing. "Suez has no grass or trees," the story describes the African port; "the houses are few and far between, made of mud and small stones. The people are black, and it goes without saying how dirty it is." According to Mertz, in Robun's account of the journey, foreigners rarely speak, and when they interact with Yaji and Kita, it is more often as thieves or tricksters. At the end, the two travelers find themselves increasingly "in the position of representing more than their locality, and their identity even as Edoites becomes untenable." They have become Japanese nationals. Japan as an "imagined community" is born inside them, and the Edo background of their origin is now only a thing to remember, albeit longingly.

To remember implies a previous act, or a trace, of forgetting. I think Ernst Renan is right, when he speaks of the relation between the nation and forgetting.⁶ But of course, like remembering, forgetting is a discriminatory *modus operandus*; somehow there is always a process of selection about which part of one's experience is to be deleted from one's file of memories. The end result has its cut in shaping one's identity, either national or otherwise. Often it creates a more or less complete linear form that becomes a perimeter to keep out "dubious" elements.

The two stories from Japan are two varieties on a theme, i.e. identity formation through a process of encounter with the Other. Ikku's narrative suggests the way identity—in this case national identity—is related to the self in a special way, probably like a garment to the body. I borrow the metaphor from James Baldwin. "Identity would seem to be the garment with which one covers the nakedness of the self," he says in the work I quote in the opening of this essay. The question is of course how tight the garment is in the case of people like the older Yaji and Kita. I would say it is not so loose (although it is best, according to the manner Baldwin recommends, to be "a little like the robes of the desert, through which one's own nakedness can always be felt, and, sometimes, discerned"). Nevertheless, for the two travelers, the garment, or their sense of identity, is certainly not something totally inwrought in their inner selves. The two Japanese fictive characters will never let it

fall nor be changed, and they may never have the will nor the power to trust in their own nakedness, but it is conceivable to see them combining the garment with other garments and still look natural. In their case, identity is not set against difference. In contrast, Robun's story is an instance in which the self not only resists any degree of nakedness, but also objects the use of garment as a metaphor for identity. They see their particular notion of Japanese-ness not only something imbedded in their being, but its very sum and substance. It is singular.

This is the beginning of what I call "Identity-Fetishism." It starts with being aware that there is a different way of doing a similar thing. Afterward, the difference is attributed to a group of people marked out by certain specificity, either of geographic, historical or biological nature. The final step is to transmute the difference into essence, or race, or paradigm.

Actually, there is nothing unusual in the awareness of being different from one group of people and being similar to another group. This generates a need to have a common symbol of belonging and develops into a more structured form of self-understanding, as well as a way to deal with the world outside. In its more assertive expression, it is both an assertion of presence and a statement of defiance. The result is today's politics of identity, through which people from different gender, race and other badges of belonging come forward and negotiate to have their voices heard and their dignity respected—sometimes in a violent way.

To be sure, this is all a natural response to long years of discrimination or exclusion. But there is also another way to explain the hardening of boundaries between different groups of people. The world today comprises of an expanding market economy generating the rise of capital and prevalent commodification. And, of course, many things go unevenly. The ensuing fragmentation of large and small communities brings along a centrifugal upturn. A sense of loss and uncertainty comes right after it. The crisis of both of Marxism and the liberal ideal everywhere helps to fan the embers. A great number of people begin to secure an identity and a role in the cosmos immune to erosion.

It is no wonder that one of the impacts of "progress" in East Asia, the Middle East and Africa, in which a sector of the society lays claim to modernity, is a visible, often noisy, return to "tradition." It is a dialectical vortex of centripetal and centrifugal forces. At a time when technology and the allure of modernity is seemingly undermining the distinctions between cultures, a local drive for power comes to the scene to assert itself and make a statement of its uniqueness, carrying the banner of "nationality," "ethnicity" or "religiosity." In a sense, it is probably not very different from what Clifford Geertz calls "moral double-bookkeeping."⁷ Today, a great number of people, while eagerly embracing the high-tech gadgets they acquired, try to revive once-forgotten symbols, rituals, and structures. They take great pains to construct, and invent, "the uncorrupted source," or "the pure origin," or any kind of primal paradise. They happily put forward the premise that social groups have essential identities, and that your "culture" is your destiny. This is probably the explanation of the upsurge of Islam, Hindu, and Christian labels of "fundamentalism." This is also probably the explanation of the use of Confucianism

both to boast of East Asian economic achievements and to discourage democratic changes.

What is curious is that this revival of tradition goes hand in hand with the drive for more modernization. Let's take Singapore as an example. In many respects, Singapore is a contemporary paragon of a modernizing Asia. It has one of the most proficient bureaucracies in the world and efficient judicial institutions. It has become an excellent environment for international trade and investment—a perfect milieu to generate a consistently strong economic performance. It is essentially a secularized system created to serve a well-defined goal and the traffic of messages dominated by purposive rationality. Seeing Singapore from this perspective, one may wonder whether this is a place of the grim Weberian image of the modern future, where people live as "specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart." However, this interior of near-perfect modernity also stores up something different. While employing the same political mode western countries use, Singaporean government leaders keep drumming in the virtue of "Asian values," particularly their Confucian variation.

Primarily they do it as a resistance to the American and European ideals of human liberty which are often propagated by the media and promoted through political diplomacy. No doubt, there is an element of resentment in this new insistence on traditional values. The Singaporean ruling elite, like many of its colleagues from other parts of Asia and Africa, is understandably uneasy, even angry, finding itself living in a world constructed, maintained and judged by others. Hence the show of independence. But there is also another rationale behind the current "neo-traditionalism." Living for many years in an environment signified by both a "disenchantment of the world" and an unabashed pragmatism, Singaporean view of tradition is more in the nature of a strategic action than of a nostalgic exercise. The return to tradition aims at finding a way to legitimize control and through such a control to stave off the "side-effects" of modernization.

The Modern Self

It is commonly known that the modernization process requires technical innovations, capital accumulation, marketing and managerial productiveness, and so forth. Its prerequisites are, among others, a drive for efficiency, well-organized processes of production and a rational agreement for frugality and for temporary forfeiture. However, the very success of economic development has given birth to a new hedonism. The danger is that the new hedonism, stimulated by mass consumption, will eventually undermine the conditions supportive to a continuing growth of capitalism. But there is a problem. Unhealthy as the hedonism is, it helps the consumer goods industry to continue and flourish. To unravel the dilemma, you have to balance the increasing impulse for prompt prosperity and the expanding claim for development's gain with a good management of human drives and needs. In other words, to maintain the vigor of the bourgeois mode of modernity, you have

to regain the kind of consensus tradition used to furnish—a consensus for common self-restraint. Hence the recurrent insistence on a nation's "cultural identity."

But there should be a caveat here. A clearly demarcated culture, perceived as a coherently structured entity, is a folly. To be sure, in Southeast Asia, the leaders persistently argue for "Asian cultural values" in politics. But the concept is preposterous, since Asia is such a diverse place; not everyone in the region eats with chopsticks, believes in karma, has more than one wife, or has a strange work ethic indescribable to an American Mormon or a Calvinist Swiss. It is equally difficult to apply a single-culture concept even to a seemingly homogenous group of people like those living in Bali and in Japan. Under the rug of similarity, there is always an internal struggle between different local expressions to achieve a certain degree of social predominance. Some are repressed or assimilated. In a less liberal atmosphere, they are even presented as being mere parasites living outside "the center" and getting their vital sources from what "the center" offers. Yet even the notion of "the center" is problematic. Cultural expressions take place in the contested space of social existence. The winner calls the shot. He or she makes his or her kind of symbols and structures the only legitimate origin of meaning. The loser immediately becomes the unwelcome Other.

For this reason, I'd rather use a different approach to "culture." To me, culture is simply a process of production of intellectual and artistic resources. The keyword is "process." Of course, old-school ethnographers (also ideologists and political leaders) tend to ignore it. They prefer to talk about established rituals, social formations and structures. They are oblivious to the fact that the description of these rituals, social formations and structures are likely the results of an "experience-distant concept," (as contrasted to "experience-near concept," to use psychoanalytic jargon), that say very little about what is classified and conceptualized. What the ethnographers, ideologists and the rest of us have are only parts of cultural texts, interpreted and reinterpreted by experts and laymen alike.

The trouble is that in reading various cultural texts one often harbors a consistent bias against the notion of "change." The urge to constitute "a culture" to define a common identity is the most prevalent mistake in our contemporary discourse. It freezes the actual catalyst that brings changes and is fraught with moments of unpredictability during society's creative interplay. In doing so, it moves against the notion of "text" itself, since it denies the property of a cultural expression to be mixed or blended with other cultural expressions. No doubt, the labeling serves a purpose. It makes a well-organized cultural catalogue.

This brings me back to the problem of identity, which is a kind of labeling. Let me tell you one story. I once lived in Bruges, a beautiful Flemish Belgian town close to the North Sea. It was in mid-1960s, and I believe I was the only non-white among the population of fifty-thousand. Each day the town seemed to reclaim the presence of history, particularly its own history. The city was first built in the 9th century. Practically every day I walked on its old cobbled streets. Almost every morning I passed the charming Rozenhoedkaai canal, marveling at ancient Flemish buildings overlooking its green, quietly flowing, stream. Every hour the time was

announced to all corners of the town by a part of Mozart's "Eine kleine Nachtmusik," ringing proudly in the town's sky. As every Bruges person would tell you, the rococo melody came from the forty-seven carillons played at the top floor of the belfry in the Market Hall. The town people, the tourist books, and the encyclopedia told me that the tower was an impressive medi-eval construction from the 14th century, a part of the landscape that has also the ornate 550-years old Stadhuis, the seat of the municipal administration, around the corner.

In short, the past was a routine presence, but it was not my past. Each time I passed the Market Place, I was fully aware that even if I decided to be a citizen of Bruges, with a genuine love for the town, I would never be a legitimate part of its collective memory. I would always be an outsider, or at best, a latecomer. Every spring the people of Bruges celebrate their memories during the Holy Blood procession. They parade in colorful dresses enacting familiar Biblical stories, portraying heroic accounts of the Crusades, and recreating the images of their ancestors thus producing their own well-organized catalogue of important events from Jesus in Jerusalem down to the local medieval burghers. In short, this is their way of creating a long but clear line out of a rather complicated past. And because the images of the past are in no way near to the image I have (if I have it at all) of my ancestors, or of my own past, the line that was drawn continued to become a border of identities.

Little did I know that this ritual of remembering is actually a kind of apology for a previous forgetting. Recently I learned, to my surprise, that architecturally Bruges is entirely a fake and depends for its charm largely on the British. A new book by historian Roel Jacobs tells it all. The Market Hall with its belfry turns out to have been a 19th century pastiche. The Rozenhoedkaai dates all the way back to 1932. Jacob's book says that it was the English who settled in Bruges in the mid-19th century who were chiefly responsible for preserving the town's ancient image, while the official Belgian attitude was that of indifference.⁸

But what is the use of "truth" in this matter? Not much, probably. And yet in identity formation, some half-truths, or even a false premise, can be both powerful and insidious. More poignant, and certainly more widely known than my Bruges story is that of James Baldwin in a Swiss village, as he tells it in his famous *Notes of a Native Son*. He was the first black man coming to the village, which was not exactly a remote place; it was only about four hours drive from Milano and three hours from Laussane. In fact, he was a rather familiar visitor to the place; he had been there four times. The villagers knew his name, although they never used it when they talked to him. They also knew that he was from America, although it turned out that they, in their charming and naïve manner, never really believed it. For them, and they expressed it without malice, a black man had to be from Africa, like all the blacks they "helped" to convert to Christianity by donating money to the village church. Increasingly, the writer became aware of how history formed factions; history had become an exclusive space, representing race, asserting biology. No matter how accustomed he was to the place and the people, he would forever remain outside the world which the white people of the Swiss village, and their ancestors, had created.

This meant the world of European civilization, its missionary Christianity, its conquest in Africa, its support of slavery, even its other variations, i.e. the urban sprawl of New York of which the villagers from one generation to another had never seen and from which part of the earth Baldwin came. At the end, with a trace of pain, the essay acknowledges that this kind of history will stay in the black man's mind like a nightmare he cannot wake up from. He would rather forget his past, but it was his lot. Let me quote from what he says about himself and his Swiss neighbors:

"The most illiterate among them is related, in a way that I am not, to Dante, Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Aeschylus, Da Vinci, Rembrandt, and Racine; the cathedral at Chartres says something to them which it cannot say to me, as indeed would New York's Empire State Building, should anyone here ever see it. Out of their hymns and dances come Beethoven and Bach. Go back a few centuries and they are in their full glory—but I am in Africa, watching the conquerors arrive."⁹

It is a powerful testimony of anguish. Yet to me the essay, written in 1953, twenty years before *The Price of The Ticket* was first published, fails to register a significant point: even if history had helped to produce Baldwin's "Nigger-ness," it can have no natural, as well as no total claim over him. Just as the continuity with the past my Bruges story is a simulacrum from a selective memory, so is the link between Baldwin's Swiss villagers and New York's Empire State Building of the whites. The past, theirs and also his, has no single corridor. Besides, it is never simply there. It is a matter of social signification; therefore it inherits interpretative problems, of which the answer is never irrefutable. The image of things centuries ago, or centuries to come for that matter, is not necessarily of a conquering Swiss tribe taking over Baldwin's helpless African ancestors.

I am using Baldwin's essay and my Bruges story, as well as Robun's narrative, as a way of arguing that the choice and the representation of a particular past, like the mapping of people and places in the "path of civilization," can become a determining line between "us" and "them." And yet it is the capacity of imagining that authenticates history and geography. It creates a more or less linear form, maybe a Caucasian chalk circle, expressing the territorial imperative to mark who should be inside and who should be not.

Of course, it has something to do with power. Maybe this is the reason why Foucault's "pancratic" view of the world as something permeated by power that comes from everywhere, dour as it is, has quite a strong resonance in contemporary debates. I have my argument against this, but let's put the matter aside for a while. Let's put it this way: the capacity of imagining is tied up with the power to sanction an imagined identity. This makes the role of our "experience" as a keystone of our identity questionable. Hence the familiar post-modernist view that identity is a construct. In this perspective, our experience of being "black," or "woman," or "Asian," requires, as it were, a constant re-reading. In fact, the post-modernists insist that our experience has never had a fixed and stable presence to serve as confines of our social identity. Worse still, as writers of post-colonial studies would urgently point out, a category of identity involves a particular material history in which a subject is constituted and indexed (for example, as "Burmese," or "Indian") by alien

forces—and the label sticks. Therefore, as Gayatri Spivak asserts, names like "Asian" are not anchored in identities. "They are incessant fields of recoding that secure identities."¹⁰

The post-modernist position cherishes differences, and inevitably, on the issue of identity, it shows contradictory slants. It has a strong bent to question consensus-building narratives and an acute misgiving of what it perceives as homogenizing hegemony. It promotes the praxis of "micro-politics," consisting of political agendas and actions with neither great theory nor great ambition to build a New World, in a time when old revolutionary parties have been discredited and liberal democratic institutions spurned. Post-modernist insight is also an appreciation of the abandoned, of the useless, of people thrown overboard. By and large, it cheers the political movement of minorities. Accordingly, it has an innate link with today's noise of identity politics. And yet, its view of identity lends no support to strengthening any communal gird, which is a necessary step in political formation. In like manner, it impairs the bond created by a group of people as a result of common suffering, like the Jews after a pogrom, or the Bosnian Moslems during a massacre. To them identity is their very survival kit, as a response to being marked for systematic victimization.

There are also problems arising from the post-modernist delight of difference. This has something to do with its dismissive, and sometime distrustful view of universality. Reading Lyotard's celebrated argument for post-modernity, for example, is like reading a treatise on tolerance. But it also sounds like an advocacy for indifference. He rightly finds fault with the claim for universal validity of the "grand narratives." He censures hegemonic discourse posturing as solid "scientific" propositions and context-free reasoning. Accordingly, he speaks for the need to appreciate different kinds of knowledge coming from different cognitive contexts. Since their relevant criteria are different, "All we can do is gaze in wonderment at the diversity of discursive species," he says.¹¹ But this espousal for difference played incessantly, as it were, on Derrida's "groundless chessboard," is actually a mixed bag of attitudes. When it gives credence to the belief in multicultural societies, it unwittingly also serves as an apology for an apartheid of values. At the end of the day it may become a respectable "ethics of indifference" towards the Other. Hobsbawm's timely remark about the end of the 20th century, quoted in the beginning of this essay, is not about an imaginary situation. It is time, then, to find out whether it is possible to look at the problem of identity differently. Let me begin with a reminder that identity seems to have become a perimeter of "we" rather than of "I." The perimeter expands (or otherwise shrinks) in an epistemic moment in front of the Other. Therefore the "we" is contingent. In the Indonesian language, for example, there are two distinct words for "we": *kita* will include the second person, while *kami* will exclude him or her. The act of inclusion, or exclusion for that matter, does not totally depend on the side of the person(s) who speak. It depends on a concrete speech-situation, which is also the case when one has to choose the appropriate word for "I" or/and for "you." I think there is nothing uniquely Indonesian about it. The Japanese language has many more words meaning "I" and

often the Japanese use none in their expressions, and French, like German, has two words for "you." The word in language, as Mikhail Bakhtin reminds us, "is half someone else's" and signs arise only on "interindividual territory."¹² And I think we can also say the same thing of the constitutive process of experiences and identities: they are "dialogic" and "situated," and they occur in the creative relation with the Other.

For this reason, Emmanuel Lévinas's insight is inspiring. For him, identity is not shaped "egologically," but ethically. To be sure, his idea of asymmetrical notion of responsibility (the Other is above me, not reciprocally next to me) may sound too sweet to the real world of human relations. But we live in an age where so often the face of the victim is smashed and forgotten. The horror of "ethnic cleansing" in the former Yugoslavia is still with us. Hence the urgency of Lévinas's ethics of the "concrete Other": it is an ethics wary of the insistence of one kind of "we" (*kami*) at the expense of the other kind (*kita*). Its starting point is not a centered subject fixed within an identity that claims an essential difference from another identity.

In this matter, it shares the notion of "textuality" of the postmodernist. Textuality, as Spivak says, is "where the self loses its boundaries." Because there is always the "trace of the other in the self," identity and consciousness never becomes fully self-present.¹³ However, there is something that the postmodernists seem to overlook, something that Lévinas's ethics is somehow capable to suggest, and that is the pain inflicted on the body during torture, murder, starvation and solitary confinement. Through pain, hunger, and sexual desire, the body, particularly the face, is "real": it is something interpreted and yet it is also an agency asserting its presence. We look at it and find it like a rare piece of glass from a broken mirror, reminding us of other pieces that may be dumped or crushed in the other side of the room—and I think that is a moment of our unspoken covenant of being human. The manifold meanings of birth, sexuality and death provide no final discourse. Yet they allude to a universal bond before, or beyond, what Theodore Adorno refers to, with scorn, as "identity thinking," which is the kind of cognitive process that puts the multiform tangle of the natural state into abstract grids.

In which case, Baldwin's metaphor of identity may not be wide of the mark. "Identity would seem to be the garment with which one covers the nakedness of the self," he says, therefore, "it is best that the garment be loose, a little like the robes of the desert, through which one's nakedness can always be felt, and, sometimes, discerned." This is, of course, not to make identity an inconsequential cover. But it is a way to free oneself each time from any repressive, "colonialist" (or "nationalistic," for that matter) formation of subjectivity. Therefore "nakedness" may suggest vulnerability, and yet ultimately it is the "trust in one's nakedness is all that gives one the power to change one's robes."¹⁴

The issue is, of course, freedom. It means that we are not only dealing with an issue of the category of space and identity, but a movement of spaces and identities. As Edward Said puts it, "no one is purely one thing."¹⁵ The disintegration of the traditional world as well as the old global order has brought along a certain degree of recognition of the undefinable self. Perhaps, this is a part and parcel of the

liberating nature of modernization—something many modernizing elite of today likes to ignore. Admittedly, there has always been a lingering doubt whether human liberty is what is at stake in the dilemma of political emancipation in a non-European society. The problem is that in many non-European societies, the individuation process is a precarious thing. It is not always maintained by the institutionalization of separate personhood.

A self is constantly a fragile phenomenon, a potential victim of either the powerful gaze of Authority or of collective project. The question is whether it is desirable to protect and develop its potentialities. I believe it is, if we share the idea of creating non-repressive type of order and reason. Order and reason, implied in the quest for modernity itself, tend to trample the indefinable self, by putting it into concepts of identity and categories. As Adorno would put it, it is always important to see what eludes the concept, so we may not "drown the scream of its victims."

Notes

1. Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa," in *New French Feminism*, ed. Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (New York: Schocken, 1981), pp. 263-64.
2. Lecture to the American Anthropological Association, reproduced in *Anthropology Today*, February 1992.
3. In *The Archeology of Knowledge*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Harper and Row, 1972) p. 12.
4. I am indebted to John Mertz's excellent discussion on the two *Hizakurige*, "Close Encounters of the First Kind: Jippensha Ikku, Kanagaki Robun, and the Literary Construction of National Identity," *Asian Cultural Studies* (International Christian University, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo, March 1996, pp. 43-58.
5. Ibid.
6. In Homi K. Bhabha (editor), *Nation and Narration*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), p.11. Renan says: "...the essence of a nation is that all individuals have many things in common and also that they have forgotten many things."
7. In his *Islam Observed*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 117. One can discern a similar symptom almost everywhere in the "Third World." Geertz writes about Indonesia and Morocco. On China, Joseph Levenson reminds us about the difference between "tradition" as a primary and serious commitment to Confucianism and "traditionalism" as a "psychological device" against change. See his *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), pp. xxix-xxx. On the Arab World, see Fouad Ajami, *The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice Since 1967* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 138-200.
8. *Guardian Weekly*, November 2, 1997, p. 24.

9. See *Notes of A Native Son*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984), pp. 159-175.
10. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Inscriptions: Of Truth to Size," in *Outside in the Teaching Machine* (London: Routledge, 1993) p. 211. An earlier post-modernist stand on experience and identity is formulated by Jonathan Culler more than a decade ago: "For a woman to read as a woman is not to repeat an identity or an experience that is given but to play a role she constructs with reference to her identity as a woman, which is also a construct." Quoted from *On Deconstruction* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), p.64.
11. Jean-François Lyotard, *The Post-Modern Condition*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 26.
12. Quoted in V.N. Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), p.12. See also Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination*, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).
13. "The Politics of Translation," *Outside the Teaching Machine*, pp.180 and 179. On Lévinas's ethics, see Matustik's interpretation: Lévinas's ethics of concrete other is ever suspicious towards totalitarian ambitions of liberal egological freedom; towards historical projection of the ego on revolutionary identity; to-wards conservative nostalgia for the ego of a nation, party, totem or church; and towards the present age ethos celebrating the end of history and the ubiquity of power." In Martin J. Matustik's, *Postnational Identity*, (New York; London: The Guilford Press, 1993), p.191.
14. In his *Les Damnés de la Terre*, (Paris: Maspero, 1961), Frantz Fanon warns of the danger of "micronationalisms," which are themselves legacies of colonialism. "Colonialism does not simply state the existence of tribes; it also reinforces and separates them." (p.70). This can be used as an apology for centralistic nationalism in many new nation-states, but it can serve as a warning of how identity-fetishism based on race, tribe, religions are all as repressive and disruptive as colonialism. James Baldwin's quotations are from *The Price of the Tickets*, Sect. 2, "The Devil Finds Work" (1985; first published in 1976).
15. Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Alfred A. Knoff, 1993), p. 336.

Globalization and Human Development

by Ishak Bin Shari

During the last few years a new definition of development has emerged. It is no longer merely focused on economic growth nor just the rapid and sustained expansion of productivity and income per capita. It is, rather, seen as a process that enhances the freedom of peoples, allowing them to pursue whatever they value. In other words, development is viewed as a process of liberation of both society and individuals from poverty, deprivation, dependence and exploitation.

This interpretation of human development is important because of the way it interprets the role of culture. Earlier definitions had but a small role for culture. It was viewed as merely instrumental—it could help or hinder. In the Asian context, Confucianism was said to encourage hard work and healthy living, thus promoting capital accumulation and entre-preneurial skills. Culture was seen not as something valuable in itself but as a means of promoting and sustaining economic progress.

In the fuller definition of development, culture is no longer reduced to this subsidiary position. Instead, while not denying its promoting of economic growth, it is acknowledged to have a more far-reaching function. Culture is desirable in itself; it gives meaning to human existence. As pointed out by the World Commission on Culture and Development (1995), "culture is to be considered not as a servant of ends, but as the social basis of those ends themselves."

Human development ought to focus on the individual human being, one who is both the ultimate object as well as the most important instrument of this development. A healthy, well-educated, skilled and motivated labor force is definitely a productive asset. However, it must be remembered that human beings need to work together and cooperate and interact in many ways. It is in this context that culture plays a crucial role. Culture helps men and women relate to each other and makes the development of the individual possible. Similarly, culture also defines how people relate to nature and to their physical environment, through which they express their attitudes to and their beliefs in other forms of life.

It is in this sense that human development is ultimately determined by cultural factors. Indeed, we must recognize that development and economy are part of, or an aspect of a people's culture.

Culture then is not merely a means to material progress. Rather it is the end and aim of a development defined as an expansion of human capabilities in all forms and as a whole. Hence any definition of development must recognize terms that include cultural growth.

Globalization and Disparity

While there is a welcome urge to rethink the concept of development, actual development is not proceeding in a welcome direction. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, market economy and democracy would appear to have triumphed.

The expansion of trade and markets have produced profound changes in the socio-economic conditions and cultures of societies around the globe. In fact, the scale and depth of market expansion (encouraged by modern methods of communication and policies of governments and agencies such as the IMF and the World Bank) seem to have reached a new stage.

Capitalism and a consequent market expansion seem to reign supreme. It is common to hear the assertion that we now live in an era in which the greater part of social life is determined by global processes, in which national culture, national economics and national borders are dissolving.

Central to this perception is the notion of a rapid progress of globalization. It is said that a truly global economy is emerging, one in which distinct national economies and therefore domestic strategies for national economic management are increasingly irrelevant. It is further claimed that the world economy has internationalized its own dynamics, that it is dominated by uncontrollable market forces, that it has its own principal economic actors, that truly trans-national corporations which owe allegiance to no nation or state and may locate wherever the global market indicates maximum advantage.

While recognizing that there is some skepticism toward this view, I do want to focus on some implications of such a development, particularly in the context of achieving an equitable development—such an important component of human development.

Contrary to the claims of supporters of economic and financial liberalization, the movement toward rapid market expansion in the last few decades has been accompanied by disturbing trends. In a recent report, UNCTAD listed a number of these. They include the fact that world economy is growing too slowly to generate sufficient employment; that there is a widening gap between the rich and poor all over the world; that income accruing capital has gained over labor; that as finance gains an upper hand over industry, trading in existing assets has become more lucrative than creating wealth through new investments; that job and income insecurity is increasing; and that the growing wage gap between skilled and unskilled labor is becoming a true global problem.

In other words, equitable development—an important component of human development—remains a serious issue. Some statistical evidence indicates that the North-South per capita income gap has moved from 10 to 1 in the 1960s to 17 to 1 in the 1990s. In the Asia-Pacific region where economic growth rates have remained high, the gap between high income and low income countries is even more acute. The per capita income gap between Japan and China is 80 to 1, while that between

Singapore and Indonesia is 30 to 1. Of course, per capita income in terms of the US dollar does not indicate much about the real living standard or the purchasing power of a national currency. But in a world of increasing interdependence such a widening gap is not a healthy sign.

Another disturbing development is the reversal of a trend in declining income inequality in many countries in the East Asian region, including Japan. At the same time, as a consequence of the recent currency and financial crises in this region, there is also been a reverse in the hitherto declining trend of the number of population classified as living in absolute poverty.

In a multi-ethnic and multi-religioned country such as Malaysia, these developments may have significant political and social implications. It is also important to mention that the problems of poverty and of increasing inequality are also manifested in the increased flow of international and domestic migration within the region.

Income equalities are also on the rise in other parts of the world. In the US, for example, the growing increase in the after-tax-income of the richest one percent (between 1980 and 1990) is so large that it equals the total income of the poorest twenty percent. What is more frightening is the fact that this inequality of wealth has acquired a new aura of legitimacy. It is now argued that this development is both necessary and inevitable; it is justified as a small price to pay for the many "blessings" of capitalism.

In part this increasing trend of income inequality is partly to be explained by the weakening of working class power and the strength of the trade union movement as a result of globalization, the resurgence of a free market economy and other developments which fragmented the solidarity of the workers' movements. Further, the decline of the worker's movement in industrialized countries as a political force means that one of the major functions of the welfare state—namely legitimization—appears no longer an important one. Indeed, one might say that democratic-consumer capitalism has become self-legitimizing. In the absence of a credible alternative to market capitalism, the inequality and insecurity inherent in the system is becoming far more acceptable. In fact, it has been argued that the absence of credible alternatives and the consequence of the acceptance of inequality, indicates a new situation, since the birth of industrial capitalism.

Another imbalance growing more dangerous in the world today is that between society and the natural environment—something which severely affects the sustainability of the development process.

In the pursuit of rapid growth through industrialization and the excessive exploitation of natural resources, many forests are rapidly vanishing and environmental degradation and pollution have become increasingly difficult problems. At the same time, the migration of whole populations to urban areas has resulted in a huge increase in slum areas, thus worsening the environment.

It must be recognized that increasing disparities and a sharp decline in the living standards of large sections of the population could provoke a real reaction. The forms so far taken by such a reaction are not encouraging. Increasing inequality

and poverty have given rise to an increasing incidence of violence, crime, and other forms of deviance. At the same time, given the weakness of what has been the traditional left, right-wing populism and extremism is likely to benefit. Discontent and insecurity are being channeled into racism, economic protectionism and other forms of national chauvinism.

The Importance of Civil Society

Given those worldwide political and ideological shifts which have so privileged the market economy, individualism and competition on the one hand and the downsizing everywhere of the state sector on the other, what are the options open to people in their struggle for an equitable and sustainable human development?

One form of response to the growing anxieties generated by marketization is a stronger role for the state in protecting its citizens against some of the risks of competition. It has even been argued that state intervention is important in order to minimize the social imbalance of openness to the international economy. In 1997 Dan Rodnik pointed out that the postwar period has witnessed highly contradictory trends in the growth of foreign trade on one hand and the growth of government on the other. The increased role of government is particularly striking in the U.S. and the Netherlands. He further argued that the driving force behind governmental expansion during the fifty years after World War II was an increase in social spending, particularly involving income transfers.

The strong correlation between the degree of exposure to international trade and the importance of government in the economy led Rodnik to conclude that the social welfare state has been the flip side of the open economy. He therefore argued that in order to reduce the deepening social fissures which might harm society, and to ensure cooperative social bases, policy makers worked out to complement the external strategy of liberalization with an internal strategy of compensation, training and social insurance for those groups who are most likely to be adversely affected.

However, critics of the interventionist state today level two convincing arguments against increasing the role of the state. First, the experience of our century reveals a propensity and a capacity of the state for totalitarian regulation and repression not only of people but also of institutions, social practices and the very fabric of ordinary life. Second, the state is a strikingly inefficient economic actor. At the same time, today's world is also characterized by the erosion of the whole sovereign state system.

It is in this context that it is of vital importance to recognize the critical role of civil society. This entity has been defined as "the intermediate space between the family and state," but excluding the capitalist market economy. As Yoshikazu Sakamoto in 1997 noted, it is "a democratic transformative public space based on the reciprocal recognition of the dignity of the equal rights of human beings."

I share the view that the expansion of civil society is crucial to human development. It will enable more effective roles in three major areas and will check both the state and the market, encourage the empowerment of the people toward greater participation, and it will encourage the promotion of new ideals. In fact, as Sakamoto pointed out, both the objects of alleviation and the ultimate elimination of poverty and inequitable development, as well as the prevention of environmental decay and the restoration of ecological balance cannot be attained by the command economy as empowered by the state from above or by the neo-liberal market economy run by competitive corporate forces trying to maximize their profits.

Rather, equitable and sustainable development could be achieved through the democratic initiatives of those in civil society itself. For example, the solution of the problem of environment degradation would require the voluntary participation of every member of civil society in a change of life-style geared to an equitable and sustainable development in opposition to the model of a dehumanized consumer culture.

In fact, against the powerful march of globalization of the free market, there have been increasing efforts by those in civil society to look for alternatives. The examples of the Grameen Bank¹ in Bangladesh and the Projek Ikhtiar² in Malaysia have, though in their early stages, provided alternative credit facilities to the poorest in the rural areas of those countries. They are well-known examples of the indigenous initiative in the creation of a real alternative development.

In Japan, some groups of farmers and consumers are now conscious not only of prices and safety of agriculture products but also of global environment and the fairness of trade. They now see that even if trade is economically fair in free-market terms, this does not necessarily mean that it is environmentally, ecologically or spiritually fair.

At the same time they are also frustrated by the liberalization policies of agricultural products. They strive to find an alternative linkage between producers and consumers, not only within Japan but also with other countries. Their efforts may be small but they have the potential of developing into the establishment of an alternative global culture through the power of the people themselves.

In this respect too, the idea of cultural freedom as promoted by the World Commission on Culture and Development is crucial. Cultural freedom, by protecting alternative ways of living, encourages creativity, experimentation and diversity, the very essentials of human development. Indeed, it is the diversity of multi-cultural societies and the creativity to which diversity gives rise that makes such societies innovative, dynamic and enduring.

Hence, in my view, developing a balanced relationship between the state market and civil society will be crucial to the attainment of an equitable, sustainable human development. We must always remember that the market has always existed and that it is not a creation of modern capitalism. Thus we need to evolve an equitable and ethical market.

Culture and Development

In conclusion, it is important to again stress that the meaning of development cannot be taken for granted. Presently, despite the progress made in the conception of human development, most economists and politicians still take for granted that development merely concerns economic growth, maximized efficiency, increased production, and consumption.

Underlying this idea is the implicit assumption that all people share the same destiny, that they are essentially oriented toward the maximization of material goods and that this is what ultimately motivates them. On the social and political front, development is equated with efforts to create and transfer institutions which are believed to be conducive and to support both the economic processes and "democracy." The goals of development are taken as given. It follows that "development" itself has been identified as the pragmatic art of development management.

However, this meaning of development, as has been pointed out above, takes into no consideration at all the realities of culture which have to do with people's control over their destinies, their abilities to view the world in ways which reflects their particularly experience.

If development becomes simply a global process whereby the economy and military exert more powerful control and dominate and shape the lives of others for their own ends, then whole cultures (meaning beliefs, ideas, meanings, feelings) are left out of consideration. When this occurs it is meaningless to speak of human development. As was well pointed out by the World Commission on Culture and Development, development divorced from its cultural context is growth without soul.

It is obvious therefore that development is more than a simple transferring of economic, political and technological processes from the "developed" world to the "under-developed" one. Unfortunately, from the perspective of conventional development discourses, it is extremely difficult to conceive of other different world views as equally worthy of consideration. In fact, very rarely are other ways of life being considered as having equal value or of providing fulfillment or satisfaction. As a result, the ways of life of indigenous peoples through the world is being seriously threatened. The great diversity of human societies, of ways of solving problems, of creating meaningful existence, of organizing human relations, of adapting to different environments, are destroyed by development as conceived and implemented by the powerful elite.

In an effort to redefine development which emphasizes the importance of culture it is also crucial to maintain a proper balance between tradition on one hand and modernity on the other. Although there are tendencies toward maintaining or returning to more ancient traditions (including tribalism) most people wish to participate in "modernity" in terms of their own traditions.

They consider that some features of traditional societies are worth preserving in their own right, while others will have to be adapted to the requirements of a changing and progressing world.

In fact, some may need to be implanted from outside. Some Asian countries, particularly Japan, appear to have succeeded in this better than others. Traditional consumption habits, community loyalties, patterns of cooperation and traditional hierarchies seem to have contributed to the extraordinary economic growth of Japan and some other East Asian countries. It must be admitted, however, that in recent years, the internationalization of production and the changing of values that emphasize individual life rather than corporate life have been leading to some serious problems in these very societies.

In our endeavor to build a better world, cooperation between different peoples—all from different cultures and with different interests—will be facilitated and kept within acceptable and even constructive limits only if these peoples can see themselves as bound and motivated by shared commitments. Thus, it is imperative to look for a core of shared ethical values and principles. Its efficacy will depend upon the ability of both the people and the government to transcend narrow self-interest and to agree that the interests of humanity as a whole will best be served by the acceptance of a set of common rights and responsibilities.

As pointed out by the World Commission on Culture and Development, the search for global ethics will involve culture in a number of ways. Moreover, any attempt to formulate a global ethics must draw on cultural resources, people's intelligence and their emotional experiences, historical memories and spiritual orientations. Culture, unlike scarce national resources, will through this process be invigorated and enhanced rather than depleted.

Involuntary poverty and social exclusion are evils in modern society that need to be eradicated. However, all too often the very process of development which is supposed to alleviate, results in creating more poverty and economic oppression. For example, in the transition from subsistence-oriented agriculture to commercial agriculture, impoverished women and children are sometimes hit hardest. In the transition from a rural, traditional society, in which the extended family takes care of its more unfortunate members, to a market system in which the community has yet to develop an alternative welfare system, the fate of these victims is often cruel. In the transition from rural patron-client relationships to relations based on the cash nexus, the poor suffer by losing one type of support without gaining the other. In the transition from an agricultural to an industrial society, the majority of the rural population are neglected by the public authorities in favor of urban populations. In the transition from centrally planned to market-oriented economies, and from autocracies to democracies, inflation, mass unemployment, poverty, alienation, and crime all have to be confronted.

This does not mean that development is necessarily bad and should be rejected. What is most needed is the rethinking of the development paradigm. So long as this is an unequal world of poor and rich, the concept of one world and one planet cannot be realized. The joint responsibility for the health of a global commons

can only be materialized when there exists shared global prosperity. In short, without global justice, global sustainable human development will remain always an elusive goal.

Notes

1. Grameen Bank ("Bank of the Poor,") is a financial institution in Bangladesh providing small, non-collateral loans to the very poor to enable them to start small businesses. The loans are paid back in small weekly amounts. Established in 1983, the bank now successfully operates in over half of in Bangladesh's 68,000 villages with a total of 2.1 million borrowers, 94 percent of whom are women. One-third of Grameen's customers are now out of the poverty groups while another one-third are close to crossing the poverty line.
2. Projek Ikhtiar is a micro-lending scheme which also provides small loans without collateral to the poor in Malaysia. The project is modelled after the Grameen Bank but with some adjustments to suit the local conditions. The implementation of the projects is being carried out by a non-government organization, *Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia* (AIM). Again, women are the major recipients of the loans and the loan repayment rate is more than 95 percent.

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Nation in Doubt, Identity in Question, and Hybrid Society

Ota Yoshinobu

A question of identity—put rather crudely, "who am I," or "who are we"—has been raised in as many different fields as there are in humanities and human sciences; today, it is the question that has been most often raised, and it is the question whose answers are heatedly debated in all those fields. What this question of identity entails exactly depends on some important qualifications that further complicate it.

I list, as follows, almost randomly, such qualifications: who poses it and to whom, even rhetorically, is it addressed?; in what context is it raised?; when and for what purpose is it raised? To illustrate the importance of these qualifications, I want to contrast this question of identity, posing it from two different positions; that of dominance and that of subordination.

First, the question most symptomatic of European imperialism was posed by a literary movement called modernism, a movement which emphasized the irreparable loss and nostalgia for the authentic and organic. Those involved in this movement, including such American figures as Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Ezra Pound, viewed their world crumbling into chaotic jumble, a clear indication of which was World War I; therefore, they all went to various destinations in Europe for the purpose of regaining a sense of self—their identities—something needed to re-imagine critically the nature of European civilization. Already in their effort—which I do not uncritically endorse, of course—a question of identity was enmeshed with, among others, issues of order, belonging, and displacement.

But white European males—exemplars of my first position—are not the only ones raising the question of identity; in fact, their displacement was chosen and empowered by the global politico-economic regime of the day, while there were others who had raised the question more forcefully from the position of subordination, the position created by the regime which made Euro-American modernism possible.

Who I have in mind as an example of the second position is W.E.B. DuBois. DuBois, an African-American historian and sociologist, stated, in 1903, as follows in this quotation from *The Soul of Black Folk*, a question of identity in a surprisingly contemporary manner:

"It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in an amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder."

Black identity, according to DuBois in this particular writing, was expressed as the negation of self-identity, that is, "looking at one's self through the eyes of others." Being an "integrationist," (or "assimilationist" might be a more suitable term to describe his position in 1903), DuBois still believed in the ideal of becoming a citizen of the U.S., a country which had been rejecting "blacks" to the margins of society through its racist practices. It is the duty of black elite's so-called "Talented Tenth" to lead this process of assimilation, which he thought would eliminate what he refers to in the quotation above as the "double consciousness."

I have quoted at length from DuBois, not because I naively identify myself with his position vis-à-vis American society, but because I think that he pointed out difficult issues surrounding the question of identity in the contemporary world. Formulating as questions, I enumerate them as follows: is a nation an adequate unit of belonging? Or, is the ethnic group an adequate unit? How do "immigrants" relate to their newly settled countries? What kind of identities are articulated in this diasporic dislocation? How is national identity constructed? At what cost? What is the role of historical memory in the construction of identity?

Thus, a contemporary discussion of identity needs to include an examination of various modes of "belonging" to community—nation-state and ethnic group—precisely when such communities are made problematic as the process of globalization constantly denaturalizes the legitimacy of nation-state and ethnic community as the original and primary source of identification, something that grounds a mode of belonging; therefore, I discuss in the following section nationalism in two forms: one based in terms of nationality, the other, ethnicity. Then, turning to a critique of nationalism, I examine in the third section the critical notion of hybridization, also divided in two conceptual polarities.

But, how is such a mode of belonging expressed? One cannot simply express one's identification with a community, unmediated, as it were. My answer at this stage is a tentative one, but it is as follows: it is representation in a culture that mediates the individual to a community that calls one's identity into being. Thus, in the following section I would like to discuss, despite a fear of appearing overly pedantic, some key terms such as representation, culture, and identity, as they relate to a debate on a mode of belonging.

Belonging: Nationality and Ethnicity

Answers to the question, "who am I?" might include such individual attributes as name, gender, sexuality, familial relations and such social attributes as

status, "race," nationality, language, religion, and so on. But, to complicate the process of answering this question, I would like to point out that gender, sexuality, nationality, and "race," for example, are not innocent categories; they imply more than what they mean; connotations always exceed denotations. Being "Japanese" can simply be a statement of nationality, while it conjures, depending on to whom this nationality is expressed, historical memories of war, images of economic expansionism and secretive political body; such memories and images are then translatable into stereotypic ideas of being "Japanese": aggressive, passive, secretive, avaricious, polite, insolent, all of which are necessarily contradictory, as Ruth Benedict pointed out a long time ago.

Certainly, these connotations do not float in the air, but are socially anchored, produced and reproduced in representational practices. Such representations produce other-representations as well as self-representations, both of which are configured simultaneously; in other words, representations about the Self are inseparable from creating representations about the Other. Furthermore, since representations socially circulate, the meanings of these representations are not immune to re-evaluation by the subjects in different positions, so to speak, the process referred to below as transcoding. This process has historically occurred frequently not only in colonial contact zones but in national urban spaces.

"Who produces these representations and to what purpose in mind?" is a very important question, as it points to the control and deployment of power, yet "who consumes them, and how?" is as important as the previous question, for it also destabilizes the singularly cohesive view of power. Presentation is interpretable in the sense that its potential for various conflicting meanings is always real; in other words, an act of interpretation pries open potentials for meanings of these representations. For this reason, an identity articulated in representations is actively produced by the power that smoothes contradictory meanings and strives for a unitary meaning to which an individual is invited to identify for a time being. But, the individual in turn negotiates such a meaning, avoiding the final closure to it. Thus, identity is not "being," but "becoming," as Stuart Hall reminds us, a continuous act of negotiation itself. According to the process of identity formation summarized above, national identity is not simply given. For example, an issue of national identity becomes complicated as soon as it is considered something more than just a legal issue. A question, "who is Japanese?" has been contested historically as a cultural issue; that is, "who is included and who is excluded from this nation?"

Okinawan intellectuals, for instance, from Ifa Fuyū to Oshiro Tatsuhiro, have repeatedly raised the following question: "what does it mean to be Okinawan in the Japanese nation-state?" To them this question comes from their reflections on experiences and histories of subtle exclusion and marginalization of the Okinawan people from Japan. This question raised by Okinawan intellectuals is not simply a question for Okinawans but is also a question for the Japanese mainlanders; since a discussion of Okinawan identity is inseparable from that of Japanese identity at large.

Ifa Fuyū (1876-1947), an Okinawan intellectual of great renown, claimed in 1914 that the incorporation of Ryukyu kingdom, enacted through several stages, had been "a kind of emancipation from slavery." "Emancipation" is a rather shocking term to describe the political process of rendering the Ryukyus into Okinawa, the process completed in 1879; this statement comes from Ifa's reading of Booker T. Washington's *Up From Slavery* published in 1901.

To avoid a possible misunderstanding, I should emphasize immediately that by the term "slavery" Ifa meant the condition of subordination without a definite sense of identity: Ryukyuans were suspended in the tension—constructed forcefully by others—between being Chinese and being Japanese, a condition endorsed by the Satsuma clan which had siphoned revenues from trade relationships between China and Ryukyu kingdom. Thus, Ryukyu "slavery" financially prepared for the emergence of the modern Japanese nation-state since it had supplied wealth for Satsuma clan which was instrumental in 1868 restoration.

Ifa considered national identity something that had been lacking for Okinawans; in this case, Okinawans as Japanese. His desire for winning recognition from the Japanese is something akin, perhaps, to liberating oneself from "double consciousness," the desire for integration also expressed by DuBois. I think Ifa's effort in reviving the *omoro*, Okinawan courtly poems, was—academic interest aside—to establish a historical link between ancient Japanese culture with the Okinawan counterpart. Regaining a historical commonality with the Japanese as represented in *omoro* poetry was his way of identifying with the Japanese. (Of course, his intellectual trajectory did not end there, but any extended discussion of it remains outside of the limits of this paper.)

Leaving Okinawa for a moment, I would like to discuss another way of formulating identity. This time without relying on the promise of integration, one moves toward the opposite direction, that is, separation. Nowadays this move has been hotly debated because of its association with nationalism (or, its variant, ethnic absolutism) that tremendously empowers members through proposing a unified value system but creates absolute gaps between its members and non-members. The sharp separation of members from non-members is represented in differences between cultures. I should point out that it is not only minority groups that sometimes resort to this mode of formulating identity; the majority does as well. Thus, according to conservative critiques like Arthur Schlesinger, Afrocentrism, for example, is a form of tribalism that potentially disrupts American national unity, because it privileges a distinctive cultural unity among African-Americans, the unity that results in separation. He is vocal in criticizing it, while he remains silent to such an idea as Huntingtonian "clash of civilizations," which is clearly based on the same organic and integrated view of culture. Schlesinger considers natural the logic of cultural separation at the level of nationality, but finds "elitist" the same logic at the level of ethnicity.

I repeat that nationalism has not always been the source of evil in the contemporary world; its status is really contingent on historical contexts as any form of politics might be. Nationalism among minorities, the oppressed and the

marginalized formulates powerful identities through transcoding: a process of assigning new meanings often opposite in dominant tones to the key terms. For example, the term, "black" in the U.S. was re-valued by black activists in the sixties as powerful and positive symbol of identification for blacks—"black is beautiful." In the United Kingdom the same term "black"—which only white British people had used to describe non-white peoples—was mobilized in the seventies to consolidate various urban populations of color such as Caribbean, African, and South Asian.

Nationalism invites people to commit themselves deeply to a community through various powerful representations of sentiment and historical memories. It is local and sedentary since it derives its power from territoriality, which is often represented in such expressions as defending one's "homeland" and, in a case of scattered communities, a return to such a place, albeit imaginary. It is a historical fact that (local) nationalism has been the driving force behind de-colonization movements in Asian and African countries since the end of World War II. I acknowledge as well that such movements perhaps remained only reactions to Western colonialism; therefore, they retained the logic of the Manichean dichotomy which had informed the very colonialism that such movements had attempted to overthrow. This is a well-rehearsed point in any contemporary discussion on colonialism. This logic, I do not think, overrides the power of history; it is incumbent upon us to understand the specificity of the historical context in which these movements arose and, certainly the consequences they created.

I present another instance of nationalism from another part of the globe. Recently, I have been studying Maya Indian nationalism in Guatemala, where the Indians (*Indígenas*) are the majority rather than the minority; however, the political power of the country is clearly in the hands of *ladinos* and whites, the minority. The indigenous population is not biologically distinct from *ladinos*; Mayas are distinct from *ladinos* only culturally: Mayas use one of twenty-two native languages, practice folk Catholicism, and follow other customary cultural practices in their everyday life.

It is often maintained that Guatemala is a country of "*mestizos*," the "race" produced as the result of mixture of Indians with Spaniards: that Guatemala is a truly "hybrid" nation. To assert anything contrary is to rub against this national ideology; consequently, this ideology simply reduces Mayas to an underclass, which is in need of modernization. Thus, in the dominant national discourse Mayas are represented as a "problem," and they are defined by such terms of negative valence as follows: pre-modern, unsanitary, poor, uneducated and unenlightened, collective, and so on. This discursive construction of Mayas constantly beckons them to renounce their ethnicity, in short, to integrate themselves into the Guatemalan society, a modern nation based on the model of European nation-state. This discursive construct of the Mayas gave rise to a unified Mayan identity. Until nationalists have re-articulated the notion of Maya for themselves, Mayas conceived themselves of belonging mainly to linguistically separate counties (*municipios*) rather than something like Maya "nation."

Maya nationalism transcodes "Maya" as the storehouse of positive meanings: ecologically conscious, moral, hardworking, knowledgeable, bearers of wisdom of

ancient Maya civilization. It represents its cultural heritage in a very essentialized—that is an historical—way, in a manner somewhat akin to ethnographic descriptions produced by anthropologists several decades ago. It strives toward opening up a space for Mayas to become subjects of the modern nation-state, Guatemala, without renouncing their ethnic identity by devising strategies of entering modernity. For example, they now have created means of transcribing their languages, creating through vernacular neologism—not direct borrowing from Spanish—vocabularies necessary for modern life, and even lobbying for official recognition of four major Mayan languages. At this juncture I consider Maya nationalism an effective means to combat the power of *ladinos*; without this form of mobilization the Mayas would be left with nothing to protect themselves from the powerful discursive constructs that affect the actions of all involved.

Another View

Now, after defending nationalism not only for its political force but also for its cultural empowerment, I would like to introduce critiques of nationalism and ethnic absolutism because I think there are also historical contexts and moments in which such critiques are needed and effective. It is important to keep in mind that any form of politics remains conjectural; therefore, to use a felicitous expression of Stuart Hall again, we need to think of it as contingent and positional, that is, "without guarantee."

One obvious feature of nationalism is its tendency to down play differences among members within a community which it tries to represent politically, while another is to police the boundary between the inside and the outside for the purpose of keeping the inside absolutely distinct from the outside. The unity is created by emphasizing the historical continuity from the time immemorial, establishing the "sense" of linguistic homogeneity, devising an historical cultural essence, if not "racial," at least shared by all.

This unity presupposed by nationalism has been contested. In the age of "postmodernism" and global economy, the localized community, whether in a form of nation-state or in an ethnic group, might appear (but to whom?) oppressive because of its drive for unity. While nation-state and organic community have been declining as the source of stable identity, new representations are produced discursively; in other words, the systematic and organic concept of culture is no longer adequate for analyzing current representational practices that produce meanings (amenable for reinterpretation) because such a concept disregards the non-systemic aspects of society, both internally and externally. These representational practices thrive upon positional variations, internally, as well as exploit permeable borders, externally.

Nevertheless, it might be too rash to do away with the concept of culture entirely, since without it a world of meaning would be lost. By the same token, it might be problematic to posit a nomadic subject, which feels free of belonging to any

community. An alternative is to focus on their presentational practices based on such ideas as "import-export, contextual-tactical shifting, local mix-and-match, syncretic recombination" (in James Clifford's phrase), as cultural borders are constantly crossed and re-crossed, new technologies invented and marketed as commodities are appropriated creatively for the purpose of making the contemporary life non-identical. Thus emerges a critique of homogenous national time and space. Then, ideas of boundary crossing, syncretism, creolization and intermixture constitute a powerful critique of nationalism that defends the idea of purity: "hybridization," in short, is a key critical term in contemporary discussions of nationalism.

But, as Renato Rosaldo has astutely noted, the idea of hybridization oscillates between two conceptual polarities: (1) hybridization as in-between space of two zones of purity; naturally, the idea of purity is logically prior to that of hybridization (2) hybridization as ongoing condition of all human sociality; for this reason, the idea of hybridization is logically prior to that of purity. Below I discuss these two distinctive conceptual polarities, the separation of which is, according to some, crucial for re-imagining a possibility for a new form of sociality that does not fall into the trap of nationalism.

Hybridization as a Critique of Nationalism: Two Polarities

First, hybridization as a cross between two zones of purity. If, for nationalism, locality and stasis are key terms, then, for its critiques, the concept of mobility is a key term, traveling becomes a powerful metaphor, and the nomad is no longer pre-modern figure, but a powerful prototype of "post-modern" individual. Exile no longer carries a negative meaning, but is positively re-evaluated as one of such "post-modern" metaphors of displacement. Everyone in a sense becomes "cross-racial, polylingual, and multi-contextual" (in Gomez-Peña's phrase), in short, a hybrid. Since such a person is a product of difference rather than identity, it might be somewhat misleading to call this form of identity as "identity" at all. In a sense, this notion of hybridization celebrates a concept of a nomadic subject, as mentioned briefly at the end of the previous section.

Accordingly, this concept of hybridization has destabilized the meta-narrative of nation-state, as much as the transnational flow of capital and labor power has rendered obsolete an understanding of contemporary economy framed exclusively in terms of national economy. George Lipsitz, a scholar in American studies, has once written that "the power of transnational capital means that all of us must become transnational too."

Although historically important as critique of many such taken for granted ideas linked with nationalism, this way of formulating an idea of hybridization, some argue, is a largely self-congratulatory stance for intellectuals in post-industrial societies; worse, it confuses various modes of movement of people into one grand metaphor of traveling: in what aspects is a position of political refugee from Guatemala living in Illinois under the protection of a Catholic priest similar to (and

different from) that of privileged intellectual from India, now teaching at a university in Chicago?

But, the most notable short coming of this facile embracing of nomadism, it seems to me, is its tendency to regard "community and belonging" as a non-issue, in other words, its total denial of consideration for developing a possible form of sociality. I find it crucial to keep this critique of "post-modern" nomadism, since I believe that nationalism and its postmodern critique cannot be narrated in an evolutionary sequence; both remain equally contested ideas.

Second, hybridization as on-going condition of all human sociality: this idea of hybridization is somewhat counter-intuitive because it posits that hybridization is logically prior to purity. According to it, what needs to be examined is the ideological formation of zones of purity, as expressed in nationalism and ethnic absolutism. In a historical examination it takes a form of constructivism, from whose perspective nation-state premised on the linguistic, cultural, or "racial" homogenous structure is not given but historically created. Therefore, this idea of hybridization deconstructs nationalism, which emphasizes the historical continuity of nation and its people.

It is also effective in criticizing multiculturalism that simply assumes the relative positioning of various cultures would be a solution to the call for more liberal education, the concept of multi-culturalism entrenched deeply in the idea of culture as closed system as if it were a language. Since language as naturally given has supplied a model of multiculturalism, as Sakai Naoki clearly notes, it is so easy to slide into accepting an almost ahistorical, structuralist view of language, which is expressed clearly in Levi-Strauss's realization that "language can only have [sic] arisen all at once."

On the contrary, Sakai's argument is that the systemicity of language arises first through the detour of learning another language. Conscious recognition of one's language comes only when one learns another; this means that a conscious understanding of "foreign" language is logically prior to that of one's "mother" tongue, and that the desire to learn another language is an act of establishing some form of understanding—"heterolingual address," to use one of his expressions—where there exists no guarantee of conducting successful communication. This, according to Sakai, is opposite to nationalism, based on "homolingual address," in which effective communication—"communion," in his word—is always secured through the "natural" sharing of language, history and culture.

Similarly, since Sakai does not presuppose the systemicity of language prior to the intervention of power to form it, the concept of translation, according to him, needs to be reconsidered as one of power. After the translation is completed—the act of establishing links between the previously incommensurable—the systemicity of two languages appear, in a sense, after the fact. Sakai's position, in short, prioritizes the hybrid human sociality over the formation of nation-state and its associated assumptions about language, culture, and people.

I consider Sakai's critique of nationalism insightful and powerful; however, what seems to be lacking is the historical specificity in which his argument is developed. Although he does propose the "heterolingual address," characteristic of

human sociality open to others, as alternative to closed, exclusionary mode of sociality, I am not sure how he could envision in concrete terms a non-exclusionary mode of community. For this reason, I regard his critique as a conjunct, effective in certain historical contexts—the U.S. and Japan—but perhaps less so in others.

In contrast, Paul Gilroy's notion of a "Black Atlantic" is a highly specific and culturally grounded attempt to criticize nationalism of any form—whether European or black—for the purpose of developing a vision of hybrid sociality, which is, also like Sakai's, prior to the formation of organic and bounded view of culture. Below I would like to discuss briefly what Gilroy proposes and to point some implications his work offers for this forum.

Linking and Connecting

Gilroy's magnificent book, *The Black Atlantic*, puts forward two inter-related arguments: (1) blacks are internal to modernity as it developed in Europe; therefore, modernity cannot be a monopoly of European bourgeoisie; (2) modernity cannot be narrated as a gradual development of nation-states. The agents in his counter-narrative to Euro-centric view of modernity are black intellectuals, musicians, and writers, who crossed the Atlantic from the New World to Europe, a direction opposite to the trajectory of slave trade; through the process of this movement created is the black political culture called the Black Atlantic, the political conception that privileges "route" rather than "root," which is often the key metaphor for nationalism. The Black Atlantic proposes a hybrid form of sociality called "Diaspora" as alternative to nationalistic form of belonging. "Diaspora," unlike postmodern nomadism, does not do away with the desire for community altogether, but links and connects differences in a web-like fashion to create relations without suppressing these differences. It also aspires to create relations with its adopted locality, as if it were agents of networking the past, present and future. Gilroy further argues that such linkage is, in the case of the Black Atlantic, culturally specific: various black musical forms—from gospel, blues, and funk to jazz—contain a characteristic, "call and response"; through this antiphony, the culturally specific form, the performer is linked, while remaining distinct, with the audience. Gilroy states that antiphony arose out from spirituals, the storehouse of memory of slavery, which, as Tony Morrison says, is the beginning of modernity.

I am not in a position to outline a blueprint for developing an non-exclusive form of sociality (or what James Clifford has once referred to as "non-exclusive practices of community, politics, and cultural differences") and I know well that such a blueprint, if exists at all, needs to come out of effort to see things with dual vision: one eye toward the specific articulation of local history and another toward the specific vision of future, and the effort in the present is to bring the two together.

Any discussion of identity cannot avoid being political, since identity is contested precisely because a certain type of political subject follows from a certain articulation of identity. Identity is discursively constructed in representations; in

addition to content, form of representations are also made contestable due to the "multi-accentuality of signs" (as vehicles of meanings) that constitute such representations. Since, culture is saturated with representations, no one can take culture, the bundle of meaningful practices, for granted. These concepts are pried open now; none are privileged in a sense that they can ground all other concepts; all of them are open to contest and re-articulation. Thus, the field of meaning, culture, and identity is political through and through. This political implication of our identity, in a way, creates a sense of uncertainty or a moment of crisis, as Gramsci says, in which "the old is dying and the new cannot be born."

This uncertainty, however, is a call for re-imagining the nature of the community. While a community is often predicated on the idea that it is given and assumed, therefore, belonging to a community presents us with a sense of security; a sense which helps us maintain the integrity as an individual. This uniformitarian notion of a community is a predicament, as I have discussed before. But, I suggest that out of the same sense of predicament and uncertainty emerges a search for another notion of community as something still in need of construction rather than taken for granted. Consequently, it still calls for our efforts in bringing it about. Thus, a discussion of identity is inseparable from this search for a notion of community, unless it a for an uniformitarian one. The search for one's identity, "who am I?" always entails another search—"who are we?" The question of identity is always social, but the society must remain open to individual differences.

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