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The cover is based on the design of Marco Malto. The silhouette on the front cover is that of Byodoin Temple in Uji, Japan. It represents paradise in Pure Land Buddhism and appears on Japan's ten-yen coin.

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Thailand: The Lessons of Protest

Kevin HEWISON
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Abstract

Since late 2005, Thailand has seen almost unending street protests by red shirts and yellow shirts against incumbent governments. While there are many lessons from this period of often unruly and uncivil political contestation, this paper concentrates on four that bear on several assumptions associated with the broad literature on democratic transitions. These are: (1) the political intransigence of a conservative elite unwilling to accommodate the rise of electoral democracy and subaltern claims for political voice; (2) the challenges posed to notions that the middle class and civil society have certain “historical roles” as the ballast for democratization; (3) the capacity for so-called independent institutions and agencies, created as checks-and-balances to be captured; and (4) the link between high rates of inequality and political rebellion cannot be assumed.

Keywords: collective action, democratization, monarchy, antidemocratic movements, middle class, inequality

WITH THE EXCEPTIONS of Singapore and Brunei, each of the countries of ASEAN has experienced regime challenging political protests in recent decades. Thailand has experienced more than most. The period since late 2005 has been unusual as one of essentially nonstop protest, which only came to an end on May 22, 2014, when the military overthrew a pro-Thaksin Shinawatra elected government. Since the coup, all protest has been banned and political repression has been extensive.

Thailand's street protests have involved a range of actors, from small ginger groups to huge and aggressive antigovernment protests that have gone on for several months. Throughout the period, however, the most significant and lengthy actions have been by the red-shirted supporters of Thaksin and his various political parties, and those by royalists, often identified as yellow shirts. Both groups have been able to mobilize hundreds of thousands of supporters.

Thailand's political protests present an opportunity for considering the lessons of collective action in the context of a nation where democratization has been debated, challenged, and discarded. Before turning to the lessons, however, some background is required.

Context

In the depths of the Asian Economic Crisis, Thailand's parliament adopted the 1997 constitution, which had been debated since 1992. This constitution was the first to involve a consultative process, even if it remained elite-dominated. The new constitution was innovative in that it took seriously human rights, decentralization, and the establishment of checks-and-balances. The latter were meant to combat the cycle of "money politics" that saw politicians accumulating ill-gotten funds to buy votes and parliamentarians (MPs) in elections.

A defining feature of the constitution was the effort to establish a more stable form of representative government. It did this by making the executive stronger and by establishing a greater degree on party control over MPs. The aim was to prevent "party-hopping" by MPs and to increase the longevity of elected governments. In essence, the desire was to establish a stable, two- (or three-) party system.

As events unfolded, Thaksin was the only prime minister to be elected under the 1997 constitution. He convincingly won polls in 2001 and again in 2005. That constitution was thrown out in the 2006 military coup, which then resulted in the 2007 constitution, essentially drawn up to prevent any Thaksin-like domination of electoral politics. However, as pro-Thaksin

parties unexpectedly continued to win substantial election victories, the military threw out its own 2007 constitution with the 2014 coup.

The 2006 coup was preceded by several months of street protests against the Thaksin government, led by the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), a loose alliance of civil society, businesses, elite and royalist groups who opposed the parliamentary power of Thaksin and his Thai Rak Thai Party. PAD came to be known as "yellow shirts" as they donned the colour of the king's birthday and made their protests a royalist revolt against Thaksin's "parliamentary dictatorship." PAD were on the streets from February 2006, having been formed from state enterprise unions and NGOs and royalist opposition groups that began to rally from late 2005. In February and March 2006, PAD organized massive demonstrations (Pye and Schaffer, 2008). Following the 2006 coup, PAD disbanded, but reformed and returned in 2008 to oppose the pro-Thaksin government that had won the 2007 election. When that government was thrown out by a judicial intervention in late 2008, PAD dissolved into several ginger groups promoting ultraroyalism, ultranationalism and a strident opposition to Thaksin. Following another election victory by the pro-Thaksin Pheu Thai Party in 2011, PAD morphed into several protest groups that eventually became the antidemocratic "People's Committee for Absolute Democracy with the King as Head of State" (PCAD) that was on the streets from late 2013 until the May 2014 coup. Its work was completed by the military's intervention.

The yellow shirts came to be opposed by the "red shirts," who were associated with the pro-Thaksin "United Democratic Front Against Dictatorship" (UDD). The UDD first became organized following the 2006 coup and in opposition to the military-backed referendum for the 2007 constitution. In early rallies, it opposed the military, railed against elite interference in politics, supported Thaksin, and demanded elections.

The red-shirt rebellions of 2009 and 2010 against the royalist- and military-backed Democrat Party-led government saw the army deployed to defeat them, resulting in considerable loss of life. The military had not

acted against PAD; indeed, its leadership refused to act on the lawful government's orders in 2008 to clear demonstrators who had occupied airports. Later, in 2013–14, not only did the military refuse to act against the PCAD, it supported and protected the protesters.

The PCAD received considerable support from the opposition Democrat Party. Yingluck Shinawatra's landslide 2011 election victory embittered the Party. Unable to win an election between 2001 and 2011, and closely aligned with palace and military, the Democrat Party came to reject elections as "majoritarianism," railed against alleged corruption by politicians, and gave its support to extra-parliamentary oppositions. The Party's acceptance of street protests began with its support to PAD from 2006. The Democrat Party continued to support antielection and antidemocratic groups, providing the leadership of the PCAD.

This reliance on street-based politics—by both sides—saw some 250 people killed and several thousand injured, most of them red shirts. This period of extended political conflict has been destructive and divisive. Indeed, many commentators have suggested that the conflict has been deep and long because it is a struggle for the future of Thailand's politics.

How did it come to this? The rest of this paper examines four areas that may assist in answering this question and suggests some of the broader "lessons" of political conflict and protest.

Lesson 1: Elite intransigence

There is considerable discussion in the political science literature about successful democratizations and the compromises required from elites to achieve this, often in the face of collective action that threatens elite interests (see Robinson 2006). The Thai case is a reminder that, even in the face of considerable force for change, entrenched elites do not necessarily make the historic compromises that permit democratization. Thailand's decade of protest has been characterized as a struggle of

competing elites, with a rising elite (Thaksin and his political and business allies) challenging the long-dominant conservative elite composed of a coterie of palace-connected senior civil and military officials, big business/old money, and technocrats (Hewison 2008, 205–7).

There was an element of this in the early period of disputation. However, as the conflict deepened, there was society-wide mobilization and remarkable political polarization, with the conflict coming to be defined by the efforts of the royalist elite to defend its economic wealth and political dominance. In this defence, this elite has relied on street mobilization as well as the use of the military, judiciary, and several of the “independent” agencies established under both the 1997 and 2007 constitutions, both now defunct.

The royalist elite’s mobilizations gained considerable support from *Bangkok’s* middle class and from the Democrat Party-dominated mid-South. Its campaigns have had several consistent themes: anticorruption, protection of the monarchy, and a rejection of electoral democracy. It is not unusual to see a middle class opposing corruption. What is unusual, and definitive of this conflict, is the class’s alliance with the royalist elite to defend and promote a feudal institution—the monarchy—while rejecting electoral democracy. This rejection is even more unusual given that uprisings against military authoritarianism in 1973 and 1992 are routinely considered middle-class revolts (Ockey 2001).

In Thailand, there has been an ideological weaving together of anticorruption, protection of the monarchy, and the rejection of electoral democracy. The argument that knits them together begins with the observation that civilian politicians are massively corrupt, gaining election through “policy corruption” or “money politics,” using the electoral system to maintain their power. Politicians can’t be trusted, voters are bought, duped or ignorant, and so electoral politics is the core of the corruption problem. The monarchy is essential, so the argument goes, because the king is the only moderating influence on corrupt politicians, being of the highest moral calibre and “above politics” (Thongchai 2008).

Of course, there *is* massive corruption in Thailand, and it has long existed. This does not seem to have restricted the monarchy, however, and it has become massively wealthy over the past five decades. Politicians may engage in corrupt activities, but so too does the business class, military, police and the bureaucracy; each has long been identified as massively corrupt (Pasuk and Sungsidh 1999). This matters little in the political discourse that it is civilian politicians who are considered corrupt and corrupting. In fact, the principal beneficiary of Thailand's politics since at least the 1950s has been the royalist elite, and it is this elite that has prevented electoral politics from establishing deep roots. The reality is that, since 2000, the majority of the electorate has repeatedly voted for pro-Thaksin political parties that are then thrown out by allies of the royalist elite, be that military, judiciary, or street demonstrators.

The lesson of this struggle is that the royalist elite is unwilling to make the necessary historic compromise that would allow it to live with electoral democracy and with politicians it dislikes. That intransigence amounts to a political bloody-mindedness opposing a compromise that would see a quite limited reorganization of political power in the country.

Lesson 2: Civil society, middle class and defining democracy

A further important lesson of this struggle has been that civil society is not the ballast for democratization as sometimes portrayed in modernization accounts (Barro 1999). In fact, in the political mobilizations of recent years, Thailand's civil society has been dominated by middle-class interests and has been aligned with the royalist elite's agenda.

In his early days in power, Thaksin gained the support of many nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and civil-society organizations (CSOs) for his attention to grassroots issues and for his nationalism. By early 2006, however, this NGO and CSO support had drained away in the face of allegations that Thaksin was authoritarian and corrupt. Interestingly, those actually at the grassroots seemed to appreciate Thaksin's so-called populist policies more than middle-class NGOs. After all, they continued to vote for his parties in large numbers.

This political decision at the grassroots was vilified by the middle class and many leaders of NGOs and CSOs. Those who voted for pro-Thaksin parties were said to be duped or bought and admonished as uneducated and referred to as “red buffalo.” The image was of red shirts being led to vote and to rally by the “populist” Thaksin. The image of the “red buffalo” has been a staple of royalist ASTV/Manager cartoons (see 2bangkok.com 2012).

One of the most revealing debates during the period of conflict has been over the meaning of democracy. All sides have declared that they are the protectors of democracy and have claimed to be motivated by concerns over the nature of Thailand’s democratization. In the 2013–14 demonstrations, street protesters from the PCAD rejected electoral democracy. They not only opposed an election but also blocked candidate registration, the distribution of ballots, and the voting itself. They also demanded that their supporters boycott the election. The PCAD argued that no election could be “free and fair” until the “Thaksin regime” had been destroyed. Their ultimatum was that the Yingluck government should be thrown out, replaced by an appointed government and an appointed reform committee to ensure that the Thaksin regime was uprooted. They were supported by the opposition Democrat Party, which has boycotted elections in 2006 and 2014; both preceded military putsches.

In general terms, this coalition has argued that elections are just one aspect of democracy. The PCAD’s complaint was that pro-Thaksin parties would always win an election because of the support from the uneducated or duped in the countryside and then engage in “majoritarianism” and ride rough-shod over the minority (that is, the opposition and those who did not vote for the pro-Thaksin party).

Both PAD and the PCAD, supported by the Bangkok-based middle class, have campaigned for a “democracy” that is less reliant on the outcomes of voting and elections. Each has demanded a greater reliance on selected and appointed “representatives,” usually opting for ministers or a royally-appointed “national government.” Such calls fit well with the royalist elite’s

long-held desire for “Thai-style democracy” where representation was defined as a process, not as elections. The process involved the father-leader (earlier, a general, then the king, and now looking more like a general again) going out to visit his children-citizens, learning of their problems and their needs, and responding as he thinks best (Hewison and Kengkij 2010).

This paternalism was also evident when the military took power in 2014. The junta’s Orwellian doublespeak on democracy saw that even a coup can come to be defined as an act to strengthen democracy.

[the] NCPO [the military junta] and all Thai citizens uphold and have faith in the democratic system with His Majesty the King as Head of State. [The] NCPO fully realizes that the military intervention may be perceived by the West as a threat to democracy and a violation of the people’s liberty. However, this military intervention was inevitable, in order to uphold national security and to strengthen democracy. (Government Public Relations Department 2014)

This manipulation of governance symbols was also taken up by protesters who championed transparency and anticorruption, defining “true” democracy as an opposition to elections.

Those on the other side also championed democracy, but made a simpler argument. They observed that winning several elections should count for something and asserted that if political reform was needed, as demanded by the PCAD, then electoral democracy was the appropriate platform rather than an unelected and unrepresentative body. They asserted that there could be no democracy without voting. They pointed out that the repeated overturning of some very substantial election victories was an affront to democratic politics.

The lesson has been that the middle class is not the “natural” ballast of democratization. As Fukuyama has observed,

Middle-class people do not necessarily support democracy in principle: like everyone else, they are self-interested actors who want

to protect their property and position. In countries such as China and Thailand, many middle-class people feel threatened by the redistributive demands of the poor and hence have lined up in support of authoritarian governments. (2013, 56)

Yet even this notion of contingency may be questioned for Thailand where a more diverse middle class has been evident. Earlier, Huntington (1991, 18) noted that a cause of democratic reversal was “conservative middle-class and upper-class groups” excluding populist, leftist, and lower-class groups from political power. This has certainly been seen in Thailand, where the Bangkok middle class and the elite have been drawn to antidemocratic positions that emphasize hyper-royalism, hypernationalism and fascist ideology. In contrast, it has been the relatively less well-off workers, farmers, and some *provincial* middle class groups that have been supportive of electoral democracy.

Lesson 3: Judicial politicization and the myth of checks and balances

One of the major complaints of the PCAD was that the elected governments of recent years were able to ignore checks and balances. This was certainly not true for the judicial branch which has been captured by anti-Thaksin political activists and has become an instrument of the royalist elite.

Political philosophy and analysis since Montesquieu has considered the separation and independence of the judiciary important. In many jurisdictions, an independent judiciary and the rule of law are meant to underpin democratic politics. Thailand's judiciary has taken a different path. It was allocated a more prominent role in the 1997 constitution and this was expanded further under the military's 2007 constitution. These constitutions gave the judiciary new political roles, appointing members of “independent agencies” and selecting those appointed to the Senate. These roles and the institutions created, together with the judiciary itself, were to act as checks and balances for the legislature and executive.

However, during Thailand's decade of protest, the judiciary has been politicized and has seen significant judicialization (Hewison 2010). Judicialization is a reliance on courts and judicial means for resolving political and policy predicaments. Over the last decade, hundreds of political cases have been referred to the courts. We can essentially date these processes to the king's call for judges to get involved in sorting out the post-2006 election political crisis, when the Democrat Party and several smaller parties boycotted an election as PAD demonstrated against the Thaksin government. Following the king's advice, judges hastily convened, annulled the election, and jailed election commissioners. This royal intervention inevitably led to the 19 September 2006 coup and made the judiciary a locus for the conservative opposition to pro-Thaksin governments and supporters. The conviction of Yingluck by the Constitutional Court on a charge of having unfairly transferred an official quickly led to the 2014 military coup (The military junta that seized power in 2014 has transferred dozens of senior officials).

The judiciary's politicization has institutionalized a political bias that pro-Thaksin red shirts have identified as "double standards." In addition to the politicized rulings on Yingluck, red shirts have seen the Constitutional Court prevent any constitutional change, riding roughshod over parliament's constitutional mandate on amendment, throw out prime ministers and a government, dissolve several pro-Thaksin political parties in 2007 and 2008, and ban more than 200 politicians associated with those parties.

It is not just the Constitutional Court that has been politicized. Decisions by other courts on, for example, *lese majeste* charges have been legally dubious and deeply biased, with constitutionally guaranteed rights on bail and public trial brushed aside. One of the few agreements in Thailand's contested politics is that the judiciary is a reliable ally of the royalist side. These events are noteworthy for the lesson that supposedly independent institutions can be captured and subverted. Whereas the royalist elite accused Thaksin of capturing the electoral process, that elite has captured and used the judiciary. This has undermined the processes

that underpinned Thailand's democracy and rule of law, laying the foundations for the military coup in 2014 and the repression that has followed.

Lesson 4: Inequality and political mobilization

The final lesson is about inequality. A consistent narrative of the decade of protest has been of relatively poor, rural-based, pro-Thaksin red shirts opposed by relatively well-off and urban-based royalists. As mentioned, there have been some academic studies that have sometimes cast doubt on this characterization. Debates have raged over whether red shirts are "poor" or just "lower middle class" or whether they are ambitious farmers trying to do a bit better, and so on (Walker 2012).

These debates about socioeconomic status are narrowly conceived, and try to deal with the question of whether Thailand's decade of protest has been a rich versus poor "class struggle." Conceived more broadly, the available national data point to a class element in the political conflict (Hewison 2012). Yet these debates also miss a potentially important political point. Moving attention from incomes and expenditure-driven assessments of socio-economic status to economic inequality reveals a political lesson. Thailand is one of the most unequal societies in Asia. It has had this status since at least the mid-1960s. While the country reduced poverty very substantially since that period, inequality has remained pretty much unchanged. These high levels of inequality and the impacts these have had for a range of outcomes in health, education, and other arenas has been documented by a range of analysts.

Recent theoretical and statistical assessments conclude that while political democracy is usually assumed to prioritize redistribution and reduce inequality, when the political system is captured by the rich or caters to the preferences of the middle class, inequality may be exacerbated (Acemoglu et al. 2013, 1). In Thailand's case, the data suggest that there has been little or no redistribution despite decades of rapid economic growth. Despite this, there has been little political mobilization associated

with economic inequality. This changed with the 2010 red shirt demonstrations that began a process that politicized inequality. This process was associated with the red shirt mobilization of hundreds of thousands of people beginning in March 2010 and the rise of red shirts in print, television, and digital media.

On its rally stage and in its media, UDD messages highlighted a range of economic and political inequities. This included attacks on double standards and the identification of the red shirt struggle as being between aristocrats (*amart*) and commoners (*phrai*). Disparities of wealth and opportunity became powerful political shibboleths, with the UDD calling for “a free and just state,” where the “gap between the rich and the poor is reduced.” It also decried Thailand’s situation as being a “backward country that is totally controlled by conservative oligarchs...”. The UDD wanted a “country of free people with national pride, freedom and equality” (UDD 2010, 5).

The red shirt street protests were crushed by the military, but the political response was a landslide election victory for Yingluck’s Pheu Thai Party. However, the polarization deepened as the vote was spatially segregated. The royalist elite response to this electoral victory was further street demonstrations and the 2014 military coup. The 2014 military junta has also responded to the rhetoric and mobilization of inequality. Coup leader General Prayuth Chan-ocha stresses hierarchy and order, with one blogger suggesting this as a return to the “despotic paternalism” of the Sarit Thanarat regime of the late 1950s (Political Prisoners of Thailand blog, 7 July 2014). Prayuth told the nation, “My principle is that superiors have to look after their subordinates, not the opposite.” He emphasized hierarchical command structures, “The operation of all agencies and organisations must be integrated according to a chain of command, involving commanding officers, colleagues and subordinates.” Prayuth’s vision was a society with a military-like structure. He added, “My principle is for the state to look after people of all ages – be they children, youths, adolescents, adults, and elderly people, in an equal and comprehensive

manner.” His nation was one that would “create a sense of conscience and ideology of nationalism.” The paternalism of the junta, where superiors know what is best, had to be trusted, and it was the nation that created oneness.

The lesson is that high rates of inequality do not mean political rebellion will necessarily follow. Rather, inequality has to be politicized; or in the case of the junta, depoliticized. When it is politicized, it is a highly combustible fuel for political dissatisfaction and requires enlightened public policy embedded in notions of universalism if it is to be kept under control. At the same time, the military coup demonstrates that inequality can also be depoliticized by repression and force of arms.

Conclusion

Street protests since late 2005 have only ended because of a military coup, Thailand’s second in a decade. The lessons to be found amongst the many factors associated with this often unruly and uncivil political contestation are many, and this paper has concentrated on just four: (i) the political intransigence of a conservative and royalist elite unwilling to allow electoral democracy to take root; (ii) the failure of the middle class as a ballast for democratization; rather, it is a class that has been easily attracted by authoritarian politics; (iii) independent institutions created as checks-and-balances can be politically captured and subverted; and (iv) high rates of inequality do not mean political rebellion will necessarily follow; inequality has to be politicized.

(This article was based on a lecture at the Asian Center, University of the Philippines Diliman on 14 July 2014—Editor)

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A Critical Consideration of the Use of Trauma as an Approach to Understanding Korean Cinema

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Abstract

A number of reasons have been forwarded to explain the emergence and current dominance of the Korean Wave in film, as well as the larger phenomenon of *Hallyu*, the term by which the popular-culture Korean wave has been known. Most of these accounts for the New Korean Cinema, the filmic equivalent of the Korean Wave, are tied to attempts to understand other national cinemas in Asia in terms of their respective countries' encounters with modernization. This paper attempts to (1) provide a historically grounded perspective on why and how film is currently being used in Korea to recapture and reevaluate traumatic experiences on the part of both filmmakers and audiences, and (2) to suggest ways in which these uses of trauma may be shifting or eroding.

Keywords: Korean cinema; trauma; psychoanalysis; realism; *auteurism*; spectators

IN AN ASSESSMENT OF the 60th anniversary of the Korean War undertaken in 2010 as a joint project with the Korea Institute of Public Administration, the *Korea Times* ascribed the emergence of the Korean popular-culture wave, or *Hallyu*, to the country's decision to move away from the "absolute primacy on economic growth" enforced by authoritarian regimes both within and outside Korea, to a new development paradigm (Salmon 2010, n.p.). The shift was articulated as a critique of the "Asian values" framework propounded by such rulers as Kuan-Yew Lee of Singapore and Mohamed Mahathir of Malaysia. "Asian values" was a tactic regarded as a coded justification for anti-Western authoritarianism. Two factors made possible the production of popular cultural material that "combined slick production with professional marketing, underpinned by a key local ingredient—the raw emotion Koreans express so passionately" (Salmon 2002). These are (1) the increasing numbers of Koreans exposed to Western countries and (2) the opportunity for new corporate players and renewed interest in the content industry as one of the reactions to the economic upheavals of the late 1990s. By looking at the specific medium of film within the context of this pop-culture wave, this paper aims to provide a closer understanding of the historical origins of the aforementioned "key local ingredient," and an explication of how it had been internalised and expressed in the cinematic component of *Hallyu*.

The attempt to explicate a complex socioaesthetic phenomenon is always a tricky undertaking—not so much because social phenomena are inevitably overdetermined—as mainly because people will always rely on a handle. People need ways by which they can understand whatever is happening to them at any given moment. In general academic practice, European modernity would be the umbrella category by which popular media in Asia are elucidated, inasmuch as both media and modernity are Western-sourced phenomena (A recent example that demonstrates this principle would be the 2002 anthology edited by Jenny Kwok Wah Lau, fully titled *Multiple Modernities: Cinemas and Popular Media in Transcultural East Asia*).

At the same time, the need to look more closely into Korean cinema is premised on the fact that it has moved beyond being an object of curiosity for cinephiles; it has become the latest major player among East Asian countries after the initial interest in Japanese and later in Chinese cinemas on the part of the major European film festivals.¹ In fact, the successful participation of Korean film practitioners in Western events arrived later than, and may be seen as influenced by, the impact they had in the immediate Asian region.

Inception issues

When the current film wave in Korea attracted the attention of international observers, one of the first responses of Koreans themselves was wonder. What was so special about their current film output when their country had been producing films for as far back in the past as anyone could remember? Casual observers of global trends may have felt that it was probably the Koreans' turn to be fetishized for their pop culture, after Westerners presumably grew tired of their fascination with things Japanese, Indian, and Chinese. The regard for Korean film culture as an object of fetishisation, immediately succeeding Hong Kong cinema's previous domination, is foregrounded as early as the subtitle, *The New Hong Kong*, of Anthony C. Y. Leong's best-selling, fans-oriented volume *Korean Cinema* (2002). Leong's position is further reflected and amplified through an acknowledgment of generational innovation in the introductory essays in the collection edited by Justin Bowyer and Jinhee Choi, titled *The Cinema of Japan and Korea* (2004).

That early response, a combination of unease and bemusement, is evident once more in the response of residents of Chuncheon City in Gangwon Province to the influx of foreign tourists eager to stage a pilgrimage, as it were, to the locations of one of their favorite televised drama series, Hyeong-min Lee and Seok-ho Yun's *Gyeoul yeonga* [Winter Sonata] (2002). Considered the first sample of the phenomenon that eventually was labeled *Hallyu* (literally Korean Wave), *Gyeoul yeonga*'s remarkability derived in

large part from the fan culture it engendered among residents of Korea's former coloniser, Japan (Onishi 2004).² The phenomenon of foreigners travelling all the way to Korea to visit the setting of their preferred series has since been replicated on Jeju Island, location of Byeong-hoon Lee's *Dae Jang-gum* (2003); and on Sugi Beach on Si-do or Si Island, Incheon, site of Min-soo Pyo's *Pool ha-woo-seu* [Full House] (2004). In fact, the Korea Broadcasting System recently opened its studio locale in Suwon, Gyeonggi Province to visitors interested in visiting sets and in viewing location shoots of its TV dramas (Gyeong-Gi Do n.d.).

Among standard explications for the origin of *Hallyu*, three competing (though overlapping) versions have emerged, delineated according to their relative stances: "neoliberal thinking, cultural nationalism, and the culturalist position" (Cho 2002 and Paik 2005; quoted in Keehyeung Lee 2008, 181). The first, so-called mainstream view, regards *Hallyu* as evidence of the comparatively high market value of Korea's culturally innovative products; the second, still-dominant perspective, argues that the highly attractive output of the country has resonated with a set of shared Asian values in neighboring places; the third, least conventional one, acknowledges the rise of popular culture as a state priority alongside the local economy. But it rejects the state-centrist nationalist discourses by focusing on the hybridity and Western-sourced inflections that raise "the possibilities of cross-cultural or transborder dialogues from below that can be mediated through [*Hallyu*] texts and their audiences in various geopolitical regions" (Keehyeung Lee, 181–85).

On the question of the current creative burst in Korean cinema, which we shall term the New Korean Cinema,³ a few frameworks have also been proffered. Some of the better-known English-language approaches deal separately with issues of North-South reunification (cf. Hyangjin Lee's *Contemporary Korean Cinema*[2000]), as well as gender roles (cf. Kyung Hyun Kim's *The Remasculinization of Korean Cinema* [2004]). Additionally, a recent study by Kwang Woo Noh (2009) claims that contemporary trends in Korean cinema derive from a "motivation to

re-examine the past.” This is evidenced in titles that focus on historical and political events, as well as personal stories from the period of robust economic growth (1960s to the 1990s) that provide “not only retrospection of the rapid transformation but also nostalgia for the past” (Noh 2009, i–ii).

It is not the intention of this paper to contest these viewpoints, inasmuch as they have proved workable for their respective volumes. In fact, it may even be possible to arrive at a perspective wide enough to accommodate existing frameworks and useful enough to account for the existence of the New Korean Cinema and suggest its future shapes and directions. This can be done by the relatively simple procedure of first looking at which film samples and practitioners constitute the said wave, and then focusing attention on the range of material covered by the films and the manner in which the materials are handled. This paper will therefore proceed contemplatively, in the sense that relevant cultural studies texts will be raised alongside a consideration of the condition of contemporary Korean film texts. The deconstructive critical method will also be deployed in instances when textual and historical aporia are encountered in order to arrive at possible useful scenarios for the future.

History as determinant

In considering a viable context for the study of the New Korean Cinema, the history of film in Korea would constitute an appropriate and useful starting point, inasmuch as a nation’s cinema has the ability to embody its culture’s prevalent ways of thinking and structures of feeling. Such an assumption underlies the writing of Gilles Deleuze’s twin volumes on film (1986 and 1989), where he concludes, “[We] must no longer ask ourselves, ‘What is cinema?’ but ‘What is philosophy?’ Cinema itself is a new practice of images and signs, whose theory philosophy must produce as conceptual practice. For no technical determination, whether applied...or reflexive, is sufficient to constitute the concepts of cinema itself” (1989, 280).

What may be termed a standard version, part of the Korean Studies Series, is aptly titled *The History of Korean Cinema* (Lee and Choe 1988). The book's authors maintain that, because of its technology-dependent and capital-intensive qualities, film in Korea has been more marked than other cultural forms by the various sociohistorical upheavals in the past century. One could take any such period and draw a direct correlation with developments in local cinema, such as the popularity of nationalist-themed films during the Japanese occupation or the rise of documentary and war film production during the Korean War. The book also helps explain certain stylistic qualities that continue to characterise Korean films, notably the insistence on a dramatic realism that directly, and rarely ironically, acknowledges the audience. What may well be the first major Korean blockbuster, Woon-kyu Na's *Arirang* (1926), functioned as a metaphor against Japanese colonisation and made effective use of direct address during its climactic moment (Lee and Choe 1988, 42–43).

Although *The History of Korean Cinema* ends right before the 1990s, on the eve of the transition to a democratic dispensation, its observations regarding the stylistic tendencies and thematic concerns of predemocratic Korean cinema appear to have persisted to the present. Several of its observations have been confirmed, upheld, or modified by an anthology sponsored by the Korean Film Council and titled *Korean Cinema: From Origins to Renaissance* (Kim 2006). In fact, in a short but cogent summation of the *Hallyu* phenomenon, Doobo Shim implicitly acknowledged such distinctive and exceptional cultural qualities—possibly relatable to the native concept of *han*, an ultimately untranslatable quality that roughly refers to sorrow or resentment derived from suffering or injustice (Bannon 2008, n.p.); the most prominent filmic example of this value would be the early-1990s' all-time blockbuster, Kwon-taek Im's *Seopyeonje*. In recognition of the need to bridge several periods marked by extreme variations in sociopolitical systems (colonisation, war, dictatorship, democracy), Shim recommended the use of an analytical approach that “comprises discourses that identify cultural hybridity and investigate power

relations between periphery and centre from the perspective of postcolonial criticism” (2006, 27). The approach is premised on the paradox that “globalisation encourages local peoples to rediscover the ‘local’ that they have neglected or forgotten in their drive towards Western-imposed modernisation” (ibid.).

How all these developments relate to the present may be the key to understanding what is going on in Korean films. From 1910 to 1987, the country had been continually wracked by diverse forms of violence by sources both outside and within the nation. Historians have duly taken note of the overt, physical, and often fatal sufferings of the population during the protracted militarised periods, whether the troops involved were foreign or local.⁴ Less visibly dramatic but still distressing in its own way were the periods of apparent quietude. These were times when the quest for sovereignty and self-determination during the Japanese and American occupations, as well as the pursuit of developmental goals during the military dictatorships, resulted in a largely unreflective willingness on the part of Koreans to submit to arbitrary and punitive disciplinary measures. These include curfews and rules delimiting maximum hair and minimum skirt length. The paradoxical relationship between repression and development was reflected even in film-related laws, as summarised in Sang-hyeok Im’s account of film censorship in Korea.

For a long time, the public was deprived of any opportunity to even discuss freedom of expression and films under colonial rule and military governments. Films were reduced to a means for the government’s promotion of ideology and preservation of order. Yet, the film-related laws evolved in a legitimate way through the rulings of the Constitutional Court. (Im 2006, 101)

For now, one can surmise that the population acceded to these intrusions on individual preferences for a complex of reasons. Each is inadequate in explaining a compliance that might seem unusually and

possibly pathologically uncritical to today's generation of young Koreans. First, any previous period of brutalisation may have inured the citizens to less physical demonstrations of authority by whatever regime happened to be in power; second, people may have willingly accepted controls on their freedom as a way of hopefully forestalling future disasters by their display of good behavior (regarding which, cf. the later discussion of the concept of behavioral self-blame); and third, in line with Foucauldian precepts, the regimes themselves held forth claims to long-term benevolence in the form of economic prosperity through modernisation.

Regarding the third cause, wherein the powers-that-be would promise development in exchange for the surrender of certain basic freedoms, conventional wisdom accepts that each patriarchal order during the past century—the Japanese, then the American, occupational forces, as well as the local military dictators—was at least earnest about making such a claim. The local militarists actually succeeded in ushering the nation through its still-enduring period of industrial prosperity. From this perspective, even both sides of the protagonists during the Korean War (Communist North, as well as free-market South) can be regarded as competing as to which of their governmental and economic models would be more beneficial to the already Sundered nation.

Discontinuities

Within such a dominant and now admittedly facile framework, the presence of the New Wave of Korean filmmaking suggests ruptures in the historical fabric. For if the narrative logic of the Euro-American model of advanced industrial development were to be observed, then the Republic of Korea has finally achieved its happy ending and would now be entitled to the proverbial sleep of the weary. If we look at the experience of some of the once-prominent national cinemas in Asia, and read up on the discourses on their film-texts vis-à-vis their respective projects of nationalist development, we could arguably state that film served the function of articulating its viewers' desires and anxieties during the unavoidably long-

drawn-out industrialisation process. If we draw from the experience of Japan, whose cinematic vibrancy was at its peak a few decades ago,⁵ such a thesis would allow us to similarly remark that the glory years of Korean cinema should have coincided with the periods of military dictatorship, from the 1960s through the late 1980s; this was a period when the contradiction between economic growth and individual freedom was at its most intense.

So the question would be not only *Why the New Korean Cinema?* but also *Why only now?* A clue may lie in the self-understanding of Koreans themselves. A relatively recent empirical study of the population describes the respondents as engaged in a “dichotomised mode of social relations.” Members of the oppressed class find comfort in all types of religion that “are essentially this-worldly in orientation,” thereby throwing into doubt the spiritual claims of local religious practice (Kim 1999, 214–15).

What this suggests is similar to Sigmund Freud’s classic description of a reality principle, where the subject’s originally all-inclusive ego eventually “separates off an external world from itself” (1961, 15). Freud concludes his discussion of the distinctions between the pleasure and reality principles with an acknowledgment that “oceanic” feelings, which seek the “restoration of limitless narcissism,” traceable to “infantile helplessness,” become regarded as the source of “the religious attitude” (1961, 19). In developing further this concept, Freud advances an intriguing analogy, one that might be unexpectedly useful to the present discussion: he describes the maturation of consciousness as similar to the evolution of a once-ancient city, so that the challenge for the psychoanalyst is to visualise in the present the structures that might have once been there in the past but are now no longer visible (Freud 1961, 16–18).

In considering then the question of why an urgent and vital national discourse is ongoing in Korean cinema, we get to understand, first and

foremost, that this discourse could not be conducted in the past for two reasons. Critical thinking was prohibited, and the (sometimes monstrous) enormity of social suffering precluded any attempt at reflection and resolution. The severity of successive traumas that accompanied the Korean experience of modernisation could help suggest why the nation has turned to a Western-sourced and technology-based medium to articulate issues in its past. The tension between non-Western nationalism and Western-style modernity is articulated in relation to film practice in Ian Jarvie's "National cinema" essay. In contrast with the Korean response, which was to engage with cinema as a means of discourse articulation, Jarvie points out how some elements in other parts of the world "have in the past called for the prohibition of movies altogether" (2000, 83). Since the nation wrested for itself a crucial amount of democratic space with the onset of the 1990s, one might be able to provisionally say that its current use of film as repository of traumatic discourses indicates that it accepts the fruits of development as much as it desires to question the price it had to pay for it.

Again, a startling insight from Freud suggests this much when he avers that the most perfect response to the regard for "reality as the sole enemy and as the source of all suffering" is to do one better than the hermit, who "turns his back on the world" by "[re-creating] the world, [building] up in its stead another world" (Freud 1961, 28). Freud ultimately recommends the rejection of this option as belonging to the province of madness; still, we can realise how a project, which consists of externalizing one's trauma and inscribing it onto a medium upon which it can be shared discursively with others marked by the same set of experiences, could promise some therapeutic relief. As to whether this relief will have the capacity to fully exorcise the painful memories of the historical past, only the future will be able to tell.

New Korean Cinema and its discontents

Although trauma had been a feature of life in America since its encounter with European modernity, it was the admittedly and exclusively

grim associations with inexplicable tragedies such as the Holocaust or 11 September 2001 attacks that prompted several discussions regarding the experience of trauma in American intellectual culture (Some recent representative examples comprise LaCapra [2001], Walker [2005], and Kaplan [2005]. Butler [2004, 1–18] similarly ascribes its *raison d'être* to the aftermath of the experience of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the US—on which more will be discussed later). The reason for the delayed introspection may be gleaned from Elizabeth Wright's perceptive comment, that

Psychoanalysis explores what happens when primordial impulse is directed into social goals, when bodily needs become subject to the demands of culture. Through language, desire is constituted and “subjects” come into being, yet this language cannot define the body's experience accurately. What is of peculiar interest to psychoanalysis...is that aspect of being which is ignored or prohibited by the laws of language. Words fail to catch it but it is real none the less. (1998, Introduction)

As mentioned earlier, the self-repression imposed on earlier Korean generations underwent an internalisation brought about by the bludgeoning effects of overt, or macro violence. This violence was reinforced by the punitive disciplinarian exercises, a form of micro violence, enforced by authoritarian systems of government. Only with the lifting of controls on freedom of expression did it become possible for people to speak out; and since the advent of free expression coincided with the country's attainment of economic prosperity, one might be allowed a fairly reductive materialist explanation to account for the emergence of the New Wave. Leong, for example, ascribes the phenomenon to a combination of “relaxed government censorship, investments in infrastructure, entrepreneurial zeal, and an iconoclastic attitude” (2002, 10). Not surprisingly, most popular accounts available to Western readers seem to agree that the movement started after 1995 (Leong 2002, 11; see also Paquet n.d.).

While the concept of trauma may still prove insufficient to accommodate some exceptions, we can see at this point how it could encompass all the major recurrent themes that typify the New Korean Cinema: the North-South division and the ambivalent attitude toward socialism; the concern for workers' welfare and the right of labor to unionise; the heroism of participants in the student movement in the struggle against militarist dictatorships; the excesses of the rich and influential, including past government and military officials, and their resort to repressive measures against popular uprisings such as that of Gwangju in 1980; and the disaffected and sometimes violent handling of personal relationships, often extending to familial affairs and sexual liaisons. This calls to mind the insight formulated by Jean Laplanche (Caruth 2001, par. 49), in discussing the relations that bind trauma, sexuality, and narcissism, to explain Freud's observation that traumas develop sexual excitement as a way of allowing the subject to cope with the experience of suffering.

The association (among modern readers) of wartime imagery with spectatorial excitability has been tracked by Susan Sontag from its origin in journalism through the surrealist impulse that emerged roughly in the previous mid-century.

Conscripted as part of journalism, images were expected to arrest attention, startle, surprise...The hunt for more dramatic (as they're often described) images drives the photographic enterprise, and is part of the normality of a culture in which shock has become a leading stimulus of consumption and source of value. "Beauty will be convulsive, or it will not be," proclaimed Andre Breton. He called this aesthetic ideal "surrealist," but in a culture radically revamped by the ascendancy of mercantile values, to ask that images be jarring, clamorous, eye-opening seems like elementary realism as well as good business sense...The image as shock and the image as cliché are two aspects of the same presence. (16-17)

In this wise, most of the major New Korean Cinema films can be categorised according to their functions within specific forms of violence. A sampling of films that exemplify politically inflected concerns would include, in chronological order, Kwang-su Park's *Joon Tae-il* [A Single Spark] (1995); Sun-woo Jang's *Ggotip* [A Petal] (1996); Je-gyu Kang's *Swiri* (1999); Chang-dong Lee's *Bakha satang* [Peppermint Candy] (1999); Chan-wook Park's *Gongdong gyeongbi guyeok JSA* [JSA: Joint Security Area] (2000); Woo-suk Kang's *Silmido* (2003); and Je-gyu Kang's *Taegukgi hwinalrimyeo* [Tae Guk Gi: The Brotherhood of War] (2004).

The relatively more internalised forms of violence may be apprehended in films such as Sang-soo Hong's *Daijiga umule pajinnal* [The Day a Pig Fell into the Well] (1996); Neung-han Song's *No. 3* (1997); Chang-dong Lee's *Chorok mulkogi* [Green Fish] (1997); Kyung-taek Kwak's *Chingoo* [Friend] (2001); Joon-Hwan Jang's *Jigureul jikyeora!* [Save the Green Planet!] (2003); Joon-ho Bong's *Salinui chueok* [Memories of Murder] (1993); and Ha Yu's *Maljukgeori janhoksa* [Once Upon a Time in High School] (2004). Aimlessness compounds the main character's or characters' disaffection, a form of inwardly directed violence, as manifested by characters in Cheol-su Park's *301, 302* (1995); Je-yong Lee's *Jung sa* [An Affair] (1998); Sang-soo Hong's *Kangwon-do ui him* [The Power of Gangwon Province] (1998), *Oh! Soo-jung* [Virgin Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors] (2002), and *Saenghwalui balgyeon* [On the Occasion of Remembering the Turning Gate] (2002); Sun-woo Jang's *Gojital* [Lies] (2000); and Chan-wook Park's *Oldeuboi* [Old Boy] (2003).

Differences

The New Korean Cinema shares with the Hong Kong New Wave the quality of operating within the parameters of popular film production and reception, if we allow a liberal application of such terms. This contrasts with the avant-gardist aspirations of New Wave practitioners in other

national cinemas, including that of Japan (where, as an example, David Desser [1988] had valorised Nagisa Oshima, among other filmmakers, precisely for the latter's avant-gardism). But what distinguishes the New Wave of Korea from those of other countries, including Hong Kong, is a certain hesitation, a respectfulness if you will, toward the depiction of violence, including sexual excess.

This is not to mean that contemporary Korean movies, especially the more generic samples, do not indulge in the commercially dictated staples of scenes of sex and violence. But whether the violence is indulged or restrained, the presentation can be seen as always managing to implicate the film viewer in one way or another toward the idealised attainment of catharsis. In discussing the role this type of viewer (or listener) plays in allaying the experience of violence, Ellie Ragland refers to trauma specialist Cathy Caruth (1995) in maintaining that “the Other – the social order – must hear what is actually being said...such that a representative listener...believes the truth that seeps through the imaginary dimensions of a narrative” (Ragland 2001, par. 11).

Caruth in fact articulated a workable configuration of trauma as, pace Freud, consistent with the fact that

the wound of the mind—the breach in the mind’s experience of time, self, and the world—is not, like the wound of the body, a simple and healable event, but rather an event that...is experienced too soon, too unexpectedly, to be fully known and is therefore not available to consciousness until it imposes itself again, repeatedly, in the nightmares and repetitive actions of the survivor.... [Trauma] is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual’s past, but rather in the way that its very unassimilated nature—the way it was precisely *not known* in the first instance—returns to haunt the survivor later on. (1996, 3–4; emphasis in the original)

In “The Aftermath of Victimization,” Ronnie Janoff-Bulman (1985, 16–17) further described how the manner in which the traumatic

event returns can be distinguished from other forms of recurrence (i.e. normative accounts of memory); the visitations of the original event, usually in the form of dreams, are attended by a reduction in the victim's responsiveness to current reality (1985, 29–30); the historically significant qualifier in this instance is that among various possible origins of trauma, those induced by other humans is far more psychologically distressing than all other sources (1985, 20).

An even more practicable aspect is a specific coping strategy that Janoff-Bulman terms “behavioral self-blame.” Here, the victim blames her or his own behaviour as a way of dealing with the stressful re-living of the traumatic memory. One paradox of behavioral self-blame can also be seen in the way the Korean cinema's primary audience (synonymous, in this instance, with the Korean people) opts to accept historical traumas as owing to its own error, thus providing the aforementioned cultural peculiarity of *han*; the other paradox, of course, is that “victims are generally not to blame for their victimisation” (Janoff-Bulman 1985, 30). Nevertheless, the adaptive potential of self-blame, the reason why it is considered “a predictor of good coping” (29), is that the victim becomes capable of resolving to take charge of her or his own fate; in doing so, she or he convinces the self of the value of strategising in order to develop her or his invulnerability, provide meaning to a previously irrational and unjust existence, and restore enough self-esteem to resume a productive life and, subsequently, to avoid possible future instances of trauma.

Interpretive Principle

Within the terms of the reality that the depiction of historical suffering in Korean films had been experienced by its filmmakers and audiences (occasionally literally), we can herewith identify Korean cinema's contribution to film realism; it attempts to make sense out of historical traumas by drawing from collective experiences rather than fabricating new ones or adopting foreign accounts. The strategy is in a sense circular,

in that this is the means—one might even argue that this is the only means—by which film artists can effectively manage to connect with the local audience.

Through a borrowed medium, history makes its presence felt, sometimes by literalising itself onscreen, more often by infusing or haunting, as a phantom would, the spectacle that spectators are invited to participate in. This is literalised most starkly in another all-time blockbuster, Je-gyu Kang's *Taegukgi hwinalrimyeo* [Tae Guk Gi: The Brotherhood of War], where each of two brothers finds himself fighting for one side of the Korean War against his much-beloved, long-lost, and momentarily unrecognizable sibling. Because of its applicability in formal and narratological terms, such a contribution recalls the achievements of earlier global film trends, especially the ones in Third and Third-World cinema (cf. Armes 1987; and Pines and Willemen 1989). Consequently, it will arguably have a capacity to endure in spite of the formation of a backlash against *Hallyu*, the larger wave of Korean popular-culture that had made its mark not just in Asia but also in the rest of the world.⁶

By asserting the presence of the traumatic in the output of the New Korean Cinema, one might be misconstrued as stating that all its products are autobiographical. This line of argument may be redundant in a sense, if we hark back to the *auteurist* dogma that all film products are always-already inscribed by their respective filmmakers' personal narratives. But what might be useful at this moment is the notion that the use of such a popular medium in articulating the discourse of the experience of violence may be akin to seeking what has been called an alternative jurisprudence. Here, what remains historically unresolved might now have a chance of attaining closure. Leigh Gilmore (2001, 143) ascribes this idea to Michel Foucault's insistence on anonymity in one of his interviews, ironically so that he could be heard once again in the same way before he became famous, in the hope that both subject and reader could "risk transformation."

In extending this argument to film practice, we could say that, because of the “oceanic” or all-enveloping reality effect, authorial anonymity always-already accompanies the viewing experience. Note also another “limit” of trauma discourse in psychoanalysis (which serendipitously fulfils our study of the New Korean Cinema) in its association of the production of art with the condition of neurosis (Rose 1987, 2). While it may be too reductive to state that the considerably high concentration of artistic achievement in the New Wave is traceable to the neurosis induced by historical trauma, the obverse argument—that none of the actuations of Korean film talents and audiences is ascribable to the mechanisms of historical memory—would ring just as false. Therefore, the condition of possibility of history impinging on Korean film activity might be more of an always-already present, if not always fully conscious, aspect of everyday cultural reality.

In considering how much further the New Korean Cinema can travel on the fuel-strength of historical trauma as an interpretive principle, we could consider the prescription of Susan Hayward (2000, 101) in her essay “Framing national cinemas.”

This writing of a national cinema is one that refuses to historicise the nation as subject/object in and of itself but makes it a subject and object of knowledge. This (ideal) writing of a national cinema...is one which delves deep into the pathologies of nationalist discourses and exposes the symbolic practices of these forms of enunciation. Finally, this framing of national cinemas is one which perceives cinema as a practice that should not conceal structures of power and knowledge but which should function as a *mise-en-scène* of scattered and dissembling identities as well as fractured subjectivities and fragmented hegemonies.

Here, we can see how the “framing” described by Hayward would not have to be a still-to-be-implemented formulary in the case of Korean cinema, since its implicit recognition of the role played by trauma had already been (and is still being) foregrounded in the major output of Korean filmmakers.

Popular Preferences

A useful starting point for the reevaluation of the experience of trauma in the creation and evaluation by Koreans of their cinema is suggested by Sigmund Freud in his essay, “Screen Memories.” In this study of grown-ups recollecting childhood images, he concluded that inaccuracies tended to occur; this is because the typical subject failed to realise that, although she or he had been in the centre of her or his recollected scenes, she or he was in fact “paying attention not to [herself or] himself, but to the world outside [herself or] himself” (Freud 2003, 20). This emergence “as an object among other objects,” Freud continued, “can be taken as proof that the original impression has been edited” (*ibid.*). So-called falsified memories could not have been freely invented, but Freud questions the larger possibility—that of

whether we have any conscious memories from childhood: perhaps we have only memories of childhood. These show us the first years of our lives not as they were, but as they appeared to us at later periods, when the memories were aroused.... [Hence] the memories of childhood did not emerge,... but were formed, and a number of motives that were far removed from the aim of historical fidelity had a hand in influencing both the formation and the selection of the memories. (Freud 2003, 21; emphases in original)

This liberatory qualification, coupled with Hayward’s suggestion that a national cinema should in effect deconstruct the foundational assumptions underlying a nation’s self-concept, might yet find a fuller realisation in the New Korean Cinema, given the prospect of greater freedom of expression, as well as increasing diversification of topics. It could also be the basis of a future paradox: that the end of this New Wave, at least as we know it, would occasion expressions of mourning from film lovers in Korea and elsewhere. At the same time, it could also indicate that the nation has finally fully sutured the scars of its painful past.

As a sample of moving beyond enumerating film samples, we would like to propose the heuristic exercise of identifying all-time blockbusters

in Korean cinema; the latter are defined as films that set attendance records regardless of the actual income generated by ticket sales. Per the records of the Korean Film Council, this list consists of only six titles during the current millennium; if we include the 1990s, there would be an additional three, or nine in total. For the purpose of providing context, we may begin with the last premillennium decade.

The first two blockbusters since 1990 were set by the same filmmaker, Kwon-taek Im, a feat that would be repeated not long after by another director, Je-gyu Kang, but never again since then. Im's films, 1990's *Jangguni adeul* [The General's Son] (which generated two sequels) and 1993's *Seopyeonje*, are distinctive in two ways: in relation to his output, they belong to a consistent body of work that dwells on the past. Also, rather than update the material or reformulate its issues for a present-day audience, it seeks to transport viewers to the period in question, with a nearly self-conscious use of silence, measured pacing, and distanced placement of action. The advantage of this approach is that it provides a semblance of faithfulness to history and rewards an audience willing to engage in reflection and introspection. The disadvantage stems from the same properties confronting a shift in audience preferences (which became apparent with the next blockbuster on record, and in a sense never allowed for the return of the older sensibility). The provisional way of "reading" this instance of Im productions generating intense interest in the local audience can be drawn from the materials' historical nature: the people (conflating for this purpose Korean mass movie audience and Koreans in general), anticipating the arrival of full democratic rights as the final reward for attaining developmental stature, were taking this occasion to look back on first a recent past (a resistance fighter during the Japanese occupation), then a further one, both marked by the same infusion of *han* or unmitigated sorrow in the struggle for survival.

The next blockbuster, Je-gyu Kang's *Swiri*, may have been released in 1999 but in a sense belongs to the 2000s—in the sense that it departs from the Im films' historicizing project. Yet the stylistic self-awareness of the

Im films also gets carried over in Kang's project; Kang's is insistently noirish, fast-paced, complex, and filled with reversals, revelations, and (violent) incidents—the Hollywoodish frenzied response to Im's Europeanesque calm. *Swiri* is also the first film whose audience count was more accurate on a nation-wide level: the Im films were measured only in terms of Seoul audience attendance—about 679,000 for *Jangguni adeul* and 1.036 million for *Seopyeonje*—whereas for *Swiri* the figure was 5.82 million nationwide.⁷ The subject, turning on seduction, intrigue, and betrayal between double spies for North and South Korea, had elements of coincidence and superspy-level skills that also possibly included some level of wish-fulfilment in reconfiguring the Korean-War conflict in conservative gender terms. Here, the North infiltrator is presented as a *femme fatale* and the South detective as a too-trustful and chivalrous lover who needed to transcend his personal affection for the sake of saving his country.

Several scholars (notably Kyung Hyun Kim [2004]) regard this period, including the series of all-time blockbusters, as concerned with the questions of modernity specific to the Korean experience, particularly the aspiration toward democratization and North-South reunification. Two years after *Swiri*, Kyung-taek Kwak's *Chingoo* [Friend] returned to a reflection on the past, but not in the manner of the Im films; rather, it combined the sense of nostalgia regarding a lost time (a main character recalls the process of his falling out with his high school best friend, who ended on the opposite side of the law from him)—a strategy successful enough to attract 8.1 million viewers despite its period setting (Korean Film Council, qtd. in Rouse-Marquet, 2013, n.p.). The next two films once more combined this reflection on a by-gone moment with the significance that *Swiri* proffered; not surprisingly, one of them was directed by Je-gyu Kang.

This was also the period when all-time record-setters arrived with nearly regular (annual) frequency, and broke through the 10-million-viewer ceiling that *Chingoo* had been approaching. Woo-suk Kang's 2003 *Silmido* (11.08 million) (Korean Film Council, *ibid.*) was reminiscent of

Im's films in terms of its liberal, antiauthoritarian critique (as contrasted with the ambivalence of *Swiri* and the apolitical orientation of *Chingoo*); *Silmido* depicted a secretly trained hit squad whose members were originally tasked to punish North Korean leaders but were later targeted for extermination by their own higher officials. Although still privileging the same central best-friends-divided-by-ideology dramatic set-up of *Chingoo*, it was also the closest that any of the films in this series ever got to the multiple-character format that Robert Altman and a few other American filmmakers specialized in. Kang's *Taegukgi hwinalrimyeo* [*Tae Guk Gi: The Brotherhood of War*] (11.75 million) (Korean Film Council, *ibid.*), released the next year, amplified the separation between close buddies by portraying two brothers separated by the historical conflict between North and South. Compared with the Korean film record-setters of the 1990s, those of the 2000s up to this point shifted their appeal to male viewers via the subordination (and even in several sequences, the total absence) of women characters. And although the films, even from *Swiri* onward, featured chases and gunfire and martial-arts showdowns, the underlying narrative strategy remained the melodramatic tearjerker; it affirmed once more the argument that some of the most effective action films actually function as a reconfiguration of the (women's) weepie with and for men (cf. Modleski 2010).

The next year, however, the all-time blockbuster departed from its predecessors in several ways. Joon-ik Lee's *Wang-ui namja* [*The King and the Clown*] (12.3 million viewers) (Korean Film Council, *ibid.*), returned to some of the elements in the '90s' entries: the Joseon Dynasty period (as in *Seopyeonje*) with a strong female character, unfortunately still a villain (as in *Swiri*). The material dwelt on a king's desire for the masculine clown's feminine (but also male) partner and the malicious interventions performed by the king's concubine, resulting in death for the two clowns (depicted as true lovers) and in the downfall of the king (the lust-driven "pervert" who broke up the clown partners and drove his mistress to commit mischievous acts). There may be a semblance here of pursuing the gender reconfiguration of the systemic enemy as feminine, as the villain had been

in *Swiri*; considering that the closest to a contemporary Korean monarchy would be the dynasty founded by Il-sung Kim and inherited by his descendants Jong-il and Jong-un, one may attempt to read this situation as a critique of the debasement of the ideals of democracy and even socialism as practiced in North Korea. However, this interpretation needs to be tempered with the reality that the generation that had directly experienced the Korean War has been dying out and the majority of younger Koreans no longer have the same longing for reunification.⁸

These points may help explain why in the next year's record-setter, Joon-Ho Bong's *Gwoemul* [The Host] (13.02 million viewers – the all-time highest) (Korean Film Council, *ibid.*), any reference to North Korea was gone. One may insist that the monster that mutated from the toxic intervention of a Cold War agent (a US Army general who instructed his Korean assistant to dump toxic chemicals into the Han River) might stand in for the violent, unpredictable, and inhumane regime of Jong-il (and now Jong-un) Kim. However, this allegorical slant is rendered untenable by several other considerations in the text: no people in the local population, even among progressive groups, support the monster; it victimizes members of the proletariat and unites the residents against US-led globalization forces; it is challenged and vanquished by a working-class family, with women members playing strong roles; and so on. In fact, it would be safer to say that *Gwoemul* indicates that the mass viewers' attention has been caught up in the country's status as a global presence, confirmed in part by the earlier mentioned recognition given by global film competitions to Korean entries.

Future Shock

To recap the application of Western, especially psychoanalytic, principles in the course of discussing the Korean films in this paper, we may take the justification posited by Kyung Hyun Kim that his goal was “not to validate theory but to better elucidate recent Korean films that have increasingly become ‘Westernized’ [inasmuch as] contemporary South

Korean society is no more Confucian than it is capitalist” (2004, Introduction); moreover, he argues that “the cinema of the recent years parallels not the flourishing of its national traditional culture, but its rapid vanishing” (ibid.); Kim picks up this line through his next volume by discussing “virtual trauma” and “post-trauma” or “trauma-free” approaches in terms of “the current tide of Korean films [that move] discernibly away from the codification of political and national allegory” (2011, Chapter 6). This indirectly affirms Elizabeth Wright’s valorisation of psychoanalytic methods as useful descriptors for the intersection between bodies and culture (1998, Introduction).

A note of caution, however, ought to focus not so much on psychoanalysis as on the use of trauma. In *Precarious Life*, Judith Butler reflects on the turns taken by American society after the 11 September 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and other targets by Islamic-fundamentalist radicals: rather than “[redefining] itself as part of a global community,” the US instead “heightened nationalist discourse, extended surveillance mechanisms, suspended constitutional rights, and developed forms of explicit and implicit censorship,” leading intellectuals “to waver in their public commitment to principles of justice” (2004, xi). Butler ascribes this response to the culture’s response to a traumatic experience; she made her critique explicit in a subsequent lecture where she warns of how trauma (e.g. the Holocaust) can threaten to persist in a destructive way via justifying the wrongs that its victims (e.g., the Jewish community in Israel) may be committing against others (the occupied Palestinians) precisely by arguing for their status as victims in need of recovery.

This may be reconfigured, in contemporary Korean culture, by restating the challenge posed by the Korean War experience—from militaristic (where both sides observe a truce) to economic (where one side attained a level of development unavailable to the other) and globalist (where even the North’s historical ally, China, has been expressing misgivings about the regime’s mischief-making). Hence, the turn away from questions of reunification toward the challenges posed by

globalization in the popular preferences of the mass audiences similarly signifies (within this admittedly narrow and necessarily open-ended reading) a preparedness to advance beyond concerns over historical trauma—but not by rejecting trauma itself. *Gwoemul*, as a sample, proffers an extensive list of people traumatized by global modernity, from rural migrants to political radicals to women and children and the homeless, even to the foreign migrants cleverly ranged by the narrative along the banks of the river, unknowingly making themselves potential prey for the indescribable spectral figure lurking in the placid waters of the “miraculous” Han River.

The challenges are manifold and present themselves not just within Korea but also overseas. A compelling example of one of many possible challenges facing a fully recuperated and consolidated Korean film industry has been narrated by Bliss Cua Lim in her recent volume, *Translating Time* (2009). Looking at recent cases of remakes of Asian horror films by Hollywood producers, Lim concludes that Western scholars such as Andrew Higson, regarded as a prominent authority on theorizing national cinemas mainly because of his essay “The Concept of National Cinema” (1989), fails to take into account “Hollywood’s debts to other national cinemas, its founding reliance on émigré talent, its appropriation of aesthetic hallmarks, its practice of borrowing and remaking, and its eye on foreign markets” (Lim 2009, 230).

As it had done with earlier European film trends, Hollywood’s appropriation of narrative and stylistic materials associated with Asian genre films has resulted in a deracination via a “softening of contrast, the quickly accomplished reduction of the distance between generic innovation and generic repetition” (Lim, 223). Lim brought up the case of Ji-woon Kim’s *Janghwa, Hongryeon* (2003), a film whose viewing experience she described as one that “slowly unfurls its secrets, yielding narrative clues and formal motifs whose significances are only apprehended on repeated viewing” (Lim, 243). Unfortunately, the remake produced by DreamWorks, titled *The Uninvited* (Charles and Thomas Guard [2009]), was produced

“based only upon having watched the trailer—not the entire source film—beforehand” (Lim, 304n). This resulted in divergent second halves between the two versions, with the original director, Ji-woon Kim, repudiating the remake (Lim, 243).

From the foregoing account, we can see how the challenge that globalisation first posed to the Korean nation, in the form of the late 1990s IMF crisis, and then replicated in the late 2000s global recession, is being configured in popular-culture terms. In both larger challenges, Korea was able to recover—with instances of trauma confined to certain specific corporations, families, and individuals, and, with lesser instances, during the second crisis. What this indicates is that the country has found its historical footing in a sphere of competition where it has been able to transform a sense of victimhood into reserves of psychic strength and determination. The challenges presented by the intrusions of globalisation in popular culture could be regarded as opportunities for the national culture to search for creative solutions, whose lessons could be explored when the next crises inevitably come along.

In this manner, Korea will be able to continue providing a model for nations that share its sense of historical heartbreak—from the injustice of colonisation and the brutality of dictatorship—via Korea’s search for ways of coping with an increasingly interdependent world system while maintaining a level of development acceptable to its people and their leaders. And when one realises that this type of experience, the trauma of Korea, is shared by all postcolonial countries outside the First World, then the achievement of full recovery from the past attains wider significance, beyond the borders of Korea, to the rest of the developing and still-to-be-developing world, through certain specific strategies: by seeking “to counter unethical discourses that pass as ethical, deadly decisions taken in the name of life (and whose life?), by refusing to associate...with narratives that promote death in the name of the state, death in the name of nationalism, the death of a constructed enemy who is [no longer] one” (Croisy 2006, 100).

Notes

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- ¹ In fact, if we were to take the oldest European festivals accredited as “competitive” by the Paris-based *Fédération Internationale des Associations de Producteurs de Films* (International Federation of Film Producers Associations in English), even disregarding the fact that the Busan International Film Festival appears in the “specialized competitive” list, the emergence of Korean films is all the more undeniable (cf. FIAPF website). In 2002, the elderly Kwon-taek Im was awarded best director at the Cannes Film Festival for *Chi-hwa-seon* [Painted Fire]. Two years later, Chan-wook Park won the Grand Prix for *Oldboy* [Old Boy]. But a wider breakout was performed by Ki-duk Kim during the same year. At the Berlin International Film Festival, he won best director for *Samaritan* [Samaritan Girl] and the same prize (the Silver Lion) at the Venice Film Festival for *Bin-jip* [3-Iron]; later, in 2012, he won the best film prize (Golden Lion) at the Venice Film Festival for *Pietà*. The presence of Koreans in Cannes, the top film-festival event, was further solidified with Do-yeon Jeon winning best actress in 2007 for Chang-dong Lee’s *Milyang* [Secret Sunshine], Chan-wook Park the Jury Prize in 2009 for *Bakjwi* [Thirst], and Chang-dong Lee once more, this time for his own screenplay for *Shi* [Poetry], in 2010; in two years, Koreans dominated the Un Certain Regard prize—Sang-soo Hong in 2010 for *Hahaha* and the redoubtable Ki-duk Kim the next year for *Arirang*. US acknowledgment of Korean film achievement became evident in 2009 when Joon-ho Bong’s *Madeo* [Mother], which bypassed the European festival circuit, won a slew of prizes for its director/writer as well as for lead actress Hye-ja Kim (The authors acknowledge an anonymous reviewer for pointing out this trend).
- ² For a follow-up report by the same source, tracing the spread of *Hallyu* in the rest of Asia, see Onishi (2005). Intensive recent studies of the Japanese’s postcolonial fascination with Korea include Creighton (2009) and Mori (2008). In terms of statistics on the number of migrant wives in Korea, the Japanese have moved up behind Chinese and Vietnamese as the third most numerous group, displacing women from the Philippines.
- ³ Earlier versions of this paper opted to refer to the phenomenon as “Korean New Wave,” following the secondary title of Anthony C. Y. Leong’s volume (2002). However, as pointed out by a reviewer, Frances Greenward appropriated the term to discuss Korean films during the pre-*hallyu* period of the 1980s and 1990s, “when the consciousness of the nation was focused on a generation that would lead it through a decade of turmoil toward democratic reform” (2002, 115). To avoid terminological confusion, we decided to defer to the earlier study and use instead the same term used by several other authors, which is New Korean Cinema. The authors acknowledge the perceptiveness and wide-ranging expertise of the anonymous reviewer who pointed us in this direction. Another, more recent study, Ilkka Levä’s lecture titled “Encountering Korean Cinema,” conflated roughly the New Wave and the New Korean Cinema period and termed it “the Renaissance

of Korean Cinema (approximately 1996 to 2008)” (2014, abstract). Since the coverage of this last study lies outside the present paper’s domain, the authors will be maintaining the New Korean Cinema designation.

- ⁴ Two useful English-language references, one macro and the other micro, would be, respectively, Cumings (1997) and the publication of The May 18th History Compilation Committee of Kwangju City (2000).
- ⁵ Japanese film scholar Donald Richie (2002) avers as much in *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film*, where he laments the decline in quality of contemporary products in relation to post-World War II masters such as the acknowledged trio of Kenji Mizoguchi, Yasujiro Ozu, and Akira Kurosawa. A similar notion—of cinema flourishing during a political dictatorship—infuses current critical opinion on Philippine cinema during and after the martial rule regime of Ferdinand E. Marcos (David 1995).
- ⁶ The panel titled “Historical Legacies, Mutual Perceptions, and Future Relations” in *Korea’s Changing Roles in Southeast Asia: Expanding Influence and Relations*, the Asia Foundation’s 2008 Public Policy Forum, presented a couple of papers that acknowledged the impact of *Hallyu* while reporting in detail objections to Koreans’ presence and behavior in Southeast Asia (Chachavalpongpun 2008); the said papers called for more active intervention on the part of the Korean government to provide a corporate-style set of rationales and plans for the phenomenon and ensure the longevity of its impact outside Korea (Kim 2008).
- ⁷ Korean Film Council (KOFIC) data for *Janggumi adeul* and *Scopyeonje* were available online only until early 2010. At present these figures, still quoting KOFIC, can only be found in the Korean-language version of Wikipedia: on the search page (<http://ko.wikipedia.org/wiki>), search for “daehanmingukeui yeonghwa hunghaeng girok” [Korea box-office record] to find the reference page.
- ⁸ A longitudinal survey conducted by the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies at Seoul National University revealed that between 2007 and 2011, support for reunification had been generally less among those in lower age groups, with less than half of Koreans in their 20s and 30s in favor as of the more recent sampling (Harlan2011, n.p.). More worryingly for reunification proponents, support for a unified nation had fallen among *all* age groups over time, resulting in a current overall average of 56 percent as opposed to, say, 80 percent during the 1990s. The main reason for the decline was the cost that propping up a severely impoverished country would entail, estimated at up to US\$ 1 trillion and leading to calls for a “reunification tax” to raise the necessary funds (Harlan n.p.).

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Filmography

Note: All entries have been released in video format but may be out of print. Entries were originally in film format (for 35mm. theatrical projection) except Hyeong-min Lee and Seokho-Yoon's *Gyeongju yeonga* (2002) and Min-soo Pyo's *Pool ha-woo-seu* (2004), which were videotaped multi-installment TV-drama presentations.

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Review Essay on *Perspectives on Philippine Languages: Five Centuries of European Scholarship*

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Abstract

This critical review essay is a chapter-by-chapter evaluation of a book that examines the writings of Europeans about Philippine languages from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. It cites the book's strengths, supplies counterarguments, provides clarifications, and offers background information and additional literature. The essay speaks highly of the book's merits; it provides archival materials that many scholars 'would otherwise have had no access to' and offers an invaluable study on the nature, if not history, of Philippine languages. Despite the book's many merits, the essay notes several problems with some of its claims and offers recommendations as to how it could have been improved.

Keywords: Philippine linguistics, Austronesian languages, Malayo-Polynesian languages

Introduction

MARLIES S. SALAZAR'S *Perspectives on Philippine Languages: Five Centuries of European Scholarship* is a very welcome addition to scholarly publications on Philippine languages and linguistics by Marlies S. Salazar, a Filipina who has spent many years delving into European libraries and archives to uncover as many as possible the writings of Europeans about the Philippines, particularly their comments about

Philippine languages. The work explicitly excludes work by Spanish and non-European (read American and English) authors, although she does mention the work of a New Zealander, who wrote his dissertation on Ilokano in German in 1904; she also cites the publications of some European authors, such as Scheerer, Conant, Vanoverbergh, Lambrecht, Himmelmann, Adelaar, and Postma, who wrote in English. She excludes the work of some European scholars who published in English such as Carl Wilhelm Seidenadel (see Section 6). For many of the scholars whose work she refers to, Salazar abstracts and translates into English relevant sections related to the Philippines.

In addition to a Preface that describes how the book developed out of a Ph.D. dissertation, an Introduction outlines the motivation for presenting the work as an overview of the studies that have been written by non-Spanish and non-English authors, and for putting them in their historical contexts. Also, Salazar distinguishes and briefly discusses five periods, defined partly by their chronology and partly by the primary focus that the writers had. Unfortunately, the five chapters in the book are not coterminous with the five periods. The first period was ‘The Age of Discovery’ (16th and 17th centuries), and is covered in the first part of Chapter 1. The second was ‘The Age of Enlightenment’ (18th century) and previews publications that are discussed in the second part of Chapter 1. The third period, covering the first half of the 19th century, is characterized as ‘The Rise of Historical Comparative Linguistics’ and foreshadows the material in Chapter 2. The fourth period primarily deals with published reports of various European travelers who visited the Philippines during the last third of the 19th century and is covered in Chapter 3, ‘The Nineteenth Century: An Age of Intensified Contacts with the Philippines.’ The fifth period spans the 20th century, the first half of which saw research that focused on Philippine languages as part of the Austronesian language family; the second half saw a decline in interest in historical linguistics as such and a rise in descriptive and ethnolinguistic studies (xiii). This period is covered in two chapters, Chapter 4, ‘Austronesian Linguistics and Their [sic] Influence in the

Philippines’, and Chapter 5, ‘Recent Developments in Philippine Linguistics in Europe.’ The work concludes with an Appendix in which the author enumerates some of the word lists of Philippine languages that appeared in the early publications she examined (details of which are described in the following sections); the Appendix also includes an index and a bibliography. In the following sections, I shall briefly mention the various individuals whose work is covered in each of the chapters, and provide an evaluation of the work.

The Age of Discovery

The first report from the Philippines was that of Antonio Pigafetta, an Italian who accompanied Magellan around the world and survived the massacre in Mactan in 1521 when Magellan was killed. His report contains a list of 160 words, of which Salazar identifies 90 forms still found in Cebuano and related languages. While she indicates that the complete word list is given in the original language in Appendix 1 (3), only the 90 items (with supplied English and Cebuano equivalents that she was able to identify) are given.

This chapter first reviews the contributions of various missionaries (European, not Spanish) who came to the Philippines during this period, including a number of German Jesuits. These include Paul Klein, who arrived in Manila in 1678; he was a prolific writer in Tagalog and contributor to the Tagalog dictionary that was eventually published by Juan de Noceda and Pedro de San Lucar (1754). After the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Philippines in 1767, many of them went to Italy, where the Spanish Jesuit priest Lorenzo Hervas y Pandura included information that they, his fellow Jesuits, provided in his extensive work comparing known languages and their relationships (1785). Portions of this work are provided in translation by Salazar. She notes that this is the first work to define the geographical extent of what we now refer to as the Malayo-Polynesian languages (8). Hervas discusses the similarities among languages from Easter Island to the Marianas, Palau, Malay, Philippines,

and Madagascar. Blust (2009 [2013]), however, claims that as early as 1603, de Houtman had recognized the connection between Malay and Malagasy, and that Reland had identified a “common language” from Madagascar to western Polynesia by 1708. One wonders also whether Hervas had seen Georg Forster’s (1777) report of his *Journey around the World* with Captain James Cook (or the German publication of the work that appeared in 1783), which listed lexical comparisons between Philippine and other Malayo-Polynesian languages. Hervas believed that Malays were the first to occupy the Philippines, and that Philippine languages are developed from Malay, a myth that is still current today among many Filipinos. Hervas summarized much of the information that had been provided to him about the current state of knowledge of the languages of Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao, including references to various Negrito groups and their languages. He was himself an ‘encyclopedist,’ the title Salazar gives to her next section where she discusses the contributions of individuals who attempted to collect what was known about all existing languages in the world. Some of these people were explorers; others were philologists. Of the former, she examines the writings of Georg Forster and Peter Simon Pallas. Of the latter, she discusses Franz Carl Alter and Johann Christoph Adelung.

Each of these four writers included information about various Philippine languages. The author does us the service of listing in her appendices the approximately fifty terms in Forster’s comparative table that have possible Tagalog and Pampangan equivalents with languages that were spoken in places he had visited during his journey. (He did not collect these terms himself; Salazar tells us that he got them from two of the early vocabularies that had been published on these languages). She correctly notes that it is a sketchy and unreliable word list because there is “no word for ‘moon’ in Tagalog” (the list itself, however, provides no word in Pampangan but does give one for Tagalog), and because it notes various “misreadings” of the Spanish sources, including the variants *dalova* and *dalava* for “two.” Both are of interest because of the switch of the medial vowel from *o* to *a* that was apparently still underway when the

Spanish first arrived in the Tagalog region. She also provides us with transliterated (from Cyrillic) and translated lists of the 285 Philippine language terms appearing in Pallas's (1789) volume for Tagalog, Pampangan, and Magindanao. The great majority of these terms are for Magindanao, all of which were collected from "travelers." Salazar has done a careful analysis of the sources of Alter's word list of Tagalog included in the Appendix (236–238), and of the forms themselves; she notes that Alter's lack of knowledge of Spanish resulted in mistaken readings of various Spanish letters. Adelung's contribution came in the form of grammatical notes on Tagalog and Bisayan extracted from Spanish (and other) materials that were available to him (listed and commented on by Salazar). Adelung also did a grammatical analysis of three different versions of the Lord's Prayer in Tagalog. One of these versions was based on a copy translated into German by Hervas. Adelung did the same for Bisayan.

Salazar surveys the key figures who contributed to the development of the field now known as Historical-Comparative Linguistics, including William Jones, Francis Schlegel, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Franz Bopp, Rasmus Rask, Jacob Grimm, August Pott, August Schleicher, Friedrich Diez, Johann Zeuss, Franz von Miklosich, Karl Brugmann and Berhold Delbrück. Of these, she focuses on von Humboldt (40–79) and discusses his extensive contributions to the then-current understanding of the structure of Tagalog and its position in relation to other related languages. Salazar claims that his work is of great importance for the history of linguistics "because it is the first complete scientific treatment of the Malayo-Polynesian language family" (74). It should be noted that 'Malayo-Polynesian' is a term that Humboldt didn't use, preferring the name 'Malayan' (it was Bopp who first used the name 'maleisch-polynesisch' in 1841). While it is true that Humboldt compared the sounds and structures of languages as far apart as Malagasy and Polynesian, he had not grasped the importance of discovering recurrent sound change (or 'sound laws') as the basis for determining the relationship between languages. Typological similarities between grammatical structures, although a by-product of the relationship, can never be used as a basis for establishing the relationship, since such similarities can and do arise

completely independently in different families. Moreover, Humboldt was apparently under the impression that a protolanguage, a ‘primitive’ or earliest form, could still be spoken. He considered Tagalog to be the ‘origin’ and ‘purest’ form of all the ‘Malayan’ languages. While it is true that Tagalog retains many conservative features of its parent language, Proto-Malayo-Polynesian in today’s terms, it has undergone exactly the same number of years of change as any of the other languages in the family. As such, it cannot therefore be considered to be ‘older’ or ‘purer’ than any of the others. Humboldt was also apparently bound by the writing conventions of Spanish grammarians who represented the velar nasal by an *ng* digraph, and considered the ligature in forms such as *iyong* (from *iyon*) as simply the addition of the ‘letter *g*’ (60). It is somewhat surprising that Humboldt considered that Tagalog was the only ‘Malayan’ language that had a ligature, since early Spanish descriptions of Ilokano, Kapampangan, and other Philippine languages in which ligatures are also commonly found would have been available to him.

Salazar expresses astonishment that Humboldt calls *ang* an article, but *nang* and *sa* only particles (89), despite the fact that many modern analyses of Tagalog show that *ang* only marks definiteness of the following NP (noted also by Humboldt), and is not a ‘nominative’ case marker (Reid 2002). While *ng* (today’s orthographic convention for representing /naŋ) and *sa* are forms that mark the case of the NPs they are associated with, they certainly have functions in the language distinct from *ang*, and cannot be labeled with the same term.

Blust provides a different evaluation of von Humboldt’s contributions to historical-comparative linguistics, summarizing them in the following way:

His colossal work of scholarship... was a major contribution to the study of Old Javanese with an excursus into comparative Austronesian linguistics.... In over 1,800 pages of text and tables he laid out the most complete synthesis of descriptive and comparative knowledge about the AN [Austronesian] languages available in his time... There

is no question that von Humboldt's treatise was a landmark of scholarship in several areas. However, with regard to the comparative study of the AN languages it seems fair to say that he stood on the very brink of the scientific era, but had not yet crossed into it. His philosophical treatise on the relationship of language to thought was far ahead of its time, but his approach to comparative issues in linguistics was in many ways no more advanced than that of Reland [1708] 130 years before him. (Blust 2009 [2013], 518–519)

Salazar concludes her section on Humboldt by briefly reviewing the contributions of Franz Bopp and Friedrich Müller. She notes that they contributed little to the work of Humboldt who “has really written the basic work on Malayo-Polynesian languages, and that he has the great merit of having put Tagalog in its proper place” (83). One appreciates the sentiments expressed by the author, who is herself a Tagalog, but the place of Tagalog in the family is certainly not the one that Humboldt envisioned: as the origin of all the ‘Malayan’ languages, including those of the South Seas, or Polynesia. Tagalog is just one of the scores of Philippine languages that share their ancestral parent, Proto-Malayo-Polynesian. Although it maintains much of the verbal structure of that language, as do other Philippine languages, Tagalog has itself undergone many grammatical changes during the thousands of years of its development, as have all the other members of the family. She briefly reviews comments on Philippine languages by Hans Conon von de Gabelentz and his son Hans-Georg von de Gabelentz before moving into the next chapter.

The Nineteenth Century—An Age of Intensified Contacts with the Philippines

Salazar divides her discussion in this chapter between scholars who either lived in the Philippines or were sent by government-financed expeditions to the Philippines, and those who did not visit the country. In the former category are Paul de la Gironière, Jean Mallat, Carl Semper, Charles de Montblanc, Fedor Jagor, Adolph Meyer, Alexander

Schadenberg, Joseph Montana, and Hans Meyer. In the latter are Armand de Quatrefages de Bréau, Aristide Marre, Hendrik Kern, Jan Brandes, Johann Jonker, and Ferdinand Blumentritt. For each of these authors, Salazar details relevant biographical information, outlining the context in which they became interested in Philippine languages and how they acquired the data that they used in their publications.

Of those who actually spent time in the Philippines and gathered linguistic data during their stay, one of the most prominent was Meyer. Salazar includes in her Appendix some of the lists that he published. These include Tiruray and Magindanao forms that were apparently given to Meyer by an unnamed Jesuit priest who claimed to speak the languages. The priest apparently wrote out the forms for Meyer as they are listed in Spanish orthography, while the Sulu language lists, and the Negrito language material that he may have elicited himself, are not given using Spanish orthographic conventions. Salazar states that after hunting for possibly similar forms in Schlegel's (1971) Tiruray lexicon and in Aldave-Yap's (1997) comparative study, she found "only one word in five" that resembled modern Tiruray and that therefore the list is not very reliable (99). She apparently did not consult Schlegel's dictionary because most of the forms given by Mayer are found in his lexicon. Perhaps she could have benefited from a deeper evaluation of Aldave-Yap's data in that it clearly misrepresents the phonology of the language. In the list given from Aldave-Yap, the letter *i* is used in all forms that have a central vowel represented in Schlegel and in Meyer's list by the letter *e*, an orthographic convention commonly still found today in languages, such as Ilokano and Pangasinan, that retain the original central vowel pronunciation. The spelling in Aldave-Yap appears to be a printer's substitution for what was probably an 'i-bar' (/i/) in the original (printer substitution errors are a major problem throughout the book in question). Thus, the Tiruray word for "fire" is not *afiy* as cited by Salazar from Aldave-Yap, but *afey*, as given in Schlegel, which he lists as synonymous with *ferayag*, the term given by Meyer as *frayague*. Similarly, the word given for "water" is not *riguwas*, but *reguwas*, which Schlegel defines as "a poetical term for water." Schlegel

also gives the expected term *wayeg* that is clearly the form represented by Meyer's *vayeque*. While Meyer gives *wefurufe* for "air," Schlegel shows *refuruh*, "a wind," as well as *labanen*, "wind," which Salazar cites (from Aldave-Yap) as *labangin*. Meyer's term for "earth," *fantade*, is also found in Schlegel as *fantad*, with a meaning similar to *tuna* that she cites from Aldave-Yap. It is not possible to determine the source of the final letter *e* found on *fantade*, although it is probably the paragogic vowel /e/ that is added to all consonant final words in the Tomini-Tolitoli languages of northern Sulawesi, such as Donde *pantade* "shore, beach" (Himmelmann 1991). This is an area south across the Celebes Sea from where Tiruray is spoken; there was surely trade contact between them. It is also found in Meyer's list on *dogote*, "sea"; and the pronouns *beene*, "he,"; *begueye*, "we"; *ocgome*, "you"; and *berrone*, "they." The forms to which the extra vowel is attached can clearly be associated with the current Tiruray forms. One other fact that apparently evaded Salazar was that Meyer apparently misread some original *w* letters as *n* and in one case *m*. So that *telen*, "three" is *telew*; *fiten*, "seven" is *fitew*; *nalem*, "eight" is *walew*; and *sioon*, "nine" is *siyow*. The form for "three," given as *tires* in Aldave-Yap, is not Tiruray; it is clearly a borrowing of Spanish *tres* that she did not recognize.

Meyer also lived among the Negritos of the west coast of Luzon and published copiously on them. Salazar includes in her Appendix Meyer's lists of forms from two of the languages he researched. It is curious, given today's knowledge of the distinct Ayta languages of Zambales, that she states, "Meyer did not see the similarities of the Negrito dialects with Tagalog and Kapampangan. He created the myth of a separate language of the Negritos, which was hotly discussed for a long time" (102). While it is true that the Ayta languages have borrowed from the languages of their Sambalic neighbors, and possibly also from Kapampangan and Tagalog, they are very different from either of these languages in lexicon, syntax, morphology, and phonology. The question was whether their languages were part of the Malayo-Polynesian language family, or not.

Salazar then discusses the contributions of Schadenberg, briefly outlining some of the places where he lived and worked and some of the

research expeditions he made, including the one that took him to ‘Guinaan’ in the ‘Gran Cordillera Central,’ where he collected 700 words. It should be noted that there are two barrios with the name ‘Guinaang,’ one in Lubuagan, Kalinga, the other in Bontoc, Mountain Province (see Reid Ongoing). It is the former that he visited, reaching it from ‘Banao, Abra.’ Salazar provides in her Appendix the lists that Schadenberg took of three Ayta languages, one simply called ‘Negrito’; the others from Caulaman and Dinalupihan in Bataan. She also discusses his work in relation to the wide interest in these peoples among European scholars at the time.

Of those who wrote about the Philippines but never succeeded in traveling there, Salazar focuses on the work of the Dutch scholars Hendrik Kern, his student Brandes, and Blumentritt. Kern was also involved in the discussion raised by Meyer and by Schadenberg about the languages spoken by Negritos. Kern claimed that they were closely related to Tagalog, and were not different languages. He did, however, note that the lexicon, phonology, and grammar showed them to be Malayo-Polynesian languages. So the primary issue, and one that was not made clear either in the original works (or by Salazar), was not whether Negritos had distinct languages, which they clearly did despite their borrowed forms. Rather, it was a question of whether their languages could be shown to be part of the same family (Malayo-Polynesian) to which Tagalog belonged or whether they retained anything of their pre-Malayo-Polynesian tongues. This was an issue that interested Wilhelm Schmidt (see below), and continues to be of interest (Reid 1994).

The role of Brandes and Kern in the development of our understanding of the relationships between the sound systems of Malayo-Polynesian languages goes somewhat beyond the facts given by Salazar. A better summary may be found in Blust (2009[2013], 522–523). One contribution that Brandes made that many modern Philippine linguists should take seriously is that the infix *-in-* is not a marker of a ‘passive’ verb, but is a marker of ‘completed action.’ Although not obvious in Tagalog because of the morphological changes that have taken place with ‘actor voice’ constructions in which it has disappeared (in the case of verbs

with *-um-*) (Reid 1992), or alternates with *m-* (in the case of *ma-*, *mag-* and *mang-* verbs), the presence of *-in-* in the verbs of such constructions in a wide range of other Philippine languages shows that Brandes was right despite Kern's objections. The infix *-in-* is now reconstructed to very early stages of the Austronesian family as a marker of perfective aspect, not as a 'passive' affix.

Austronesian Linguistics and their [sic] Influence in the Philippines

Of the range of scholars discussed in this chapter by Salazar, some never visited the Philippines, such as Wilhelm Schmidt, Renward Brandstetter, Rudolph Kern, Jan Gonda, and Otto Dempwolff. Of those who visited or lived in the Philippines, she discusses the missionary priests who lived in the country, Morice Vanoverbergh and Francis Lambrecht; the visitors Otto Scheerer and Hermann Costenoble; and finally, the Filipino scholar Cecilio Lopez, who studied under Dempwolff in Germany and became the leading linguist in the Philippines on his return.

Schmidt, although not contributing anything directly to the study of Philippine languages, did help raise our understanding of the relationship among the various branches of the Austronesian languages and also of the Austroasiatic languages of mainland Southeast Asia and India. As Salazar notes, he was the first one to propose the terms commonly used now for these two language families. His attention to the Philippines was motivated primarily, it seems, by his interest in the languages of the Negrito peoples, a pursuit that connected him with Vanoverbergh, his fellow SVD (Society of the Divine Word) priest. Vanoverbergh published copiously on the Northern Luzon languages during his eighty-year residence in the Philippines and with whom this reviewer was closely connected during the publication of his *Isneg Vocabulary* (Vanoverbergh 1972). Schmidt noted that Philippine Negritos did not have their own language but spoke the languages of their neighbors (148). This again misrepresented the languages of the Negritos. Although it is possible to

relate most of them to the same subgroup that their neighbors' languages belong to, they are distinct from them in many ways.

Brandstetter, without ever visiting any region where an Austronesian language was spoken, made major contributions to the state of knowledge of Austronesian languages and their relationships. Salazar indicates these accomplishments in her fourteen-page discussion of his writings. Her summary of his general contributions are useful, but in accord with the purpose of her research, she focuses on Brandstetter's writings in relation to Philippine languages, especially the essay in which he compared Malagasy and Tagalog. This article and several of his others are available in English translation, as Salazar notes (see Brandstetter 1916). An excellent evaluation of Brandstetter's contributions to the field of Austronesian linguistics is available in Blust (2009 [2013], 523–528, see also Blust and Schneider 2012). Careless copying or poor editing mars the material that is taken from the original sources that Salazar provides. Thus, the claim that Brandstetter always wrote 'n' for 'ng' is very misleading (158), because he actually wrote 'ñ' for 'ng'. Likewise, for the phonetic system of Original Indonesian (162), Brandstetter shows the final 'e' of the six vowels as 'ë'[ə], (Blagden's translation of Brandstetter [1916] gives 'ě'); the velar 'ñ' is 'n' [ŋ]; the palatal 'n' is ñ; and the line that contains 'y, l, r' is missing the bilabial semivowel w.

Several pages are devoted to the publications of Rudolph Kern on certain morphological features of Philippine languages. These include another misguided attempt to prove that the perfective infix *-in-* is a passive affix, and a summary of the functions of the *ka-* prefix, to which he added "*ka* is sometimes added to the imperative to give it some urgency: *Lakad ka na?* 'Go now!'" This is cited by Salazar, but she doesn't note that Kern failed to recognize that this particular *ka* is a second person singular pronoun, or that imperatives in Austronesian languages typically encode the agent, unlike European languages. Gonda's contributions, especially in the area of Tagalog terms that apparently have their source in Sanskrit, are summarized by Salazar with the note that "[l]ike most Sanskrit scholars, Gonda has a tendency to emphasize the influence of Sanskrit on other languages and cultures" (177).

The major European linguist of this era who utilized data from Philippine languages in his comparison of Austronesian languages was Otto Dempwolff. His contributions are discussed and evaluated by Salazar (177–185), who credits his work as being “unequaled in its scholarly and thorough approach. It has been the starting point of all later research in this area” (184). This, of course, is very true in comparison with preceding work, and his publications have provided the foundation upon which subsequent scholars such as Dahl, Dyen, Wolff, Zorc, and Blust have built their careers. But his work was not without problems, as Blust notes in his extensive examination of Dempwolff’s work (2009[2013], 528–543). Salazar, noting that Dempwolff’s major work is an “extremely useful source for research in comparative Austronesian linguistics” (185), lists the English translations that have appeared in the Philippines over the years. But Blust notes, “[u]nfortunately, no good English translation of Dempwolff’s major work exists to date... A full (uncredited) translation of VLAW was issued in mimeographed form by the Ateneo de Manila University in 1971, but this is so riddled with errors that the beginning student is best advised to avoid it” (2009[2013], 542). It would have also been useful to acknowledge that even though Dempwolff had reconstructed over 2000 lexical items to his “Uraustronesisch,” or what today is called Proto-Malayo-Polynesian, Blust reconstructed twice as many additional forms, a large number of which are cited with reflexes in Philippine languages (Blust and Trussel Ongoing). Finally, the problems that were noted above with the representation of Brandstetter’s Original Indonesian are replicated in the listing of Dempwolff’s Proto-Indonesian (181). Thus, the vowels are missing ə (schwa); the laryngeals show ‘c’ for the ‘spiritus asper’ or light glottal closure that Dempwolff represented with the superscript c ; the (misaligned) retroflex symbols ‘d’, ‘t’, and ‘l’, should all have subscript periods, d , t , and l , respectively; of the palatals, ‘g’ and ‘k’ are misaligned and n is missing its accent mark, \acute{n} ; the velar η is also given as ‘n’; and the velar fricative χ is shown as ‘j’. Similar problems exist in the listing of the twelve homorganic nasal combinations, and Salazar does not list the four diphthongs that Dempwolff considered to be part of the sound system.

Salazar next summarizes Scheerer's two German articles (most of his articles were written in English), one of which was concerned with the Aklan phoneme /l/, which is pronounced as a vowel and written as *e* in Aklanon orthography in certain positions in a word. She then outlines the contributions of the Filipino scholar Cecilio Lopez whom she appropriately characterizes as the "father of Philippine Linguistics" (190). She noted that "he was highly respected by students and scholars alike and he helped them whenever he could" (190), as he did with the current reviewer who met with him on his first arrival in the Philippines in 1959. Lopez was also the person with whom Costenoble left his German materials on comparative Philippine linguistics before his death, and which Lopez translated into English and published.

Recent Developments in Philippine Linguistics in Europe

In this chapter, Salazar reviews the work of a wide range of European scholars whose studies in the second half of the twentieth century include Philippine language materials. They include the comparativists Andre-George Haudricourt (France), Hans Mohring (Germany), and Otto Christian Dahl (Norway). She then groups together linguists from separate European countries: Russia: Sergey Bulich, Evgeny Polivanov, Natalya Alieva, Vladimir Makarenko, Ivan Podberezskij, Lina Shkarban, Grennady Rachkov, Maria Stanyukovich; France: Maurice Coyaud, Jean-Paul Potet, François Dell, and Nicole Revel; Germany: Heinrich Kelz, Werner Drossard, Nikolaus Himmelmann, Agnes Kolmer, and Ursula Wegmüller; and finally Holland: Karl Alexander Adelaar and Antoon Postma. Many of these scholars visited the Philippines for various periods, and many of them, especially those from Russia, were primarily interested in Tagalog. Others such as Revel, widely known for her work on Palawan; Stanyukovich for her work on the *hudhud* epic genre of Ifugao; and Postma for his studies on Hanunóo and its pre-Spanish writing system, have spent extended periods in remote places in the Philippines and have contributed greatly to our understanding of otherwise little-known languages.

Conclusion

Salazar has done an invaluable service to all linguists interested in Philippine languages by utilizing her skills as a polyglot and translator to reveal to us material that many of us would otherwise have had no access to. Of keen interest to this reviewer, for example, are the comments interspersed throughout the book on early views about who the Negritos are and the nature of the languages that they speak, and the lists of Negrito forms given in the Appendix that were taken by Meyer and by Schadenberg. This is material that could have been referred to in Reid (2013), but which were unavailable to me. But the frequent use by Salazar of the term ‘dialect’ for ‘language’ especially when it refers to a language spoken by Negritos (85, 93, 149, etc.) was, for me, problematic.

While at various points Salazar indicates where modern scholarship provides a different analysis or provides explanations for phenomena that puzzled early European researchers, these are scattered and incomplete. The work would have been greatly improved if she had been more careful to evaluate the contributions of writers in the light of modern scholarship. For example, while Brandstetter (and others) discussed the widespread presence of what have been referred to as monosyllabic ‘roots’ in Austronesian languages, she does not mention Blust (1980), who examined the nature of the phenomenon, critically evaluated Brandstetter’s methods, and reconstructed some 230 roots based on 2,560 tokens in 117 Austronesian languages, of which 32 are Philippine languages.

Another area in which Salazar could have provided some evaluative comments is the commonly occurring reference to what were called “passives” in Philippine languages, and which today are typically referred to as syntactically transitive constructions with different “focus” or “voice” marking on the verb. It is striking that even though she (123) cited a very relevant passage from Marre’s (1901) *Grammar of Tagalog*, which discussed the nature of Tagalog ‘passives,’ she did not associate the statement with

what today is widely understood as the basis for the difference between the accusativity of European languages and the ergativity of Philippine languages.

If one had to give the reason for this curious difference, one could find it in two completely opposed points of view, from which the action expressed by the verb is considered. In the European languages the action is seen in relation to the person who does it, whereas the Malayo-Polynesian languages consider the action in relation to the person or the thing that receives or undergoes it. (Marre 1901, 573)

Related to this issue, Drossard's (1984) argumentation that all the forms called "passive" must be considered "active" and that *ma-* verbs are "stative" is dismissed by Salazar (219) by the comment, "[i]n one stroke he had eliminated all the difficult passives of Tagalog, at least for himself." But this view had long been held by some linguists, such as Seidenadel (1906, reviewed in Reid 2011) who, probably before anyone else, rejected the concept of "passive" for the syntactically transitive verbs of Philippine languages. Seidenadel considered them to be "active." He also used the term "stative" for (one class of) *ma-*verbs. The use of the term "active" or the equivalent term "dynamic" is commonly held now by a number of Philippine linguists, such as Tanangkingsing (Tanangkingsing and Huang 2007), who prefers to reserve the term "passive" for *ma-* verbs in Cebuano. While most modern linguists no longer consider Philippine transitive verbs to be passives, Pierre Winkler (2011) defends the early Spanish use of the term, claiming that the Spanish missionaries foreshadowed modern Functional Grammar in their semantic-pragmatic usage of terms that today typically carry syntactic meanings.

One more case that Salazar could have provided some perspective on is in relation to the commonly referred to RGH- and RLD-laws that were credited to van der Tuuk and were discussed by Conant in relation to Philippine languages and referred to by Scheerer. These are still appealed to by some Filipino linguistic students when discussing the historical

development of Philippine languages. However, these laws have long been evaluated and shown to be inadequate explanations of the reflexes of the various reconstructed proto-phonemes that they were first proposed to show. They are now reconstructed as Proto-Austronesian and Proto-Malayo-Polynesian *R and *j.

The book under review, while very valuable in many respects, is unfortunately flawed by a large number of errors, including missing, misplaced and misspelled words, many of them clearly inadvertent and a number of which were mentioned in Section 4 above. However, in the interest of providing an objective evaluation of the work, it is necessary to indicate more of these problems.

One would expect that Salazar, as a linguist, would have been more careful in her citation of the Cebuano forms listed in Appendix 1 that are the modern equivalents of the forms given by Pigafetta. Although these are taken from Yap and Bunye (1971), they are not cited with stress marks indicating length and glottal stop as given in this work and other dictionaries of the language, such as the much more complete dictionary of Cebuano Visayan by Wolff (1972). We find *buto* for *bútù*, *luya* for *luy-a*, *suka* for *sukà*, *iro* for *irù*, *isda* for *isdà*, etc. Such diacritical marks were possibly removed by the printer but should have been corrected during the proofing stage.

There are a number of inaccuracies in listing the languages cited by Alter (26), inaccuracies that may have been in the original but were simply copied by Salazar without comment. She inadvertently reinforces the common Filipino belief that Philippine languages developed from Malay; she classifies Philippine languages, including Magindanao, Tagalog, and Pampango in her 'Indonesian' group, among which she also includes Palau, which is also not an Indonesian language, either geographically or linguistically. It would have been better to label the same group of languages as 'Western Malayo-Polynesian,' which clearly distinguishes them from the Oceanic languages cited under 'Melanesian' and 'Polynesian' headings. In the same list, it would have been better had Salazar used the

modern names of the countries where languages are spoken, such as Vanuatu for ‘New Hebrides’ and Sulawesi for ‘Celebes.’ Her ‘Mangaray’ (now called Manggarai) is spoken not ‘near Celebes,’ but in the west of the island of Flores in Indonesia. Similarly, Nias is spoken not ‘near Sumatra’ but in two islands off the north coast of Sumatra and are part of Sumatra. Palau is not ‘near the Carolines,’ but is part of the northern chain of Caroline Islands. ‘Achenese’ is more properly spelled Acehnese, and ‘Battak’ is Batak. ‘Malicolo (New Hebrides)’ refers to the island of Malecula in Vanuatu, where a number of different languages are spoken (Lewis, Simons, and Fennig 2014). Similarly, she gives ‘Babobo’ for Bagobo (107), ‘Austroasian’ for Austroasiatic (131), ‘Ranks Islands’ for Banks Islands, ‘Anlitum’ for Ancitum (now Ancityum), ‘Oraged’ for Graged (182), ‘Miao-yao’ for Miao-Yao, now commonly referred to as Hmong-Mien (212), ‘Siraraya’ for Siraya (222). etc.

One additional problem that I kept on tripping up on are the multiple examples throughout the book of the inappropriate use of the English present perfect tense where a simple past tense is called for. These include, “Huonder has established a list of...” which could have been, “Huonder established a list of...” (4); “In this work, he has proven the effectiveness of his linguistic method” (44) for “In this work, he proved the effectiveness of his linguistic method;” and “She has based her work mostly on the research done and has compiled an atlas of terms related to rice” (212), a sentence that would have been better written as “She based her work mostly on research done and compiled an atlas of terms related to rice,” etc.

While the work has an extensive and very valuable 27-page bibliography section (with English translations of titles in foreign languages), the references have multiple editing problems. For example, the Yap and Bunye (1971) reference is cited without the mention of the second author; similarly, although both Schachter and Otanes are given as the authors of their Tagalog grammar in the references, only Schachter is mentioned as the author on (218). Despite the necessarily critical comments given in this section, they should not hinder anyone from buying the book. It should be added to the shelf of all aspiring young Filipino linguists.

Perspectives on Philippine Languages: Five Centuries of European Scholarship. Marlies S. Salazar, Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2013. ISBN: 978-971-550-649-6, 348 pp.

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Philippines-China Relations, 2001–2008: Dovetailing National Interests

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Abstract

This study shows that the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JMSU) between China and the Philippines is an attempt of both countries to advance their respective national interests. Arguing that the foreign policies of China and the Philippines dovetailed during the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the study situates the JMSU as (1) part of China's overall foreign policy in Southeast Asia and (2) as an attempt to maintain good relations with the Philippines and help resolve tensions related to the South China Sea disputes between the Philippines and China. The paper also shows that (3) the JMSU, along with Chinese ODA, dovetailed with the Philippine government's plan to promote economic development and facilitate energy security. Citing significant documents compiled by government agencies, newspaper and online articles, government officials' speeches, and academic journals, the study shows how the Chinese official development assistance (ODA) coincided and ran parallel to the signing of the Joint Maritime Seismic Undertaking. In conclusion, the study suggests a direct, causal link, not just conjunction, among Chinese ODA, the advancement of Beijing's security interests, and the signing of the JMSU.

Keywords: Philippines-China relations, China and Southeast Asia, Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking

Introduction

THE GREAT LEAP OF China's economy in recent decades has brought enormous benefits to many of its people. Economic development brought better standards of living and provided spillover effects to its neighbors. China, fuelled by its rising economic power, has also become a provider of official development assistance (ODA), markedly different scenario from the 1980s in which it was a mere recipient. It isolated itself from the world during the Maoist period, but this once "sleeping giant" grew more aggressive in its foreign policy, particularly in staking its territorial claims and sovereignty especially in Southeast Asia.

Through ODA, China has not only successfully made its presence felt in countries they assist, but it has also given greater business opportunities offshore to Chinese companies, who help implement Chinese ODA-funded projects. This trend has been particularly notable in Southeast Asia, an important region for China's strategic goals. On the economic front, "the importance of Southeast Asia to China's continued economic development has grown larger as its economy has grown because the resources that China needs to maintain its growth, security, and stability flow through the region" (Scher 2010, 3). Particularly, China needs an uninterrupted source of raw materials, i.e. minerals, oil, gas, rubber, agricultural products and the like, from Southeast Asia in order to secure the growth and development of its economy.

Moreover, China needs to engage with the Southeast Asian region, embarking on a multilevel engagement that help prevent the alignment of states against its interests, establish the means for preferential access on a bilateral basis, and project an image consistent with its theme of seeking a "harmonious world" (*ibid.*). In relation to that, China used instruments such as elements of its national power—diplomacy, economy, culture, military and information—to cultivate a good relationship with Southeast Asia. As China helps developing countries like the Philippines, it creates an image that it is one of them, i.e., a developing country that helps another achieve its developmental goals. China appeals to these nations,

particularly in regions like Africa and Southeast Asia, because agreements with Beijing focus on “mutual benefits rather than on one-way assistance” and provide a “win-win” solutions (King 2006, 6). China has successfully employed these instruments to promote its long-term interests, including maintaining regional influence, defending its territorial claims, and leveraging regional access to markets, resources, and securing transit routes whether they are on land or sea (*ibid.*).

It is amidst this politico-economic background that this study shows that the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JMSU) between China and the Philippines is an attempt of both countries to advance their respective national interests. Arguing that the foreign policies of China and the Philippines dovetailed during the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (GMA), the study situates the JMSU as (1) part of China’s overall foreign policy in the South China Sea and (2) as an attempt to maintain good relations with the Philippines and help resolve tensions related to the South China Sea disputes between the Philippines and China. The paper also argues that (3) the JMSU dovetailed with Philippine government’s plan to promote economic development and facilitate energy security.

The Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking

Bilateral relations between the Philippines and China received a boost on 16 May 2000 with the signing of the Framework of Bilateral Cooperation in the Twenty-First Century (ABS-CBN News.com 2008). The framework was crafted in order to expand the bilateral relationship of the two countries, focusing on exchanges and cooperation on government, business, military, education, and tourism sectors. The framework also reiterates the Philippines’ and China’s adherence to the promotion of peace and stability in the South China Sea as both states refrain from actions that may complicate or escalate the situation in the area (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China 2000).

On 4 November 2002, The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and China signed the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. In the same year, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo appointed Mr. Eduardo Mañalac as undersecretary supervising upstream operations at the Department of Energy. This appointment came right after his seven-year stint in China as an oil explorer (*ABS-CBN News, Timeline*, 2008). Then, on 30 August 2004, Mañalac was appointed president and CEO of the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC); two days after his appointment he signed the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JMSU) deal with China (*ABS-CBN News, Timeline*, 2008).

Earlier in September 2003, China made a significant move to ease tensions over the South China Sea by proposing a joint oil exploration and development of the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea with other claimants to the potentially oil-rich archipelago (Pablito 2003). In November 2003, The Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC) and the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) signed a landmark agreement to jointly develop the South China Sea, which is believed to be rich in oil and gas deposits. The two companies also agreed on a program to “review, assess and evaluate relevant geological, geophysical and other technical data available to determine the oil and gas potential in the area” (*Philippine Star* 2003).” Moreover, the exploration would not include the highly-contested Spratly region (*Philippine Star* 2003).

This agreement would culminate on 1 September 2004, when the JMSU was signed between Philippines and China through the PNOC and CNOOC. Under the JMSU, the two countries “expressed the commitment to pursue efforts to transform the South China Sea into an area of cooperation.” Under the agreement, two countries under their respective state-oil companies would do a “joint research of petroleum resource potential of certain areas of the South China Sea as a pre-exploration activity” (3). The area covered by the agreement has “a total area of one hundred forty two thousand eight hundred and eighty-six (142,886) square kilometers” and was to be implemented for three years

(2005 to 2008). Allegedly, the site of the JMSU covers about 80 percent of the Philippines' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), an area the government acknowledged as disputed (*ABS-CBN News.com*, Timeline, 2008).

The JMSU initially elicited protests from Vietnam (*ibid.*). To address the objections from Hanoi, a tripartite agreement that now included Vietnam (via Petro Vietnam, a state-owned oil company) was signed on 14 March 2005. In 2007, because of the initial success of the joint seismic undertaking among the Philippines, China, and Vietnam, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo urged all the parties involved to continue pursuing phase 2 of the JMSU beyond 2008 (Bengco 2011). However, in 2008, the agreement lapsed without extension by the Philippines because of domestic issues and protests, which will be explored at a later section of this paper.

Chinese Official Development Assistance (ODA), Strategy, and Policy in Southeast Asia

The signing of the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking between China and the Philippines exemplifies Chinese foreign policy towards Southeast Asia. China since the early 1950s has always given official development assistance to other countries, particularly to developing nations, despite its own modest economy (Zhang 2007, 250). But marked change occurred in 1978, when a flood of foreign direct investments (FDIs) entered the country through Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms, specifically its *gaige kaifang* (reform and open-door) policy. *Gaige kaifang* policy ushered a new era for China, propelled its economic development, and turned Beijing from being an FDI receiver to an aggressive investor in other countries through its ODA. Specifically, China made its investments through the different private companies, who were encouraged by Beijing to invest in government-identified regions. Zhang (2007) also observed that just as a country's policies on aid programmes reflect its national interests, so do China's increasing aid programmes in Southeast Asia mirror its increasing

objectives in the region. For Zhang, China's ODA reflects the "country's major policy goals and its understanding of national interests as well as the international environment" (250).

The Southeast Asian region's attractiveness to China rests on many aspects, culture and strategy included. Strategically, the region is a next-door neighbour of China; both share rich, similar histories and traditions. Moreover, Southeast Asia is home to rich natural resources like minerals, oil, gas, rubber, agricultural products, and the like, which China needs for its growing domestic economy (Viraphol 2007). Goh argued that the recent Chinese "penetration" into Southeast Asia has focused primarily on "economic cooperation and mutual gains" (2006, 1). The US Congressional Report Service also noted that China's ODA initiatives were intended to "secure and transport natural resources and secondarily for diplomatic reasons" (2009, 1). China's ODA parallels its growing economy, which needs to expand into new markets.

In addition to the economic growth, China's regional security concerns have also shaped the evolution of its aid programmes (Cotterrell and Harmer 2005). Cotterrell and Harmer observe five factors that influence China's ODA: (1) projection of an image, (2) encouragement of local Chinese private companies to invest abroad, (3) expansion of the markets of state-owned enterprises, (4) adherence to its foreign policies, and (5) development of a suitable environment for China's economic development.

The first two factors concern us here. Along with the need to help other developing countries, China's ODA giving can be contextualized in what can be called as "South-South Cooperation" (Zhang 2007, 251), an arrangement consistent with China's image as a developing country helping another. Indeed, China has used its economic resources to enhance its global image in the international community. The second factor that influences China's ODA is its desire to push its private companies to invest in other countries, particularly in areas where Beijing sends its ODA. This materialized through the "Step-out policy where the government strongly

encouraged its state-owned and privately owned enterprises, to invest abroad” (Woo and Zhang 2005, 2). According to Cheng, et al. (2012, 8), State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) intervened in China’s foreign aid in three stages: “help recipient countries to prepare aid requests, conduct preliminary project assessment and implement aid projects.” This is exemplified in the National Broadband Network (NBN) deal between China and the Philippines in 2007. As part of the arrangement, Zhong Xing Telecommunications (ZTE), a favored Chinese private company for this project, helped the Philippine government arrange loans with the Chinese government. Lastly, China’s intention to influence SEA and other countries has also been a major basis of their ODA. One author argues that the development and rise of China in the past two decades has shown that the assumption of the realist theorists that China will use its economic and military capabilities to overturn the balance of power and stability in East Asia is wrong (Kang 2003, 6). Instead, China’s strong and stable condition contributes to order in East Asia.

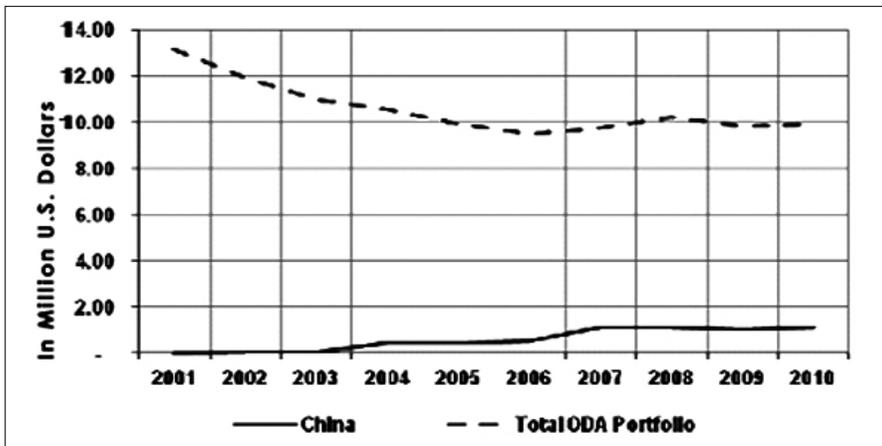
Chinese ODA and Loans to the Philippines during President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo’s Administration

Chinese foreign policy in Southeast Asia can be exemplified by Beijing’s increasing economic involvement in the Philippines. Indeed, it is interesting to note that the signing of the JMSU in 2002 coincides with China’s rising economic presence in the Philippines. China became a significant contributor to the Philippines during the Arroyo administration, providing ODA projects and increasing their volume every year. In addition to that, China devised an easy loan payment scheme for the Philippines. Beijing also provided not only infrastructure projects but also military aid to the Philippines. It only shows the wider involvement of China in the Philippines which went beyond the signing and approval of the JMSU.

Growing Volume of Chinese ODA in the Philippines during the Arroyo Administration

Data from the department Head of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) confirms the growing volume of China's ODA in the Philippines (Table 1). Statistics show that despite the decreasing volume of all the assistance and loans from other countries, China's ODA continued to increase from 2001 to 2010.

FIGURE 1
Total ODA to the Philippines and China's Contribution, 2001-2010



Source: Systems and Development Policy Division, Project Monitoring Staff, NEDA, 27 July 2012.

According to a department head from NEDA (Email Interview, 27 July 2012) the total loan commitments from China from 2001 to 2010 amounted to US\$1.316 billion, broken down into the following:

- a. US\$209.99 million for closed or completed projects.
- b. US\$607.75 million for ongoing projects; and
- c. US\$500.00 million for projects which are not yet effective.

Philippine Senator Francis Pangilinan pointed out that “in 2007 the Philippines has entered into 31 agreements with China which supposedly aims to promote bilateral trade and development in the next 10 years” (Casayuran 2008, 12). The promotion bilateral trade between the Philippines and China during the presidency of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had increased since China upped amounts ODA to the Philippines in 2001.

Easy payment terms for Chinese loans

The Chinese government set up easy payment terms that could help finance the country’s economic development. As Chinese Embassy Attaché Peng Xiubin pointed out, the “Chinese government’s standard rate for loans is pegged for a period of 10 years while the ‘preferential loan’ to the Philippines was pegged at 3 percent for a maximum period of 20 years” (Cagahastian 2005). Moreover, Chinese Embassy Attaché Peng Xiubin qualified that “what we provided the Philippines is a preferential loan for an important ally,” Xiubin said (ibid.). China also furnished all necessary arrangements so that the Philippines could avail of Chinese loans. Specifically, Hon. Liang Wean tao, economic and commercial counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Manila, described that “China has offered \$1.8 billion in a preferential buyer’s credit to the Philippines, making it the largest recipient of such loan from China” (*Philippine Star* 2007, 5).

Major Aid Projects of China in the Philippines

The major highlight of the Philippines-China relations during the administration of President Arroyo was the deepening and increasing economic ties between the two countries. She enumerated the different Chinese-funded projects in the Philippines:

Major landmarks of our relations include the Philippine-China Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Partnership framework, also the Northrail from Manila to my home province of Pampanga, the national broadband network projects in the Philippines, and continued regular exchanges of high-level visits between our two countries. (Arroyo 2007a)

China helped finance many of the identified key and vital government projects during that time. President Arroyo believed that funding some of the vital infrastructures in transportation and communication is a key to the economic development of the country (Arroyo 2007). Furthermore, she argued that the Philippines benefitted from the growth of China (Arroyo, 2007). The president stressed the importance of the Filipino and Chinese business groups in forging the closer relationship of Manila and Beijing. She enumerated the different undertakings, initiatives, programs and projects; these include promoting trade, investments and tourism; improving fiscal discipline; and the forging of new partnerships and alliances that positively affected the relationship of the Philippines and China, specifically in the economy (Arroyo 2007). Some of China's major ODA projects in the Philippines are as follows (Email interview with NEDA-Project Monitoring Staff, 27 July 2012):

- a. **General Santos Fishing Port Complex Expansion/Improvement Project** (Completed 31 July 2007)—The project consists of wharf expansion and improvement of some components of the fishing port like water supply system, cold storage and waste treatment plant.
- b. **Non-Intrusive Container Inspection System I and Non-Intrusive Container Inspection System II** (Completed in 2010)—The project involves the purchase, installation, and operation of thirty (30) x-ray machine units to be placed in the different shipping ports in the country.
- c. **Banaoang Pump Irrigation Project** (Ongoing as of 2012)—The project is designed to provide irrigation water to 6,312 hectares of area involving the construction of pumping stations in Ilocos Sur.
- d. **Agno River Integrated Irrigation Project** (Ongoing as of 2012)—The Agno River Integrated Irrigation Project (formerly San Roque Multi-Purpose Project-Irrigation Component) is envisioned to provide year-round irrigation to some 34,450 hectares of farmlands to benefit 28,207 farm families in Pangasinan.

- e. Angat Water Utilization and Aqueduct Improvement Project Phase II** (Ongoing as of 2012)—The project aims to maintain the security of water supply for Metro Manila by ensuring the safety and integrity of the raw water conveyance system via Umiray, Angat, and Ipo dams to water treatment plants in La Mesa and Balara.
- f. Northrail Project Phase I Section I** (Ongoing as of 2012) and Phase I Section II- (Loan not yet effective)—This project aims to provide an efficient transport service for passengers and goods between Metro Manila and Central and Northern Luzon, thus helping alleviate the traffic problems and reducing urban sprawl outside Metro Manila.

Of the projects included in this section, which are identified through from NEDA-PMS, only the following have definite project costs:

TABLE 1: Some China-Funded Projects

Project	Cost in Million Dollars
General Santos Fishing Port Complex Expansion / Improvement Project	US\$ 30.54*
Non-Intrusive Container Inspection System Project I	US\$ 44.12*
Non-Intrusive Container Inspection System Project II	US\$ 119.60*
Banaoang Pump Irrigation Project	US\$ 49.77*
Agno River Integrated Irrigation Project	US\$ 89.15
Angat Water Utilization and Aqueduct Improvement Project Phase II	US\$116.60
Northrail Project Phase 1 Section 1	US\$ 500

*Note: Actual data presented values in Pesos converted at Php50.00 = \$1.00 rate for illustration and comparison purposes only.

Here are the updates on the ongoing projects as of 2012: Banaoang Pump Irrigation Project (98.52% complete), Angat Water Utilization and Aqueduct Improvement Project Phase 11 (89.44% complete), Agno River Integrated Irrigation Project (77.61% complete), and the Northrail Phase I Section I (22.94% complete).

The JMSU, Energy Security, and Economic Development

The rising amount of Chinese development assistance dovetails with the Philippines' national interests and foreign policy vis-à-vis China. Indeed, the signing of the JMSU is but one part of broader thrusts of Philippine foreign policy towards China during President Arroyo's administration: (a) preservation and enhancement of national security; (b) **promotion and attainment of economic security**; and (c) protection of the rights, and the promotion of the welfare and interests, of Filipinos overseas (NEDA, Medium Term Philippine Development Plan 2004–2010, *emphasis mine*).

The Arroyo administration prioritized economic development and recognized that the country has the potential of producing its own oil and gas requirements. Hence, the JMSU. The president pointed out that the Philippines must foster greater energy independence by exploring its oil and gas reserves in its territory. She stressed that

“I am therefore, setting the policy directions and announcing them today towards our **goal of energy independence and savings**: First, we need to increase our reserves of indigenous oil and gas. We must develop and actively promote oil and gas exploration. The Philippine National Oil Corp. (PNOC) will search for indigenous energy resources.” (Arroyo 2004, *emphasis mine*)

Highlighting the importance of energy independence, the president said that “energy independence also comes in the form of strategic alliances with other countries, particularly our long-time energy partners like Saudi

Arabia, our ASEAN neighbors, China and our new partners, Russia” (Arroyo 2004). The administration also argued that energy independence will improve the country’s national security which will positively affect the country’s economy and its environment as she said,

“And part of bright new future for our nation is to take control over our reliance on energy, **to become free from dependence on foreign oil and become self-sufficient through the use of sustainable, alternative forms of energy.** This will enhance our national security, lift our economy and preserve our environment [emphasis mine]. (Arroyo 2002)

But the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking is not simply about energy security; indeed, the signing of the JMSU is also part and parcel of the Arroyo administration’s plan to develop the Philippine economy. Although there is no way now to determine the economic impact of the JMSU because it was shelved, it should be read in light of Philippine foreign policy under President Arroyo.

Recognizing that China is a very significant player for the Philippines and the region, the president stressed that the Philippines must deal with and align its foreign policy with China’s rise. She pointed out that the Philippines must deal with different realities in the international arena:

“The relationships of China, Japan and U.S. will be a determining influence on the security situation and economic evolution of East Asia”, “Philippine foreign policy decisions will have to be made more in the context of the ASEAN”, and “The defense of the nation’s sovereignty and the protection of its environment and natural resources can be carried out only to the extent that it asserts its right over its maritime territory- and get others to respect those rights.” (Arroyo 2002)

President Arroyo viewed China’s rise as not “a threat but an opportunity for all” (ibid.). She believed that China is important and that it would play a strategic role in the economic development and security situation

in Asia (Arroyo 2007b). In her speech during a forum at Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China, the President said that the Philippines' relationship with China is among the most important ties of the Philippine Government (2007). As a result, the Philippines under Arroyo grew very "aggressive in seeking multilateral and bilateral trade relationships" with China (Arroyo 2007c). Indeed, the closer economic relations between the Philippines and China evolved in a more confident, mature and comprehensive relationship (ibid.). Specifically, their economic relations are "punctuated with substantial and important projects aimed at deepening exchanges on a number of areas, especially trade and investment" (ibid.). Indeed, "many Filipino analysts and observers somehow agree that former President Arroyo paved the way for a more enhanced relations between the Philippines and China" (Email Interview with a Foreign Service Officer at DFA, 20 July 2012).

One can highlight the importance of China to President Arroyo's foreign policy by comparing the number of state visits of President Arroyo to China with those of past Philippine presidents (Table 2). Whereas her predecessors visited China once during their terms, President Arroyo travelled there twelve times between 2001 and 2009.

TABLE 2: High Level Visits between Leaders of the Philippines and China

Philippine Presidential Visits to China	Visits of Chinese Leaders to the Philippines
Ferdinand Marcos (1975)	Premier Zhao Ziyang (1981)
Corazon Aquino (1988)	Premier Li Peng (1990)
Fidel Ramos (1993)	President Jiang Zeming (1996)
Joseph Estrada (2000)	Premier Zhu Rongji (1999)
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo: 2001 (2x), 2004, 2006, 2007 (3x), 2008 (3x), 2009	President Hu Jintao (2005)
Benigno S. Aquino III (2011)	Premier Wen Jiabao (2007)

Source: Email interview with a Foreign Service Officer of DFA, 20 July 2012.

The increase in visits is paralleled by the rise in the number of economic agreements between the Philippines and China. Table 3 below lists such agreements.

TABLE 3: Agreements between the Philippines and China

PH President	Number of Agreements
Ferdinand Marcos	8
Corazon C. Aquino	3
Fidel V. Ramos	3
Joseph Estrada	6
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo	65

Source: abs-cbnNEWS.com/Newsbreak, 14 March 2008.

The agreements forged under President Arroyo covered areas such as agriculture, infrastructure cooperation, scientific and technical cooperation, maritime cooperation and others (Philippine Embassy in Beijing 2005). These closer bilateral economic ties were strategic moves that sought to reduce the Philippines' long and heavy dependence on the United States as its major export market (Magkilat 2002, B1). Indeed, as a reflection of the maturing economic relations of the two countries, China became the Philippines' third largest trading partner as well as the fastest growing market for Philippine exports such as electronics, minerals and agricultural products like banana (Dela Cruz 2008). And, according to data from the National Statistics Office and processed by the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion (BETP) of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), China was the Philippines' top 3rd, 5th and 4th trading partner between 2008 and 2010, settling as 3rd in 2011 and 2012. By 2012, exports to China amounted to US\$6.16 billion, which is 11.85 percent of total exports. Merchandise trade with China amounted to US\$12.822 billion with a share of 11.28 percent of total Philippine merchandise trade (DTI-BETP 2013).

Economic Development and Energy Independence, But at What Cost?

Although the JMSU is an attempt to help promote economic development and energy security in the Philippines, it was signed at a great cost to the country. The JMSU violates the Philippine Constitution and departs from established legal and government protocols. Under the JMSU, only the areas under dispute must be explored for oil. However, 80 percent of the exploration area lies within the Philippines' 200-nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). As such, it should fall under the provisions of the Philippine Constitution and Republic Act 387 (Petroleum Act of 1949). Section 2, Article 12 of the Philippine Constitution states that "all natural resources are owned by the State and therefore their exploration, development and utilization shall be under the full control and supervision of the State" (www.gov.ph). With the provisions of the JMSU, this article of the Constitution is clearly violated.

Also, according to the Petroleum Act of 1949, any agreement that the Philippines will sign with other countries regarding the use, extraction, exploration, and other similar and related activities must clearly state that at least sixty per centum of the capital is owned by [Filipino] citizens" (Article 31). The JMSU, however, violates this provision, which clearly states that all parties—China, Vietnam and the Philippines—must have equal rights, interests, and obligations. Thus, China, Vietnam, and the Philippines share equally not only the costs of the exploration but also the gains and benefits.

Third, despite its impact on Philippine national territory, the JMSU (the one Philippines-China signed in September 2004, and the other Philippines, China, and Vietnam signed in March 2005) was signed in secrecy. This very fact is a valid point of contention for the involved countries, especially for the Philippines. And it was only through some scholars and journalists like Barry Wain and other members of the media that the signed JMSU agreements were exposed. They revealed in the Philippine press that aside from the contested Spratlys Islands, some islands of Palawan

were covered by the agreement (Bondoc 2011, 153). Specifically, seven Philippine islands, without any territorial issues or contentions, were included in the coverage areas of the JMSU (Bondoc 2011, 250).

Fourth problem was the commercial nature of the JMSU; this meant that it was not subject to government scrutiny because of its confidentiality, which is allowed because of the stiff competition in the oil industry. That the JMSU was packaged as a commercial agreement, despite covering areas in territorial disputes and thus being an issue for the national government, already suggests a conspiracy among the parties involved to sidestep standard procedures. Indeed, as a commercial agreement, the JMSU was protected from accusations of violating the general provisions of the Petroleum Act of 1949: “the right to explore for, develop, exploit or utilize the petroleum resources may only be granted... under a contract of service executed for the Republic of the Philippines by the President and approved by the Congress of the Philippines” (Article 5). Indeed, some members of Congress and the Senate accused the Executive Branch of not asking the legislature to review and approve the JMSU agreement.

On a diplomatic front, the JMSU does not fall under “cooperative activities” allowed under two official documents from ASEAN: the *1992 ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea* and the *2002 Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea*. Both documents encourage the party or parties involved to “undertake” only these activities relating to: (a) marine environmental protection, (b) marine scientific research, (c) safety of navigation and communication at sea, (d) search and rescue operation, and (e) combating transnational crime, including but not limited to, trafficking in illicit drugs, piracy and armed robbery at sea, and illegal traffic in arms (2002 ASEAN Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea, 5–6). When it signed the JMSU with China, the Philippines violated the spirit of *2002 ASEAN Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties in the South China Sea*, which calls for “friendly consultations and negotiations” among all States concerned in the disputes; Manila dealt with China bilaterally, never taking the

multilateral route that would have entailed consulting with ASEAN. This is ironic since it must be remembered that the Philippines had called for a multilateral engagement in dealing with the South China Sea disputes calling all parties involved to be part of the dialogue in solving the disputes.

The JMSU: The Philippines' and China's Attempt to Resolve Tensions in the South China Sea

The Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking is also part of China and the Philippines' formal, official commitment to maintain good relations—political, economic, and diplomatic—amidst tensions between Manila and Beijing regarding the South China Sea. Indeed, the significance of the signing of the JMSU is better understood in light of Philippines-China relations vis-à-vis the South China Sea disputes, one of the major issues between some ASEAN members and China. A major challenge to the Philippines in dealing with territorial issues with China started in 1995, when China occupied Mischief Reef. This was seen as an encroachment of Philippine territory. Since then, the Philippine Navy has patrolled the South China Sea, and the Department of Foreign Affairs explained that the Navy has a mandate to maintain patrols in the area in order to protect and maintain the country's marine resources and its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) (Casanova and Carreon 2001). Even so, military reports attested to continued sightings of Chinese ships in the Spratly Island chain in the South China Sea alongside new markers on reefs not already occupied by rival claimants (Cabacungan and Burgonio 2003). Exercising some political will, the Philippines imposed a fishing ban in April 2001 in the disputed Scarborough Shoal, although this action of the Philippine government was welcomed by the Chinese government stating that the imposition of the fishing ban in the area is acceptable to Beijing since it would preserve the marine species in the area (Calica 2001).

At the start of President Arroyo's term, however, the government stressed that despite the tension with China over the South China Sea, the Philippine government is determined to maintain its good relations with

Beijing (De Leon 2001). Former spokesperson at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Vic Licaros, stressed that both countries give importance to maintaining their good relationship (Casanova and Carreon 2001). The president herself explicitly stated the Philippine interest in diplomatic and security engagement with China, stressing that her foreign policy towards Beijing will be based on respect and rationality. Indeed, her presidency saw an increased use of diplomacy with China to help solve the South China Sea dispute (Interview with a division head from the National Security Council [NSC], 10 July 2012; De Leon 2001). During the 103rd Foundation Day of the DFA, she desired a healthy, comprehensive, long-term relationship with China that goes beyond the different issues between the two countries. Furthermore, she pointed out that an important priority for the DFA is to secure agreements on maritime boundaries and that the government must intensify its efforts to promote peaceful resolution of territorial disputes (Arroyo 2001a). Noting the volatility of the world economy and security during that period, President Arroyo emphasized the need to consolidate “collective security and economic stability in the Pacific Rim in East Asia and in Southeast Asia” to which the Philippines should contribute. Similarly, she had claimed that

The areas of cooperation are already clear to every nation involved. From north to south, east to west, we are resolved to work more closely on border security cooperation, more active multilateral and bilateral exchanges of information intelligence and communication effective restraints on terrorist fund transfers, transportation, energy and health security, customs controls and generally ensuring a safe and stable environment for trade, investment, travel and tourism. (Arroyo 2001b)

The Philippines agreed to address the South China Sea issue in the spirit of cooperation and nonconfrontation (De Leon 2001). The Philippine government proposed the joint use of the disputed Mischief Reef in the Spratlys Islands by Filipino and Chinese fishermen and even of other nationalities (Calica 2001). Both countries vowed not to make any action

that might complicate the situation; instead, they promised to expand military dialogue and cooperation and other confidence-building mechanisms (ibid.). The Philippine government also stated that they are bent on multilateralizing the issue by adopting a Code of Conduct in the South China Sea by ASEAN and its dialogue partners (De Leon 2001).

The desire to resolve the disputes peacefully takes off from ASEAN initiatives regarding the issue. The Foreign Ministers of ASEAN had adopted the *1992 ASEAN Declaration on the South China Sea* (aseansec.org, 1). The declaration stressed that all parties desired peace and stability in the South China Sea and that any development leading to tensions in the area must be treated with restraint (aseansec.org, 1). In November 2002, during the 8th ASEAN Summit in Cambodia, all ASEAN member countries and China joined in the signing of the declaration on the Code of Conduct on the South China Sea (*Manila Bulletin* 2002). This initiative of the Philippines received credit and praise from ASEAN and China, pointing that this is a major breakthrough in resolving the battle of sovereign claims in the disputed territories in the South China Sea (Kabilig 2002).

China echoed the Philippines' intention to resolve the disputes without conflict. President Hu Jintao, during his 2005 visit to the Philippines, said that China and the Philippines pledged that the two countries would turn the South China Sea into an "area of cooperation" in order to achieve development (Calica 2005). China's Defense Minister Chi Haotian assured in September 2002, when he travelled to the Philippines, that both countries would promote "peaceful consultations and negotiations" in dealing with the territorial disputes in the South China Sea; he highlighted the fact that the two countries had no history of war against each other (*Philippine Daily Inquirer* 2002). In addition, Philippine Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes pointed out China's willingness to take part in drafting a regional code of conduct for all claimant countries aiming to reduce the tension in the South China Sea (ibid.).

Conclusion

This study has shown how the signing of the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking (JMSU) exemplified Chinese foreign policy vis-à-vis Southeast Asia and coincided with the rise of Chinese economic assistance to the Philippines. The paper also set the JMSU in the context of Philippine foreign policy vis-à-vis China under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, even if its signing violated the Constitution, departed from government protocols, and ran contrary to ASEAN agreements. Yet it is also interesting to move from this purely conjunctural analysis and hypothesize instead a direct causal link between China's increasing economic assistance to the Philippines and Beijing's drive to promote its security interests in the South China Sea, specifically through the signing of the JMSU.

Several studies posit such a general link between economics and security. Economic policies and agreements like the JMSU serve a country's national objectives. For instance, Davis (2008) explores the economic and security bargaining in the Anglo-Japanese alliance, in which Britain then recognized Japan as a good security ally in the Far East because of its increasing naval power and ability to preserve stability in the region in the early 1900s (173). Britain accordingly developed foreign policies that would contribute to Japanese economic gains (175). In this way, London's overseas policies dovetailed with those of Tokyo. Davis also argues that "security interests motivate states to offer side payments to an ally" and that the capacity of a state to offer "economic side payments" to another state has direct importance for international security (153). Similarly, liberal theorists hypothesize about the use of economic tools to achieve one's national interests, particularly on security cooperation. Specifically, they "contend that common interests from interdependence raise the costs of conflict" (Polacheck, S.W., 1980 as cited in Davis 2008). An article entitled *The Link between Economics, Stability and Security in a Transforming Economy* (Zukrowska 1999, 269) observed the differences on how the links between economics, stability and security are being defined over the course of world events. It highlighted the fact that the security of a state

depends on the condition of its economy (270). Moreover, it stressed that the link between economics and security are more obvious in the case of democratic states that rarely engaged in war (272). Zukrowska (1999, 282) concluded that the new security in the world today is evolving based on interdependence and cooperation in which economic force leads to the attainment of security. Lastly, Hirschman (1980) and Baldwin (1985) as cited in Kahler (2006, 23) stressed the importance of economic instruments as an essential part of a state's toolkit in influencing other states and their policies. Following these lines of thought, It can be surmised that China's ODA is an economic strategy used to influence the Philippines. Long and Leeds (2006, 2), in their article *Trading for Security: Military Alliances and Economic Agreements*, argued that economic and security agreements positively affect each other, judging from the corresponding relationship between alliances and trade particularly among European states before World War II.

Given these theoretical perspectives, it is plausible to suggest that China assisted the economic development of the Philippines in order to enhance its security standing in the South China Sea, specifically through the Joint Marine Seismic Undertaking. Naturally, it still does not follow from these studies that Chinese economic development assistance to the Philippines is an example of Davis' notion of "side payments," but the idea—that China strategically leveraged the economic development of the Philippines to influence Manila's cooperating and agreeing with China in the JMSU—is lent credence by a Foreign Service Officer (FSO). In an email interview, the FSO said that China's ODA to the Philippines was not given out of goodwill but is created for political influence which China needed to advance its interests over the Philippines (Email interview with a Foreign Service Officer at DFA, 20 July 2012). Similarly, it is instructive that during the signing of the Northrail Project a few days after the JMSU was finalized, an embassy official was even reported to have said that "No JMSU, no Northrail" (Drilon in the interview at the Correspondence, March 2008 episode). Indeed, that there were strings attached to the JMSU can be hypothesized in the fact that the Northrail Project served as the

gateway of China's ODA to the Philippines; indeed, the Northrail Project was followed by other new assistance programs such Projects I and II of Non-Intrusive Container Inspection System, Agno River Integrated Irrigation Project, and Angat Water Utilization and Aqueduct Improvement Project Phase II. These few comments, along with the conjunction of Chinese economic aid and the signing of the JMSU, suggest a direct causal link between Chinese ODA and Beijing's security interests, one that can be established in separate, further study.

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Commentaries

Turning the Page: Re-examining Standards in Academic Journal Publication

Asian Studies Editorial Staff

ASIAN STUDIES: JOURNAL of Critical Perspectives on Asia, the journal published by the Asian Center, University of the Philippines Diliman, held a roundtable, **Turning the Page: Re-examining Standards in Academic Journal Publication** last 10 February 2014 at the GT-Toyota Asian Center Auditorium, Asian Center, University of the Philippines Diliman.

Fifty editors and staff members of journals based in universities and higher education institutions in Manila, Tarlac, Cebu, Baguio, Zamboanga, and Cagayan de Oro took part in the roundtable to discuss the following:

- Current state of journal publishing in the Philippines;
- Nature of trends, problems, and challenges of journal publishing;
- The relevance of mainstream standards of scholarship, e.g., citation indices;
- The role of English as the dominant medium of scholarship;
- The place of local and regional languages in academic publications and the issue of translations;
- Online publishing: advantages and pitfalls;
- Possible avenues for alternative standards of scholarship; and
- Strategies for cooperation and joint action.

The roundtable was held in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of *Asian Studies*, which came out with its maiden issue in November 1963. But more importantly, it was held in light of certain issues that have surfaced in academic journal publishing in the Philippines and in Asia, as a whole. Questions have been raised about the hegemony of Western standards of scholarship that are perceived to have marginalized the intellectual traditions of various Asian peoples and societies. These traditions may not be ‘scholarly rigorous’ in terms of mainstream academia, but have been nonetheless instrumental in the rise of great Asian civilizations and are seen to still possess contemporary value.

These traditions are also repositories of the multiple experiences of local communities over several millennia and can point to possible redefinitions of academic scholarship. The revival of the famous 5th-century center of learning, Nalanda University in Bihar, India, is a case in point. Its philosophy “seeks to recover the lost connections and partnerships that existed in the region called Asia, before the onset of historical forces that led to their dissolution” (Nalanda University, n.d.) and whose vision is “to harness the best talents for the creation and dissemination of new knowledge as well as for the recovery and restoration of valuable old insights which have suffered unintended neglect” (Nalanda University, n.d.).

The roundtable featured several speakers that shared their respective experiences and thoughts on journal publishing. Dr. Ramon Guillermo, Associate Professor at the Department of Filipino and Philippine Literature, drew on Jacques Ranciere’s distinction between police and politics, and explained how the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) citation system determines what are “visible” and “invisible” in the world of scholarship; it determines what counts and doesn’t as a publication from the perspective of academics.

Dr. Guillermo also discussed how ISI has penetrated and determined policies in the University of the Philippines (UP). He began with the establishment of the International Publication Award for UP faculty, under which those who publish in ISI-certified journals will receive at least PhP

50,000 (just over USD 1,000) per article. This is and has been a disincentive among faculty to publish in non-ISI Philippine journals, for which there is no “comparable reward.”

Moreover, the question of tenure, promotion, and performance bonuses among faculty has been hinged on getting published in ISI journals, a scenario that has sidelined and devalued the publication of books. ISI does not keep track of book publications, however much cited and bought, and thus play a subsidiary role to international journal articles, which help accrue more points for promotion. Not only have books been devalued, but the vocation of teaching itself—including inspiring students—has been sidelined, becoming a mere “plus factor” to research and publications. Another instance of the dominance of the ISI paradigm, as it were, is found in Dr. Guillermo’s debate with a fellow professor, who said that the administration of the university should fall on ISI-published faculty. In response, Dr. Guillermo said that an excellent publication record does not necessarily translate into superb administrative skills, among others.

The bulk of Guillermo’s lecture focused on the impact of ISI on Philippine languages and its relation to the scholarship of Filipino academics in the country. Indeed, 94.5 percent of articles in Thomson Reuters Social Science Index from 1998 to 2007 were all published in English. As such, ISI’s adoption of English has had a marginalizing effect on research produced in Filipino and other Philippine languages. Because most ISI journals are in English, this forces academics to write in the language, much to the detriment of, say, German, French, or in this case, Filipino. Eugene Garfield, Guillermo noted, writes and calls for dominance of English as a language of scholarship, calling it an “evolutionary process.”

Dr. Guillermo concluded his talk by sketching possible alternatives, including the adoption of a National Citation Index, like the Thai Citation Index (TCI). The TCI is a citation of research published in Thai and functions, in Guillermo’s words, as a “kind of alternative and also a kind of critique of the ISI system.” While publishing in Thai has decreased Thai scholars’ citations abroad, it has raised national visibility, as more

people are reading Thai research articles. Moreover, a national database like the TCI has resulted in the rise of publications from ASEAN researchers, whose output “appear to be much greater than those of other regions.” The lesson Guillermo drew on the TCI is that “research performance evaluations should take national databases into account in parallel” to that of international databases.

Guillermo also believed that we should “encourage in Asia and Southeast Asia polyglot” science, whereby we do not allow a single language to dominate in our discourse.” He agreed that journals should be internet-based and be open-access, which raises readability, if not citation rate; and that countries should push for a national citation index like that of TCI, which would pave the way for a regional database of journals for, say, ASEAN. This would help Filipino scholars relate to their ASEAN counterparts, and contribute to building an ASEAN identity, whatever that may be.

The second speaker, Dr. Albert Alejo, was editor in chief of *Asia Mindanaw*, a journal based in Ateneo de Zamboanga University. He began by saying that “the critique of the so-called Manila-dominated academic journal editing and publishing is itself a Manila-based, -sponsored, -solicited, and -subsidized intellectual project.” It was with this premise that he summed up the experience of Mindanao journals, critiqued Manila-centric scholarship, and posed alternatives.

Alejo interrogated the discourse of the “national” in the Philippines, citing its inadequacies and how Mindanao has been “misrepresented, underrepresented, or not represented at all in Philippines.” This he did by showing how national symbols do not account for the experiences of Muslims or how textbooks stereotype or demonize the people of Mindanao. Alejo noted that this kind of scholarship is reflective of the marginalization of Mindanao in the economic and intellectual life of the Philippines. He then proceeded to give an overview of the roles and functions of Mindanao-based journals, that of academists, activists, and archivists.

As a platform for academists, these journals publish abstracts of recent M.A. and Ph.D. theses or dissertations, most of which are written in academic English. Many are printed once a year and are multidisciplinary, blending articles on social sciences and humanities with those of the hard, biological sciences. Like many journals in the Philippines, Mindanao-based journals have low budgets and employ only part-time editors and staff.

Alejo describes the functions of these Mindanao-based journals. First, many of their editors are also activists in practice; they often publish issues that are current and of vital importance to Mindanao or to their local communities. The key consideration is less on citations and peer reviews than on practical component: can the articles, for instance, help in the peace talks and peace education? These matters should also be considered when assessing journals, which should not be evaluated on the basis of citations alone.

Lastly, journals in Mindanao often function as archivists; they serve as “custodians of documents;” publish speeches of University presidents and peace agreements; preserve institutional memory and history; and reprint relevant historical documents as far back as the American or even Spanish period which are deemed important in understanding contemporary issues.” Some of these documents are not scholarly in the traditional sense, but they do fulfill a vital social and political function.

Alejo called on the need to theorize on these three concerns, and not just focus on “the philosophical and epistemological foundations of academic publishing.” The latter, though a critique of Western scholarship, only ends up proving “that we can enter that kind of Western academic discussion.”

Dr. Aileen Baviera and Sascha Gallardo, editor in chief and managing editor, respectively, of *Asian Politics and Policy*, published by Wiley-Blackwell, narrated, among other things, the experiences and concerns involved in running an international publication. Gallardo outlined the workflow of the journal and discussed the software that APP uses in

managing content and ensuring that manuscripts do not have plagiarized content. Dr. Baviera pointed out the following concerns of editors, which those in the Philippines also share: (1) turn-around time for manuscript reviews; (2) number of reviewers; (3) qualifications of the reviewers; (4) difficulty of looking for reviewers; (5) standards of a good peer review; (6) need to reconcile contradictory reviews; (7) diplomacy in handling harsh, offensive comments from the reviewers; and the (7) extent of revisions needed.

The concerns of authors are (1) length of the review process; (2) need to respond to reviews that say “data is too old or insufficient” or the methodology is wrong; (3) pressure to cite specific authors; and (4) ideological and epistemological differences between authors and reviewers.

Last are the concerns of reviewers: (1) appropriate choice of reviewer; (2) length of paper and time to review; (3) bad writing; (4) need for constant reminders; and (5) encountering articles that plagiarize the reviewers themselves.

Later in the roundtable, the open forum and breakout sessions yielded a variety of perspectives, thoughts, and concerns of the participants. They reiterated the points raised, qualified views, posed solutions to specific problems, and/or offered more nuanced arguments. Three major proposals were generated by the participants:

1. To formally establish a guild of editors of Philippine journals in the social sciences and humanities. A suggestion was later made to include science journals as well. This guild would be the organizational venue for implementing the proposals and suggestions made in the roundtable.
2. To continue the development of a National Citation Index, already been introduced by the Commission on Higher Education and Ateneo de Naga University. The Index can help facilitate the exchange of knowledge among scholars in and of the Philippines.

3. To hold regular seminars and academic writing workshops, which would help strengthen the culture of research and publication in the Philippines.

In support of the above proposals, as well as to address other issues, the following views and opinions were expressed during the open forum and breakout sessions:

- Among others, the common problems encountered by editors throughout the journal publication process are: lack of quality submissions; the preference of senior scholars to publish abroad; poor quality of reviews, including harsh assessments and lack of constructive criticisms; delays in publication; and problems on the distribution and circulation of the journal.
- All these compound to the fact that many faculty in Philippine universities have multiple teaching and administrative responsibilities, giving them less time to do research. As one editor pointed out, he was more productive in writing research during his retirement than when he was in the academe.
- To address these concerns and strengthen the culture of research in the Philippines, some editors suggested the following: give faculty less teaching loads so they can devote more time to research; institute regular writing workshops that will encourage new scholars; and teach scholars how to handle rejections, and to give and receive constructive criticisms. Both can help create a collegial atmosphere among and between faculty members.
- There is also a need to be more aggressive and proactive in soliciting manuscripts; adding incentives to authors and reviewers to finish on time; giving adequate

time for book reviews, commentaries, and literary outputs; sharing reviewers among journals; outsourcing technical editors; and boosting the connection between editors and reviewers to help improve the quality of an article.

- One academic spoke of “ISI fundamentalism,” in which promotion can be obtained only if one is published in ISI-journals. ISI cannot be dismissed wholesale, however, since Filipino scholars still need to engage with the rest of the academic world. Another described how incentives for publishing in ISI-journals have contributed to a marginalization of publication in non-English languages. Still, another commented that citations in ISI- journals do not necessarily reflect the overall quality of a journal. The Impact Factor can be deceiving, since in some cases, a high rating was only due to a specific article being cited.
- Despite the dominance, as it were, of ISI, one former editor remarked that there really was a huge difference in overall quality between ISI and non-ISI journals. At the same time, however, he added that engaging in global standards need not mean being uncritically subjected to Western standards; getting peer-reviewers from Asia can help balance Western-oriented perspectives. Some editors expressed concern over how scholastic standards can be maintained as Filipino academics pursue alternatives and complements to ISI.
- All the same, many of the editors expressed the need to correct ISI-fundamentalism or at least provide more balanced metrics. “Reward those who are published in ISI but do not penalize those who are not,” is one sentiment among editors. Also, one of them spoke of the need to “democratize the social scientific and

humanities research so that more universities will have more access to it.” Some wanted to continually publish in non-English languages (or in any language one is comfortable with) while providing abstracts in English. And one editor mentioned that publishing in Filipino does not preclude having a global, international audience, since, as another pointed out, visitors to their journal’s website came from outside the Philippines.

- Even as they were open to the idea of a National Citation Index, the editors expressed several concerns. A National Citation Index can be used and abused, and can reproduce yet another hierarchy within the Philippine academic community; after all, how does one choose which ones are included in the index? Plus, citation can be abused in so far as one can increase the citation of a journal simply because one knows the editor or the author of an article. As one editor puts it, “citation is a game that Western academics have mastered.”
- The creation of such an Index should be paralleled with institutional responses from universities and related institutions. Specifically, one of the key issues raised is to strengthen the research culture in the Philippines and to find alternatives, if not supplementary ways of doing research, while maintaining high standards and building supportive research-conducive mechanisms. For instance, not everybody in universities does research and publishes accordingly, and more students take up the non-thesis tracks for their master’s degrees, thereby diminishing research outputs. Plus, there is an apparent “contradiction between the objectives of research and publication: on the one hand, writing what is significant to the researcher or the institution; on the other hand,

aiming and guiding towards an ISI or at least to a high-standard publication.” It has also been observed that many scholars do not adopt ‘publishable’ outputs.

- One of the suggestions to overcome all these is to use graduate school as a training ground for researchers; to standardize/nationalize research outputs that are already publishable; to explore and legitimize other forms of research, not just theses, journal articles, and the like.
- Side by side with the question of alternative forms and standards of scholarship is the issue of what counts as academic knowledge and what quality scholarship means. This dovetails with the interrogation of citations. What do citations actually prove? As one editor puts it, Impact Factor, which is based on citations, is not necessarily indicative of a journal’s quality. Another suggested the need to take into account the relevance of journal to its immediate environment.
- One is reminded of Albert Alejo’s description of Mindanao journals earlier in the day. He had shown how journals in the region discuss “common, considered urgent local issues such as conflict, development, gender issues.” This kind of involvement in social issues needs to be also taken into account when discussing the nature of academic knowledge and quality scholarship.
- Similarly, another editor raised the question of scholarship being communicated, citing, for instance, that publishing in Filipino won’t necessarily mean it’s useful. Publishing alone is not enough; what is essential are different skills and techniques to facilitate communication.
- The question of open access was also brought up. Many

editors were in principle open to the idea, but they expressed concern about how it will impact the financing of journal publication, about how journals will keep track of its readers, and about how it will increase citations for non-ISI journals, and what such an increase would mean for Impact Factor.

The February 10, 2014 gathering of Philippine journal editors and publishers was the first of its kind in the country and highlighted the issues that have long challenged academic publishing in non-Western societies. It will hopefully be followed by similar events that will, in the end, chart a new beginning and a restructuring of intellectual norms and practices suited to Asian societies and peoples.

Appendix: List of participants and affiliated journals/ publications

1. Filomeno Aguilar, Jr., Editor in Chief, *Philippine Studies*, Ateneo de Manila University
2. Erlinda Alburo, Editorial Board Member, *Journal of History*, Philippine National Historical Society
3. Albert Alejo, S.J., Editor, *Asia Mindanaw*, Ateneo de Zamboanga University
4. Sherlyn Almonte-Acosta, Editor, *Education Quarterly*, UP Diliman
5. Joel Ariate, Managing Editor, *Kasarinlan*, Third World Studies Center, UP Diliman
6. Maria Ela Atienza, Editor, *Philippine Political Science Journal*, Philippine Political Science Association
7. Nelia Balgoa, *Mindanao Forum*, Mindanao State University-IIT
8. Aileen Baviera, Editor in Chief, *Asian Politics and Policy*, Wiley-Blackwell

9. Anne-di Berdin, *Philippine Journal of Social Development*, College of Social Work and Development, UP Diliman
10. Karina Bolasco, Director, Anvil Publishing
11. Marya Svetlana Camacho, Editor, *Manila Studies*, Manila Studies Association
12. Alejandro Ciencia, *The Cordillera Review*, Cordillera Studies Center, UP Baguio
13. Lisandro Claudio, Editor in Chief, *Social Transformations*, Ateneo de Manila University
14. Golda Crisostomo, Editor in Chief, *Luz y Saber*, Colegio de San Juan de Letran
15. Lino Dizon, Editor in Chief, *Alaya*, Center for Kapampangan Studies, Holy Angel University
16. Divine Endriga, Editor, *Synergeia*, University of Asia and the Pacific
17. Jayson Fajardo, Editorial Associate, *Philippine Journal of Public Administration*, NCPAG, UP Diliman
18. Sascha Gallardo, Managing Editor, *Asian Politics and Policy*, Wiley-Blackwell
19. Jose Neil Garcia, Director, University of the Philippines Press
20. Eulalio Guieb III, Editor in Chief, *Social Science Diliman*, UP Diliman
21. Ramon Guillermo, Associate Professor, Department of Filipino and Philippine Literature, UP Diliman
22. Ronel Jimenez, Managing Editor, *Antorcha*, Colegio de San Juan de Letran
23. Ricardo Jose, Editor, *Kasarinlan*, Third World Studies Center, UP Diliman
24. Romeo Lee, Editor in Chief, *Asia Pacific Social Science Review*, De La Salle University Manila

25. Rowell Madula, Managing Editor, *Malay*, De La Salle University Manila
26. Armando Malay, Jr., Editorial Advisory Board Member, *Asian Studies*, UP Diliman
27. Eric Julian Manalastas, Editor in Chief, *Review of Women's Studies*, Center for Women's Studies, UP Diliman
28. Mayel Martin, *Kritika Kultura*, Ateneo de Manila University
29. Katrina Navallo, Editorial Associate, *Asian Studies*, UP Diliman
30. Janus Isaac Nolasco, Managing Editor, *Asian Studies*, UP Diliman
31. Erlinda Paez, Editor, *Synergeia*, University of Asia and the Pacific
32. Robert Panaguiton, *Asia Mindanaw*, Ateneo de Zamboanga University
33. Raul Pertierra, Editor, *Sabangan*, Philippine Women's University Manila
34. Antoinette Raquiza, Editorial Board Member, *Asian Studies*, UP Diliman
35. Antonio Reynes, *Philippine Law Journal*, UP Diliman
36. Temario Rivera, Former editor, *Philippine Political Science Journal*, Philippine Political Science Association
37. Sandra Roldan, *Journal of English and Comparative Literature*, UP Diliman
38. Josefina Rolle, *Philippine Journal of Social Development*, College of Social Work and Development, UP Diliman
39. Hope Sabanpan-Yu, Associate Editor, *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society*, Cebuano Studies Center, University of San Carlos

40. Ramon Santos, Editor in Chief, *Musika Journal*, UP Diliman
41. Vincenz Serrano, *Kritika Kultura*, Ateneo de Manila University
42. Eduardo Tadem, Editor in Chief, *Asian Studies*, UP Diliman
43. Teresa Encarnacion Tadem, Editorial Board Member, *Asian Studies*, UP Diliman
44. Jean Tan, Editor in Chief, *Budhi*, Ateneo de Manila University
45. Giovanni Tapang, Editor in Chief, *Diliman Review*, UP Diliman
46. Rosario Torres Yu, Editor in Chief, *Daluyan*, Sentro ng Wikang Filipino, UP Diliman
47. Margaret Udarbe-Alvarez, Editor in Chief, *Silliman University Journal*, Silliman University, Dumaguete
48. Charlie Veric, *Kritika Kultura*, Ateneo de Manila University
49. Olivia Villafuerte, *Sabangan*, Philippine Women's University Manila
50. Michiyo Yoneno-Reyes, Review Editor, *Asian Studies*, UP Diliman

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Hudud: Is UMNO goading PAS?¹

Francis LOH Kok Wah

THE KELANTAN STATE ASSEMBLY passed the Kelantan *Syariah* Criminal Bill (II) to introduce *hudud*² law in the state of Kelantan on 25 November 1993. This Bill was passed unanimously by all 36 State Assembly members, including two from the Barisan Nasional (BN). That was more than 20 years ago.

But the law could not be implemented because it required an amendment to the Federal Constitution. For under Schedule Nine of the Constitution, “civil and criminal law and procedure, and the administration of justice”—except in the case of “Islamic personal law relating to marriage, divorce, guardianship, maintenance, adoption, legitimacy, family law...” etc.—falls under the purview of the federal, not the state government.

Back then, Parliament, which was dominated by United Malays National Organization-Barisan Nasional (UMNO-BN), was not in favor of amending the Federal Constitution to facilitate the implementation of hudud laws by the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) government in Kelantan. So the PAS government did not try to introduce a private member’s bill in Parliament then.

Admittedly, after its improved performance in the 1999 general elections, PAS tried to implement hudud laws in the states of Kelantan and Terengganu, which had fallen under its control following the elections. This attempt led to divisions within the Barisan Alternatif (BA) coalition and ultimately to the withdrawal of one of its partners, the Democratic Action Party (DAP) from the BA. Perhaps drawing from this experience, PAS hesitated to push for hudud laws in the intervening years, until now.

Unconstitutional and discriminatory

However then, like now, much public debate occurred that resulted in acrimony over the matter. For the late Karpal Singh, the matter of introducing hudud law should not have arisen in the first place because Malaysia is a secular state. For Karpal, the Federal Court had ruled in 1988 (*Public Prosecutor v. Che Omar Che Soh, with Tun Salleh Abbas presiding*) that Malaysia operated on the basis of secular laws. Introducing hudud laws contradicted the present constitution. Accordingly, the implementation of hudud laws required rewriting the entire constitution. Karpal reiterated this stance in an interview—apparently his last—with his party’s organ, *The Rocket*, just before his untimely death.

Sisters in Islam (SIS) and other women’s groups, then and now, have argued that the implementation of the Kelantan Syariah Code, as proposed by the PAS government, infringes upon Article 8(1) of the Constitution, which declares that: “All persons are equal before the law and entitled to the equal protection of the law”. Furthermore, Article 8(2) provides that “there shall be no discrimination against citizens on the grounds of religion, race, place of birth or gender in any law...” The presumption of *zina* (illicit sex) in the case of a woman, who cannot find four male witnesses to back her allegation of rape, is just one example which highlights how women can be discriminated against under the proposed Code. This certainly goes against the principle of justice that Islam (as in other revealed religions) categorically champions.

Medical practitioners have also been dragged into the debate this time. In response to the comments made by Kelantan state authorities that surgeons would be responsible for amputating limbs as required once hudud is implemented, the Malaysian Medical Association (MMA) has unequivocally voiced its opposition to surgeons getting involved in the matter, stating that it goes against the Hippocratic Oath to which all doctors subscribe. The MMA’s position has been supported by Dr Ahmad Farouk, a surgeon and leader of the Islamic Renaissance Front. But groups like the Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia (IMAM) and Ikram Health have come out to state that it is the duty of Muslim doctors to facilitate the implementation of hudud.

Non-Muslims also affected

The implementation of hudud law—we have been told by its supporters—will not apply to non-Muslims. That might be so, theoretically speaking. In fact, however, there's no doubt that the implementation of hudud laws will also impact upon the lives of non-Muslims, who comprise about 38 per cent of the population, on several grounds.

What happens if both Muslim and non-Muslims are involved in a crime, say zina? Where will such a case be heard—in the civil or the sharia court? Will hudud law or civil law apply? Or two separate courts—which might result in two different court rulings and punishments? What kind of justice is this? Wouldn't this go against the principle of equality before the law as enshrined under Article 8 of our Constitution?

And suppose it is decided that a crime is to be heard in the sharia court and there are non-Muslim witnesses to the crime. Will non-Muslim witnesses be able to testify on behalf of a rape victim? What would be the weight of the evidence presented by a non-Muslim witness? A male one? A female one?

Recent well-publicized controversies in the past decade over various personal and family matters involving Muslims and non-Muslims have not given confidence to non-Muslims that their lives will not be affected by the implementation of hudud laws either.

The break-up of couples originally married according to civil law, as a result of one spouse's conversion to Islam, which has sometimes resulted in the conversion of minors to Islam without the knowledge and permission of the other spouse, comes to mind. For instance, the recent dispute between S. Deepa, a Hindu, and Izwan Abdullah, the husband who converted, over the custody of their children and the forced abduction of one of them, on the basis of two differing court orders, resulted in the police refusing to act against one or another party. And there have been cases of Muslim authorities carrying out 'body snatching' of deceased persons, who when alive had reportedly converted to Islam without informing their families.

Regrettably, these incidents have caused the sense of religious suppression on the part of non-Muslims. For this reason, non-Muslims believe that the implementation of hudud law, like the increasingly frequent controversies mentioned above, will have spillover effects on non-Muslims too.

It follows that any state government or any party that intends to introduce hudud law is morally bound to engage all Malaysians—Muslims and non-Muslims alike—in public discourse and dialogue to convince them of the merits of hudud laws in a multicultural, multireligious society like ours. As well, we need to be informed whether and to what extent the implementation of hudud in countries, like Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sudan, or in the special region of Aceh in Indonesia and the 12 Sharia states of Nigeria, have stopped crime in those places. After all, isn't this the goal of implementing hudud?

In the event, hudud is only a small part of the Sharia; so why are local ulama putting heavy emphasis into implementing the hudud?

Why now?

Back to our original question: why, therefore, is PAS pushing for the introduction of two private members' bills in the Dewan Rakyat to implement hudud laws in Kelantan in 2014, over 20 years later?

In this regard, it is significant that such a major amendment to our Constitution is being facilitated by a private member's bill in Parliament. Who remembers the last time UMNO-BN, which still commands a simple majority in Parliament, and the Speaker nominated by UMNO-BN allowed the opposition to introduce a private member's bill?

As far as we can recall, the UMNO-BN majority and its nominated Speaker have always dismissed previous attempts by any opposition member of parliament to introduce a private member's bill. Why, therefore, is UMNO-BN acting otherwise now?

This is why we must look beyond the rhetoric and the semantics of the proposed bills themselves. The answer is in politics! Of Old Politics v. New Politics! UMNO, steeped in ethnic-based exclusivist Old Politics, is goading PAS to jettison the Pakatan Rakyat's New Politics, as contained in its *Buku Jingga*,³ so as to become more exclusivist and ethnoreligious, like UMNO itself! We must be clear about this!

New Politics has resulted in the virtual demise of the BN coalition, which performed poorly in the 2013 general elections. The BN polled fewer votes than the PR Opposition in Malaysia's 13th General Elections (GE13) and had to depend on its fractious BN partners in Sabah and Sarawak to win a majority of seats in Parliament. There is really no BN anymore, only UMNO.

The writing was already on the wall with the arrival of Reformasi in 1998. So when Tun Abdullah Badawi took over as prime minister he introduced various reforms within UMNO-BN, as well as within his government. 'Work with me, not for me!' Time to change the 'software' instead of focusing on the 'hardware' of development like his predecessor did. Some of his predecessor's mega projects, which were benefiting certain cronies were set aside. Remember the 'crooked bridge' that was scrapped?

Abdullah also launched the Royal Commission of Inquiry to look into the workings of the Royal Malaysian Police. He called upon the civil service to serve the rakyat better and government departments to be more transparent. He launched several parliamentary select committees which went around the country to listen to feedback from the rakyat, prior to presenting the new laws concerned in Parliament. The media were also allowed to be more critical without threat of closure. And in contrast to his predecessor's arbitrary proclamation of Malaysia as a Muslim country, Abdullah launched his notion of Islam Hadhari.

Before you knew it, Abdullah was out! He was accused of being manipulated by a group of Oxford boys located on the "5th floor" of the PM's Department in Putrajaya, of favoring his own cronies, and of being weak. Thrown out with Abdullah were the attempts to reform UMNO, to

make it more inclusive minded, more CAT-like (competent, accountable and transparent), as the opposition was attempting to be in Penang and Selangor.

Seen from this perspective, the results of GE13—declining performances of the BN, slight advances by the opposition PR but not enough to allow it to displace the UMNO-BN once and for all—was not unexpected; a stalemate of sorts resulted, stuck between Old Politics and New Politics.

UMNO re-strategizes: back to Old Politics⁴

Faced with the possibility that it would suffer even more losses in the next general election, UMNO began to re-strategize. Having rejected Abdullah's reformist option, the only remaining option was to dig deeper into exclusivist ethno-religious Old Politics, some would even say to resort to reactionary fascist politics.

The party began to target the removal of PR leaders, viz, Anwar Ibrahim was once again taken to the courts, the late Karpal Singh was found guilty of sedition; Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad was charged again under the Peaceful Assemblies Act (though the courts have since acquitted him); Teresa Kok has been charged with sedition; Sosma has been used to detain an activist, etc.

Perhaps less obvious, UMNO's new political strategy called for the breaking up of the opposition Pakatan Rakyat (PR). More than this, it calls for the breaking up of PAS too. As is well known, PAS had succeeded in attracting a younger generation of Muslim leaders, mostly professionals, who have been called 'the Erdogans', in reference to the Islamic prime minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan (until recently, considered a moderate and reformist-minded). PAS was not monolithic; it was not simply dominated by ulama-types. There were progressive Muslims in PAS, who believed in New Politics and looked far beyond hudud.

In the run-up to the GE13, these Erdogans in PAS had pushed for the realization of the Islamic welfare state (rather than the Islamic state

per se as desired by the more conservative ulama in the party's Dewan Ulama). The Pakatan Rakyat's joint programme Buku Jingga had no mention of an Islamic state, nor of hudud. Apart from calling for greater justice, freedom, equality for all, the joint programme called for the promotion of Islamic values in various walks of life, a position that was acceptable because Islamic values, like ushering in a just government, caring for the poor and needy, justice, fighting corruption including in high places and compassion for all, are all universal values that people of other faiths also share.

In fact, egged on from within by the Erdogans and from without by their PR partners, party leaders had taken the public stance that non-Muslims could use the *kalimah* Allah provided they did not misuse and abuse the term.

Put another way, both the PR, and PAS itself, had to be broken up in order for UMNO to recover its electoral losses. And how else to break these two than by pushing for a more exclusivist political agenda based on Ketuanan Melayu on the one hand, and for a more Islamic state on the other!

Indeed, this was already part of UMNO's strategy in GE13 but perhaps not so evident because UMNO was also trying to proclaim Malaysia as a moderate country to the global community and as 1Malaysia to the non-Malays within Malaysia. Now that the elections are over, the more liberal wing within UMNO has allowed the more reactionary wing to set aside all pretenses of being moderate and to sideline attempts at creating a more inclusive 1Malaysia nation.

It was in this regard that Datuk Seri Jamil Khir Baharom, the minister in the prime minister's department, announced on 8 November 2013 that the attorney general's chambers had given the green light to amend the existing "356" maximum penalty under the Akta Mahkamah Syariah (Bidang Kuasa Jenayah) (Pindaan) 1984, to enhance the punishment for crimes against Islam. Under existing provisions, the hukum was limited to three years imprisonment, a RM5,000 fine and/or six strokes of the cane (Utusan Malaysia, 8 November 2013).

Subsequently, Tan Sri Annuar Musa, the member of parliament for Kerteh, and former UMNO Kelantan chief, declared that he would campaign for his UMNO colleagues to support PAS if it introduces a bill in Parliament to implement hudud law in Kelantan.

In response, PAS deputy president Mohd Sabu warned his PAS colleagues not to be persuaded by UMNO's baiting and to continue working with its PR partners, for PAS' biggest victories had come as a result of co-operation among the Opposition (Malaysiakini, 21 Nov 2013).

More recently, deputy prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin visited Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat, the Mursyidil Am PAS (or spiritual leader of PAS) and proposed the setting up of a special technical committee between the federal (UMNO) and state authorities to discuss in depth the implementation of hudud laws. YADIM (Yayasan Dakwah Islamiah Malaysia) chief Datuk Dr Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki, also a member of UMNO's supreme council, also visited Nik Aziz. The Dewan Ulama Pas Kelantan welcomed these visits and supported Muhyiddin's call to "duduk semeja"⁵⁵ over the issue.

More than that, Perkasa, which has received funds from UMNO and other so-called Islamic groups like Martabat Jalinan Muhibbah Malaysia (MJMM) have been goading PAS on in this endeavor. Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali and secretary-general Syed Hassan Syed Ali, for instance, have challenged PAS to stop its *sandiwara* (play acting), to push for hudud seriously and to break with its PR partners, who reject hudud laws (Utusan Malaysia 9, 12 and 29 April 2014).

Meanwhile, UMNO's mouthpiece, Utusan Malaysia, has been carrying articles daily, by UMNO and PAS leaders, and Muslim NGOs of all hues and colors, in praise of PAS leader Datuk Abdul Hadi Awang and in support of PAS' proposed hudud bills. Those individuals and groups pronouncing that all Muslims are duty bound to support (*wajib sokong*) the bills have been highlighted. Naturally, DAP leaders and a few PKR ones have been consistently condemned, daily.

No doubt, the entire campaign is a well orchestrated one.

PAS should push for more inclusive politics

PAS should be wary of UMNO's political re-strategizing. Beware of the reactionary Old Politics that they are promoting. Do not fall for their bait.

We also call upon PAS leaders not to push for the implementation of hudud laws in Kelantan, not now nor in the future. For Malaysia is a multiethnic, multireligious society and there cannot be two systems of justice.

In this regard, they ought to follow the example of Abdurrachman Wahid (or Gus Dur as he was popularly known), who was the leader of Nahdhatul Ulama and president of Indonesia. He took the stance that it was not appropriate for Indonesia to introduce the Sharia and proclaim Indonesia as an Islamic state in this day and age, and in view of its multi-religious make-up.

This is a stance that the Muhammadiyah, which with the NU, the two largest Muslim organizations in Indonesia also took and continues to do so. Yet, they continued to combat authoritarian rule and KKN (*korupsi, kolusi dan nepotisme* or corruption, collusion and nepotism) and to promote justice and equality.

We appreciate that one reason why PAS is pushing for the Sharia in general is that it is concerned about widespread social ills and the increasing number of political and financial scandals under 50 years of UMNO-BN rule. Consequently, the existing civil-legal system has been found extremely wanting.

All the more reason, therefore, to reform this civil-legal system by pushing ahead with New Politics, characterized by a two-party democratic system under which:

- there will be checks-and-balances between the executive, legislature and judiciary;
- there are free and fair elections;
- ordinary people, public interest societies and free media can participate and have their say;

- the interests of the *rakyat*, not those of the political elites and their cronies, are put on centre-stage; and
- the rights of all peoples regardless of their ethnic and religious backgrounds, race or gender, are protected.

We believe that all these safeguards and aspirations are not only contained in the Federal Constitution but also are in keeping with the teachings of Islam and indeed of all religions.

We wish that PAS would join with all justice- and democratic-loving Malaysians to champion this noble cause, one that is inclusive of all.

Notes

PAS decided to postpone the introduction of the Private Member's Bill in June, as originally announced, but it has stressed that it intends to do so at a later point in time. The notes below were made and added for journal publication.

- ¹ This thinkpiece was originally published as a two-part commentary in the online newsletter of Aliran Kesedaran Negara (Aliran), on May 6 and 7, 2014. URL: <http://aliran.com/thinking-allowed-online/2014-ta-online/hudud-now/>; <http://aliran.com/thinking-allowed-online/2014-ta-online/hudud-part-2-umno-restrategises-back-old-politics/>
- ² In Arabic, *hudud* is the plural form of *hadd*, which literally means 'hindrance, impediment, limit, boundary, frontier...' It generally refers to 'punishments of certain acts which have been forbidden or sanctioned by punishments in the Kur'an' in B.Lewis, V.L. Menage, CH. Pellat, and J.Schact, *Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition, Volume 3*, page 20. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1986.
- ³ *Buku Jingga* literally means "Orange Book" and refers to the pre-2013 election manifesto of Pakatan Rakyat, the Malaysian opposition party.
- ⁴ The second article begins here.
- ⁵ *Duduk semeja* literally refers to sitting together around the same table, connoting dialogue and generating points of consensus.

Introduction to *Crises, Vulnerability & Poverty in South Asia: Peoples' Struggles for Justice and Dignity*

South Asia Alliance for
Poverty Eradication (SAAPE)

SOUTH ASIA HAS A RICH HISTORY which has contributed to the region's unique advancement over the ages. Many old civilisations of the world have their historical roots in South Asia. Thus, the land is endowed with rich and diverse cultures. The brave daughters and sons of this land have made historic contributions to the cause of humankind, including emancipation of people from slavery and various forms of injustices and exploitation. Likewise, abundant in natural resources, South Asia has a huge potential for progress and prosperity.

While the historical context and geographical endowment make for a promising start, South Asia faces many challenges. A vast majority of people in South Asia are persistently struggling for better livelihood. Out of the total population of the world, almost one quarter—about 1.6 billion people—live in South Asia, today. Noticeably, more than 40 per cent of the world's poor live in this region. Another distinguishing factor is the large variation in population size as well as the level and pace of socio-economic development across the region which is not similar to regional groupings in other parts of the world. As of 2011, in terms of population size; of a total of 1593 million people, India had the dominant share of around 75 per cent followed by Pakistan (11.1 per cent), Bangladesh (9 per cent), Afghanistan (1.7 per cent), Nepal (1.7 per cent), Bhutan (0.05 per cent) and the Maldives (0.02 per cent). With regard to gross domestic product (GDP) per capita measured in USD, the Maldives has the highest at USD 6405 followed by Sri Lanka at USD 2835, Bhutan at USD 2346, India at USD 1489, Pakistan

at USD 1189, Bangladesh at USD 743, Nepal at USD 619 and Afghanistan at USD 543, in 2011.¹ Out of the eight countries, four countries fall in the category of the UN-defined least developed countries (LDCs), of which three are landlocked. The share of distribution of GDP among the South Asian countries indicates that there is a lack of symmetrical distribution. For instance, in 2011, India's share was 81.4 per cent of the total GDP of USD 2271 billion compared to 9.3 per cent share of Pakistan and 4.9 per cent of Bangladesh. The effect of low level of GDP vis-à-vis GDP share is reflected in the cases of Afghanistan and Nepal, both standing at 0.8 per cent.

Growth, equity and HDI

The economic performance of countries in the South Asian region varies widely. Based on the relatively high growth performance of some South Asian countries, particularly India, South Asia as a whole is epitomised as a star performer or locomotive of the global economy compared to other parts of the world (UN, 2011). In reality, except for Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Maldives, the growth performance has either been low or has decelerated in recent years. In these three countries, growth rate has slightly improved from 6.1, 8.0 and 5.7 per cent between 2003 and 2007 to 6.7, 8.3 and 7.5 per cent during the period between 2007 and 2012, respectively.² Contrarily, a deceleration in growth rate has taken place in India in recent years from 9.6 per cent between 2003 and 2007 to 6.9 per cent between 2007 and 2012. During both periods, growth performance of Pakistan was quite low at 3.0 to 3.5 per cent. Another low growth performer is Nepal at 4.8 per cent during the period of 2003 to 2007 and 3.9 per cent between the period of 2007 and 2012. In Bhutan, the growth rate has reduced considerably from 11.8 per cent between 2003 and 2007 to 5.6 per cent between 2007 and 2012.³

The statistics mentioned above clearly reflect the heterogeneous growth rate in South Asia. The fluctuations noted also underline the lack of sustainability of growth per se. Given that people's lives are intertwined with the region's growth, it makes their involvement in both growth and

outcome processes critically important. Such participation is linked to the policy regime and accompanying structural and institutional set ups, both of which impact the development of productive forces, which in turn, determines social relations. It indicates that growth has to be accompanied by development which, inter alia, embodies equity and social justice; both principles being essential to the sustainability of growth itself. South Asia appears to be struggling on such fronts. A stark image of the region emerges from the analysis of the Human Development Index (HDI), the inequality adjusted HDI and the poverty by income and deprivation. These indicate that in addition to large variations among countries (which moves away from the rosy picture painted by the average growth trend of a few countries) the overall situation is quite alarming.

The HDI of 0.558 of South Asia is one of the lowest in regional comparisons (UNDP, 2013). When inequality is adjusted, it reduces by more than one third to 0.395 which reiterates the high inequality in South Asia. The issue of exclusion is clearly highlighted by the gender inequality index (GII) which is extremely high at 0.568. It is almost at par with the GII of Sub-Saharan Africa, which is 0.577.

The HDI is relatively high for Sri Lanka at 0.715 followed by the Maldives at 0.688, India at 0.554, Bhutan at 0.538, Pakistan at 0.515, Bangladesh at 0.515, Nepal at 0.463 and Afghanistan at 0.374. However, such ratios are reduced considerably when inequality is adjusted. These come down to 0.607 for Sri Lanka, 0.515 for the Maldives, 0.392 for India, 0.430 for Bhutan, 0.374 for Bangladesh, 0.356 for Pakistan and 0.301 for Nepal. Two types of ratios, for instance, show that inequality is high in Pakistan compared to Bangladesh (*see table 1.1 and 1.2*).

The Human Development Report of 2013 confirms that in most South Asian countries, the score in terms of the HDI is very low. Out of the 187 countries, Norway ranks first while Niger ranks last. Although Sri Lanka and the Maldives are comparatively better, South Asia as a region is still 'inhumane' in terms of access to income, health and education which is essential for decent living as per international standards (*see figure 1.1*).

Table 1.1
Population, economic growth rate, per capita income, HDI, inequality adjusted HDI, gender-based inequality and poverty in South Asia

Country	Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Bhutan	India	Maldives	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	South Asia
Population (in million), mid-2012	33.4	152.9	0.7	1259.7	0.3	26.6	180.4	21.2	1675.2
Share of population in South Asia (in %)	1.99	9.13	0.04	75.20	0.02	1.59	10.77	1.27	100.00
GDP (in USD), 2011	19.2	111.9	1.7	1848.0	2.1	18.9	210.2	59.2	2271.09
GDP share	0.8	4.9	0.1	81.4	0.1	0.8	9.3	2.6	100.0
Per capita GDP	543	743	2346	1489	6405	619	1189	2835	
PPP per capita GDP (USD)	1312	1416	5113	3296	5476	1115	2609	4772	3368
GDP growth rate, 2003-2007	8.4	6.1	11.8	9.6	5.7	4.8	3.5	8.0	
GDP growth rate, 2008-2012	5.7	6.7	5.6	6.9	7.5	3.9	3.0	8.3	
HDI	0.374	0.515	0.538	0.554	0.688	0.463	0.515	0.715	0.558
Inequality adjusted HDI		0.363		0.392	0.495	0.301	0.346	0.579	0.393
Gender-based inequality	0.707	0.550	0.495	0.617	0.320	0.558	0.573	0.419	0.601
% of people who are MPI poor		57.8	27.2	53.7	5.2	64.7	49.4	5.3	
Intensity of deprivation		50.4	43.9	52.7	35.6	54.0	53.4	38.7	
Population below poverty at PPP USD 1.25 a day, 2000-2009		49.6	26.2	42.6	1.5	55.1	22.6	7.0	
National poverty line 2000-2009	36.0	40.0	23.2	27.5	30.9	22.3		15.2	

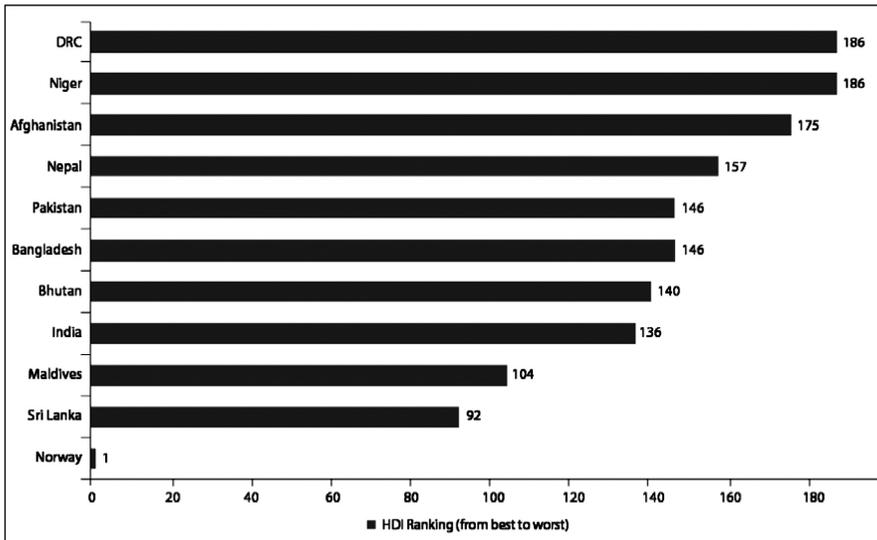
Source: UNDP (2013), World Bank online database & 2012 World Population Data Sheet

Table 1.2
Infant mortality rate, under-five mortality rate, life expectancy at birth, access to improved water source and improved sanitation in South Asia, 2001-2011

Variables	Year	Afghanistan	Bangladesh	Bhutan	India	Maldives	Nepal	Pakistan	Sri Lanka
Infant mortality rate (IMR)	2001	92.7	59.2	62.6	62.4	35.7	59.3	74.3	15.8
	2007	80.5	44.6	49.2	52.9	16.0	46.1	65	12.4
	2011	72.7	36.7	42.0	47.2	9.2	39.0	59.2	10.5
Under-five mortality rate (U5MR)	2001	132.8	80.0	85.2	85.0	45.3	78.9	93	18.4
	2007	113.4	57.4	64.3	70.0	19.3	58.4	80	14.4
	2011	101.1	46.0	53.7	61.3	10.7	48	72	12.2
Life expectancy at birth	2001	45.6	65.2	62.2	62.0	71.3	62.3	63.4	71.8
	2007	47.2	67.7	65.8	64.1	75.4	67.0	64.5	74.3
	2011		68.9	67.3	65.5	76.9	68.7		
Percentage of population access to improved water source	2000	21.0	79.0	91.0	81.0	91.0	83.0	88.0	80.0
	2005	41.0	80.0	91.0	85.0	90.0	86.0	89.0	86.0
	2008	48.0	80.0	92.0	88.0	91.0	88.0	90.0	90.0
Percentage of population access to improved sanitation	2000	32.0	44.0	62.0	25.0	81.0	23.0	37.0	82.0
	2005	35.0	50.0	64.0	28.0	92.0	28.0	41.0	88.0
	2008	37.0	53.0	65.0	31.0	98.0	31.0	45.0	91.0

Source: UNDP and UNESCAP, online database

Figure 1.1
HDI ranking of South Asian countries



National income poverty estimates of individual South Asian countries show that poverty is around 32 per cent in Bangladesh followed by India (29.8 per cent), Nepal (25.2 per cent)⁴ and Pakistan (22.3 per cent). Sri Lanka has the lowest rate at 8.3 per cent. The purchasing power parity (PPP) based poverty estimate with USD 1.25 per day pushes up poverty considerably. For instance, the poverty rate for Bangladesh goes up to 43.3 per cent followed by 32.7 per cent for India, 24.8 per cent for Nepal and 21 per cent for Pakistan.

In traditionally exclusionary societies, deprivation-led poverty estimates reflect the ground reality more vividly.⁵ The latest multi-dimensional poverty estimates show that poverty continues to be very high in most South Asian countries. In terms of percentage, it is estimated at 57.8, 53.7, 49.4 and 44.2 per cent for Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal, respectively. The Maldives and Sri Lanka have low poverty levels at 5.2 and 5.3 per cent, respectively. The same measurements also depict the grave intensity of

deprivation in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Nepal, hovering around 50 per cent. Likewise, the poverty intensity is high in Bhutan at 43.9 per cent (UNDP, 2013). Hence, these figures adequately depict that as a result of wealth accumulation in a few hands,⁶ a majority of the South Asian population is suffering from destitution, deprivation and misery.

Problems of low economic growth and HDI

As per the discussion above, it is now understood that the region's economic growth has been inadequate and the HDI performance continues to be unsatisfactory. However, these problems are not novel and are rooted in both historical and contemporary factors. Historically, the structural and systemic problems of patriarchy, feudalism, class hierarchy, religion, caste, race, geographic location and ethnic-based discrimination or exclusion, have persisted. Many countries freed from colonisation or autocratic regimes continued with the old state-and-subject system of ruling, despite adopting either parliamentary or presidential forms of governance. No noticeable difference in democratic governance under federal or unitary system is found.

Countries like Pakistan have had to confront military regime, time and again. Nepal, where the erstwhile autocracy was followed by a decade-long violent conflict, is now undergoing a prolonged political transition. The Constituent Assembly (CA) elected in 2008 was dissolved in 2012, as it failed to draft a constitution even after four years of the constitution-making tenure. Although a fundamental change in the system is being pursued, one that focuses on socio-economic transformation and inclusion in political and social system, the prolonged transition accompanied by confrontation at the political level, is creating uncertainty in the institutionalisation of a progressive agenda. Bhutan is a young, evolving democracy while in the Maldives, bolstered by the forced resignation of the elected President, a conspiracy to weaken democracy is underway.

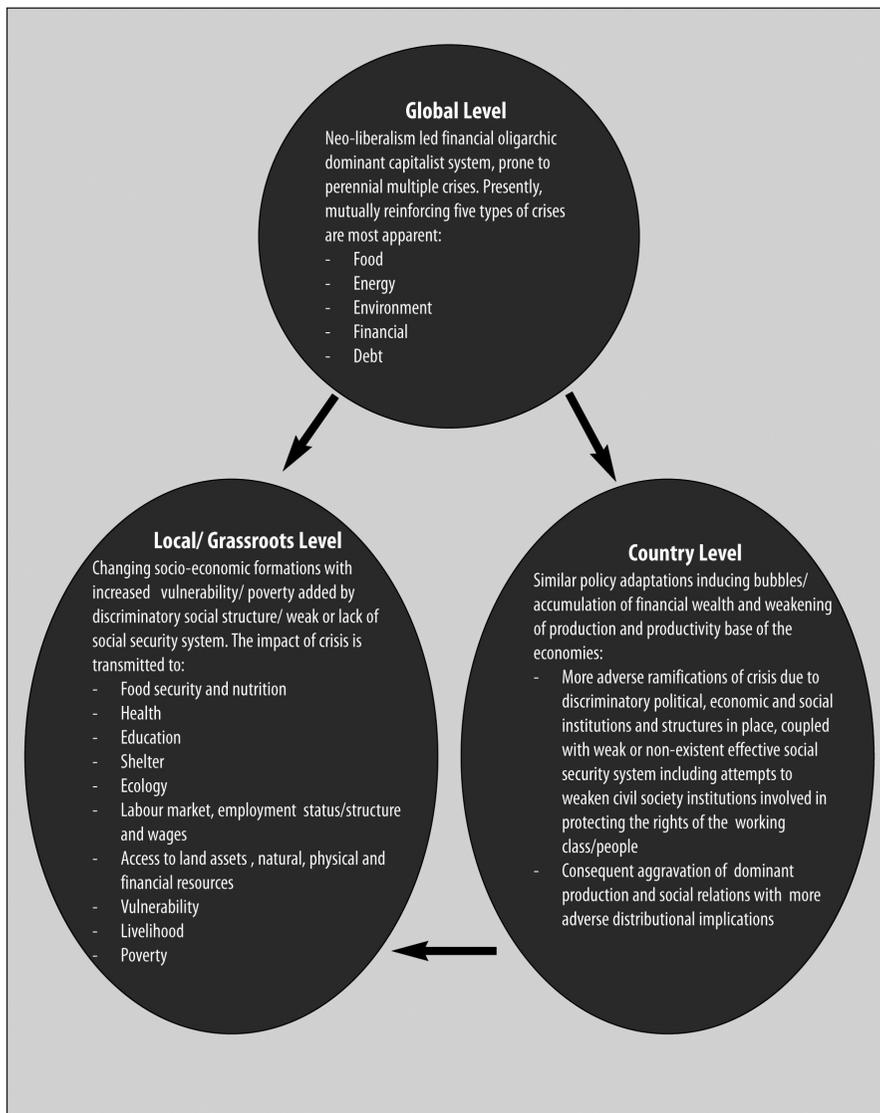
Such developments indicate that people are deprived of political, civil and economic rights, and a true 'participatory democracy' is yet to be

institutionalised in South Asian countries. A political system, limiting democracy to inducement of the electorate during periodic elections, as a tool for legitimising the bourgeois rule, continues. Democratic institutions strengthened by an in-built system to consolidate the rule of law, transparency and accountability, are conspicuous by their absence. The democratic rights of people are yet to be introduced and institutionalised at the grassroots. The judicial system also lacks the ability to ensure equality, rule of law and compliance to human rights. In most parts of South Asia, minority communities feel increasingly unprotected. Excess in abuse of authority and violation of minority rights are commonplace. Conflicts in different forms and manifestations—mainly rooted in denial, discrimination, exclusion, deprivation and marginalization—are frequent. These conflicts are deeply rooted in widespread poverty and in the traditional interweaved mechanism of exclusion and fundamentalism in different forms and magnitude. Characterised by such tendencies, anti-people economic policies are considered to perpetuate insecurity and vulnerability, with pervasive impacts on people's livelihood and consequent impoverishment.

Frequent and deepening multiple crises in the capitalist countries have augmented the abovementioned phenomenon and made it more alarming. A quick look at the circles in figure 1.2, explaining the channels through which multiple crises are impinging on the economies and people of the poor countries provides a clearer picture of the scenario.

As is evident from figure 1.2, along with the neo-liberal dominant global capitalist system intensifying multiple crises in the form of food, energy, environmental, financial and debt, the vulnerability of economies as well as people of developing countries including South Asia is bound to aggravate. At the country level, the speculation-led bubble is bound to contribute to the accumulation of imaginary wealth and capital, but at the cost of fast erosion in the production and productive base of economies. Amidst this, there are also attempts to weaken the civil society movements leading to the aggravation of dominant production and social relations with further adverse income distribution implications. Consequently, the

Figure 1.2
Transmission mechanisms through which multiple crises increase vulnerability and poverty



vulnerability of the people at the grassroots is accentuating further amidst multiple crises, transmitting severe adverse impacts on food security and nutrition, health, education, shelter, labour market and employment structure, access to land assets and natural, physical and financial resources, but above all, livelihoods and poverty.

Crisis in capitalism and harsh anti-working class conspiracies

Currently, we witness a scenario of over-accumulation of capital which has ensued from the anarchy of production. It manifests itself through an excess of saleable production. Such over accumulation accrues, not due to absence of enough people who have needs or desires of consumption, but because of the concentration of wealth prevents an increasingly large proportion of the population from being able to buy the merchandise. However, instead of it being a question of a standard overproduction of goods, the expansion of the credit system makes it possible for capital to accumulate in money capital which can take forms that are increasingly abstract, unreal, and 'fictitious'. As such, the system has only been possible so far by excessive consumerism through increasing indebtedness, accelerated depletion of resources, increasing income inequalities and social exclusion and unrest which are no longer sustainable (Cairó-i-Céspedes & Grem -Universidad de, 2010).

The unique phenomenon of capitalism is the employment of various means to intensify exploitation and ensure profit; the latter being a prerequisite to the system's survival. The conversion of industrial monopoly capitalism into financial capitalism today, is a vivid example. Put precisely, there are at least four different dimensions of the present systemic crisis: economic and financial crisis, human underdevelopment crisis, ecological crisis and socio-political and institutional crisis leading to human deprivation, increasing ecological depletion and rising conflict and social discontent. Thus, despite globalisation having integrated semi-capitalist, non-capitalist or pre-capitalist countries into the global markets, it has dismally failed to mitigate the crises (even temporarily) caused by growing

wealth and concentration of capital in the hands of a few, amidst stagnating purchasing power of the masses. Evidence suggests that, in order to avoid or minimise multiple crises or their intensification, fictitious capital of trillions of US dollars must be eliminated. However, given the present dominant financial oligarchic system, wherein the ruling class and elites of both advanced capitalist and developing countries function in proximity (the latter working as their surrogates); such a possibility is nearly impossible. Instead, along with the intensification of anti-working class policies, new or other alternative means are being explored and imposed globally to tackle the deepening crisis.

The financialisation-led bubbles encouraged by, among other factors, loose monetary policy in the US had created a technology-stock bubble in the late 1990s. This collapsed in 2000 and 2001, leading to the recession. Again, with the collapse of the information technology-led bubbles, following a phenomenal rise in the stock and property market arbitrarily, attempts were made to counter the long recession by cutting prime rate to a 45 year low of one per cent in June 2003. This was accompanied by an excessive reliance on deficit budget which contributed to fuel trade deficit leading to another bubble that originated from the housing and real estate sector in the US. Ultimately, these bubbles exploded in 2008 leading to the financial crisis with a high contagion effect, generating recession throughout the world. Although trillions of US dollars in bail-outs and fiscal stimulus packages helped overcome the financial meltdown temporarily, reliance on excessive deficit finance is now augmenting the debt crisis and threatening recession in capitalist countries. It is further combined with forceful imposition of anti-working class policies and other neo-liberal policies which make third world countries poorer.

Further, technocratic governments were installed in some peripheral Euro Zone countries, in violation of their constitutional provisions, in order to impose strong anti-working class austerity policies. In many capitalist countries today, including the US, policies pursued ensure high profits for big corporate houses, banks and financial institutions. On the other hand, high unemployment and stagnation are being ignored,

threatening livelihoods of the majority. As an offshoot, the policy of quantitative easing by printing billions of dollars every month, has been adopted since October 2012 by the US, which is also violative of its obligations as a country with international currency. Such a move is aimed at depreciating the dollar vis-a-vis currencies of developing countries. At the same time, it is also aimed at appreciating property prices in these countries by means of massive capital flows to these countries amidst low or zero interest rate in the US. The policy of quantitative easing has been replicated by other capitalist countries with adverse impact on the economies of developing countries and livelihood of people.

Alongside, land grabbing, capturing of mining and other natural resources of poor countries; market encroachment by Transnational Corporations (TNCs) (backed by their governments and of poor countries) is also intensifying. Direct military intervention and aggression in disguise has increased massively, more so, in oil-rich countries. It is to be noted that profit is being grabbed through illegal means by exploiting the weak governance and accountability system, which has further augmented crony capitalism in developing countries. But along with exposition and defaming of ruling establishments as a result of promoting crony capitalism, diversion from the real issues are being created, albeit with the backing of international monopoly capitalists. As such, more and more anti-working class policies are being intensified through further deregulation in administered prices. Similarly, these countries are pressurised to follow the policies of free entry of capital, goods and services of international monopoly capitalists in general and of TNCs, in particular.

Peoples' resistance for change

Amidst such crises, the responsibility to alter exploitative discourse and safeguard the rights of the oppressed, lies upon the people and social movements, including women's rights groups, peasants' rights groups, groups devoted to the rights of fisher folks, indigenous peoples, *Dalits*, minorities, trade unions and other progressive forces fighting for social justice and societal change.

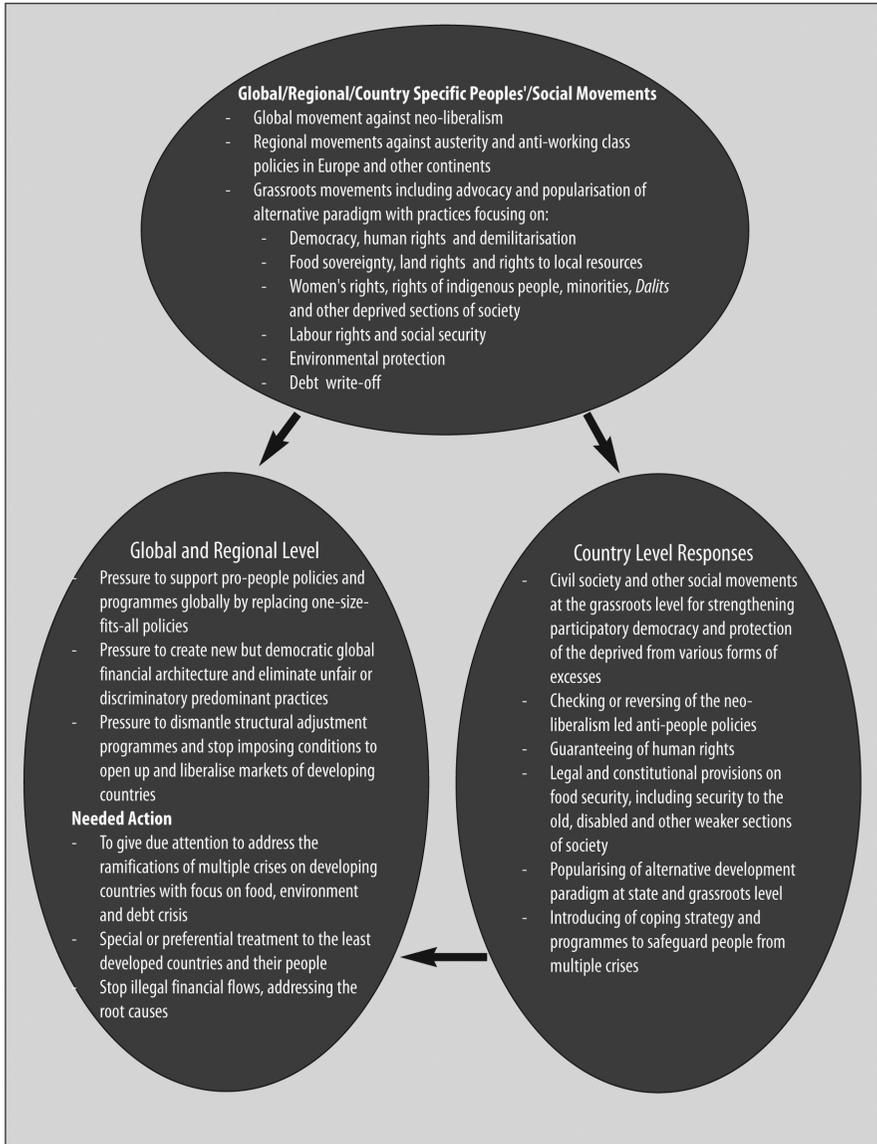
With the aggravation in exploitation of people across the globe amidst multiple crises under the dominant capitalist system, peoples' movements have intensified at different levels. This movement has been directed against neo-liberalism, which has manifested to the extent of revolt and uprising of the people in various parts of the globe. Today, the movement of the working class against austerities has heightened in Europe. In parallel, alternative development paradigms, which focus on genuine democracy, human rights and demilitarisation, food sovereignty, land rights and rights to local resources, women's rights, rights of the indigenous people, *Dalits*, labour rights and social security, environmental protection and debt write off, among others are also becoming popular.

At the global and regional level, pressure is being mounted to support pro-people policies and programmes by replacing one-size-fits-all policies. Such movements are advocating for the need to create a new but democratic global financial architecture, eliminating unfair or discriminatory predominant practices, dismantling structural adjustment programmes, stopping imposition of conditions to open up and liberalise markets of developing countries, among others. The generation and intensification of pressure on the need of concrete actions to insulate the developing countries from the severe adverse effect of multiple crises, is also part and parcel of peoples' movements at the global, regional, country and grassroots levels. Figure 1.3 shows how such movements are becoming instrumental in achieving these goals.

Experience shows that alliance-building and networking of civil society initiatives and other social groups involved in social movements of the South and North have succeeded in not only defeating many anti-people moves by multilateral institutions and other capitalist countries but has also provided alternative solutions to livelihood and empowerment. The global movement of 99 per cent against 1 per cent, the Arab Spring, the massive workers' movements in European countries, the resurgence of the Left in Latin America and intensification of pro-people movements in South Asia and other parts of the world are clear examples in this regard.

Figure 1.3

Peoples' grassroots movement geared to change economic discourse at global, regional, national and grassroots levels



Notes

(The article was originally published as the introduction to the book, Crises, Vulnerability & Poverty in South Asia: Peoples' Struggles for Justice and Dignity (2013) by South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication, Kathmandu: Sthapit Printing Press, 2–12. It is being reprinted here as is, including the images. The report can also be found online at <http://www.saaape.org/index.php/news-room/news/5-saape-s-south-asia-poverty-report-2013-launched>.—Editor)

¹ Source: World Bank online database

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ See (CBS 2012).

⁵ However, there are still many shortcomings in this method of estimating the rate of poverty, such as the use of arbitrary weights for various deprivation linked indicators; the exclusion of a number of critical variables like land assets, food security, shelter, productive employment and inequality; the problem of homogeneity in unit of measurement; bold assumptions on treating the extent and reliability of service availability under consideration, no room for shock type effect and the like. These factors would additionally yield a superior measure of poverty than taking the consumption or income approach of estimating poverty while linking it with deprivation.

⁶ Today some of the richest persons are from South Asia as a result of the fast accumulation process, leading to a tiny section of the population becoming billionaires and hence, an unprecedented rise in the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

Japan, An Ambiguous Power

Valerie Anne Jill I. VALERO

IN THE FACE of global concerns, regional contingencies, and precariousness in its diplomatic relations, there are expectations that Japan will undergo a significant, if not accelerated, transformation into a “normal state,” one with an international politico-security presence and armed force commensurate its economic prowess. Recent years have witnessed the examination of the possible implications of a “normal Japan” on international affairs, with the discussion of Japan’s trajectory reaching a level of frequency and intensity that the Japanese themselves may not have even experienced.

While “normal Japan” has taken some substantial attention in Japanese foreign relations discourse, it coexists with another significant concept: the decline of Japan. The Japanese economy, once referred to as a juggernaut, is by certain standards now a “laggard,” having conceded to China the position of the world’s second biggest economy. Aside from a prolonged period of economic sluggishness, its growing socioeconomic woes—not least of which is the aging of the population—seem to suggest a fast slide from Japan’s glory days without a good end in sight.

In light of these foregoing concepts, the current scrutiny of Japan presents a paradox in which diametric perspectives on the country exist at the same time. “Normal Japan” asserts national dynamism while the decline of Japan asserts stagnation and eventual national deterioration. Both concepts are ensconced in the idea of inevitability, which follows that in either context, Japan is unlikely to change course even with the occurrence of domestic and international developments that require extensive policy modification and other relevant adjustments. The paradox predictably leads to a confusing, inconsistent conclusion: Japan will become a formidable military power just as it is sure that it will fade into obscurity in the succeeding years. Japan, then, is a functioning contradiction.

Moreover, the auxiliary arguments found in the two concepts have provided experts, scholars, and media much to explore in often extreme, sensationalist terms: Japan's remilitarization and diminishing international relevance. On the one hand, although the possibility of Japan's transition into normal statehood fundamentally translates into the expansion of security capabilities through the revision of Article 9 of the Peace Constitution, normal statehood and the ensuing expansion unwittingly find synonymy with ultranationalism and resurgence of Pacific War militarism. When territorial tensions such as the East China Sea dispute intensify, the inevitable conclusion drawn by experts and scholars is that Japan would revert to belligerence. On the other hand, Japan's sluggish economic performance, as indicated by its "demotion" to third largest economy in the world, pushes an interpretation that the country's fall is nothing but nebulous. Hence, in Japan's case, less than full coffers are empty coffers, and empty coffers mean no advantage or influence by which to work with in international affairs. It would appear as if whenever Japan is concerned, hasty generalization is sure to follow.

Similar to the comments on the frequency and intensity of discussions on Japan's prospects for normal statehood, another question Japan-watchers ask perhaps more assiduously than the Japanese themselves is what kind of power and role the country will assume. The concurrent polarity in the perspectives on Japan resonates with Lind's (2012) observation that "no matter what Japan does, people view it through the lens of extremes."

The tendency to identify Japan through polarization and exaggeration compromises the opportunity for a more nuanced, constructive evaluation of the country's present and future situation. For instance, to equate "normal Japan" to an automatic reversion to Pacific War militarism would be to overlook not only the evolution of the international politico-security milieu but also Japanese national interests and concerns as influenced by the evolution of the milieu. In addition, to equate Japan's decline based on its present socioeconomic difficulties would be to discount its extensive economic presence around the world, the comparably high standard of living its people still enjoy, and the possibility of robust recovery.

Japan warrants examination bereft of ideas of deviation or exception. More often than not, the problem with analyzing Japan is that it is seen as an aberration—a country without requisite capabilities and resources and thus “abnormal.” If, for instance, Japan’s “abnormality” merely refers to the restricted scale, capacity, and mandate of its defense establishment, then it would be reasonable to assume that many countries are in fact abnormal because of their grounded capabilities and mandate. Is Japan truly less normal compared to the likes of Switzerland and the Vatican, states that are small and lightly armed, and neutral and theocratic, respectively? Is Japan, whose security capabilities are purportedly superior to all Southeast Asian armed forces combined, less normal than the Philippines, whose military is in need of modernization and unable to fulfill its mandate properly?

It could be stated that Japan’s possible remilitarization is a misnomer, for Japan has had an armed force since the beginning of the postwar era that goes by the designation “Self-Defense Forces” (SDF). Despite defense spending pegged at one percent of Japan’s annual GDP, the SDF has been consistently one of the most funded, highly trained, and technologically sophisticated armed forces in the world. Perhaps a crucial problem concerning the remilitarization debate is the equation or alternation, instead of connection, made between the SDF’s capabilities and mandate. For instance, the quality and quantity of Japanese defense spending, especially in recent years, have originated speculations of a more aggressive security posture eventually leading to militarism. However, careful study and contextualization would yield a different and more complex perspective on the trend.

First, the Peace Constitution underpins Japanese security; thus, spending and other security activities connect to the SDF’s defensive function and not to expanded functions based on anticipated constitutional revision. Second, although Japan is able to maintain one of the world’s well-funded and most competent armed forces, it is hardly one of the world’s biggest military spenders. The actual value of the one-percent spending cap depends on the rate of growth or decline of the Japanese economy.

If Japan has been experiencing economic slowdown for several years, then it means that its defense budget has consequently contracted. Third, the lack of preemptive, unilateral capabilities compels Japan to work within its limitations and be more resourceful when it comes to policy alternatives. With its entry into the United Nations (UN) in the 1950s, Japan shifted its focus towards the multilateral arena where it believes it could effectively contribute to the international community. Peacekeeping, disaster relief, humanitarian aid, and other related activities define not only the significance of the SDF in the 21st century, but also and more crucially, the appropriation of resources when it comes to matters of defense and security. It would be reasonable to suggest that a portion of Japan's defense spending goes to the improvement of SDF operations in UN-sanctioned missions abroad. Meanwhile, the Tohoku disaster of 11 March 2011 showed the need for prompt response along with the potential of the SDF as an institution assisting civilians.

Japan, like any other sovereign state, requires itself to build capabilities in the face of domestic and overseas exigencies. The pursuit of greater cooperation with the United States and of greater regional security presence is not so much an aggressive counter of a rising China as an attempt to assure its most important partner that Japan shares the same vision of and obligations to the international system. It is worth recalling that Japan received harsh reprimand for its delayed and passive participation in the Gulf War (1990–1991), and the aversion to repeating the experience has compelled the formulation of a proactive security policy that expands the scope and conditions of SDF operations. On matters of regional affairs, especially territory, Japan is at odds with its northern neighbors. Flanked by a nuclear threat from North Korea and territorial squabbles with China, South Korea, and Russia, it would be unsurprising to learn that Japan's insecurity has risen and that it is adjusting its capabilities in relation to the perceived precariousness of its immediate security environment.

With regard to Japan's economic condition, would it be logical to assume that the country is in a decline as drastic as portrayed by overseas

media for being the world's *third* largest economy? How, then, do we regard the fourth largest economy and the rest of the world's economies, if Japan is doing "very poorly?" The negative outlook on Japan overlooks the specificities crucial to understanding how countries and their economies work for them. It is no small feat for Japan to have become the world's second- and third-largest economy in a brief period, considering that their population and land size are far smaller than those of first- and second-ranked (respectively) United States and China. The proportion of output per person, among other things, is higher for Japan. Moreover, the negative outlook downplays the efforts and accomplishments of emerging economies. As Curtis (2012) asks, "...[I]s Japan's diminished stature as an economic superpower really a matter of decline or the consequences of the ability of other countries to grow richer?"

Volatility and stagnation are not exclusive to Japan, as other countries also have had to contend with such problems when it comes to their respective economies. An aging society and a decreasing birthrate are concerns, if not trends, prevalent in most postindustrial economies. Changes in the labor force (e.g., shrinking and aging, unemployment, and underemployment), which potentially affect productivity and consumption, are present in countries such as the United Kingdom and Germany. Unemployment is a pressing and enduring issue for many countries, the United States included. As exhibited by Greece and Spain, ballooning public debt is hardly a Japan-only problem.

In the discussion of a country's economic movement, it is crucial to examine how and to what extent growth translates into the quality of life for its people. Curtis (2012) poses a profound question relevant to the above-mentioned assertion: "...[W]ould you prefer to live in the number two economy China or the number three economy Japan?" China's massive population has translated into massive productivity, but it has also meant a broader, thinner distribution of wealth. While China has been and will likely continue to register a high rate of economic growth, it continues to struggle with bridging the structural and income gaps between the rural and urban sectors of society. In other words, everybody in China

has yet to partake of the country's newfound prosperity. It will take more time for China to achieve a widespread, significant rise in standards of living, as well as to rectify the unfavorable effects of industrialization. While Japan is unlikely to replicate the economic miracles of the last century, its decline does not completely correspond with the general pessimism aimed at its direction. Curtis (2012) and Vogel (2012) insist that life is still good in Japan, as the people retain access to dependable public services (e.g., transportation and health insurance) and consumer goods, live long where the environment is safe and clean, and are secure because of a low crime rate. Based on the reasoning of the two scholars, for all the talk of a dramatic decline, the obvious signs of a country's socioeconomic deterioration have yet to surface in Japan.

There has been much ballyhooing about the loosened market stronghold of Japanese corporate juggernauts, particularly Toyota and Sony. Product recalls, revenue decline because of increased competition, and production chain problems resulting from the Tohoku disaster, have affected the operations and global standing of Japanese companies. Moreover, observers cite that the creativity and innovation that transformed Japan into an economic powerhouse are now missing, with a *Newsweek* article claiming that in relation to the boom of the Apple iPod, Sony's "last truly big thing" was the Walkman.¹

While the difficulties and the need to adjust models to the present times are a reality, the problem is that the tendency to view and discuss the Japanese economy in bleak, hyperbolic terms discounts other important considerations, such as continued global activity and presence, as well as diversity within the economic sector. If one were to enumerate Japanese corporations still competing in today's market, the list would still be substantial. In the automobile industry, brands include Honda, Isuzu, Lexus,² Mazda, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Subaru, Suzuki, and Bridgestone, a leading global manufacturer of vehicular parts. In the electronics industry, brands aside from Sony include Canon, Fujifilm, Fujitsu, Hitachi, Konica Minolta, Kyocera, Olympus, NEC, Nikon, Nintendo, Panasonic, Ricoh, Sanyo, Sharp, and Toshiba. In the retail industry, *Comme de Garçons*,

FamilyMart, and Uniqlo have embarked on overseas expansion to join the likes of Asics, Casio, Citizen, Mizuno, Seiko, Shiseido, and Shu Uemura as Japan's prominent global brands. It is worth stressing that many of these companies have existed for decades (in the case of Mitsubishi, over a century) and have diversified operations. For instance, Sony also manufactures cameras and handheld devices (e.g., smartphones, tablets, and e-readers). It is also in the film, gaming, and music industries, a fact often neglected in the discussions of Sony's overall economic performance. Another example of an enduring and diversified corporation is Canon, which was founded in 1937. While widely recognized as a maker of cameras and printers, it is also a manufacturer of ophthalmic equipment and x-ray machines.

In discussions of the Japanese economy, there is a tendency to overlook or downplay the creative industry, a contradiction considering that Japan's public diplomacy and overseas revenues significantly stem from its popular culture. Japan's creative industry has expanded despite the downturn experienced by traditional industries, and is expected to thrive in the coming years with the growth of international merchandise and licensing agreements.

There are a number of examples illustrating the dynamism of Japan's creative industry. Sanrio Company specializes in character merchandise, and its most famous spokesperson, Hello Kitty, is worth over a billion dollars. Bandai, along with Hasbro and Mattel, is one of the world's leading toy makers. Nintendo—Pokémon's publisher and creator of the world's most famous plumbers, the Mario brothers—is a billion-dollar gaming company. The Pokémon and Mario Brothers properties are unto themselves worth billions of dollars. *Animé* and *manga*, although experiencing dips in the last few years, still manage to generate sizable revenues from its international distribution and merchandise in Europe, North America, and other key territories. Previously mentioned companies Comme de Garçons and Uniqlo have become key players in the global fashion retail industry. The works of renowned Japanese artists Yayoi

Kusama and Takashi Murakami have fetched millions in international art auction houses.

It merits emphasis that the creative industry not only generates revenues through retail but also contributes to the promotion of other sectors such as tourism. It also plays a complementary role in efforts to promote cultural diplomacy. Theme parks, museums, conventions, exhibitions, and festivals, among others, encourage the influx of international visitors that, by extension, is able to foster greater people-to-people exchange between Japan and other countries.

Amidst the debate on Japan's future course, crucial questions, hence, beg asking: Does the world want a Japan that is either militarily resurgent or socioeconomically declining? Is the world ready for a Japan that is radically different from what it is right now? Will the world gain more from relations with a resurgent or declining Japan? More importantly, what kind of power is Japan today? To which Lind (2012) responds by arguing that "Japan is not pacifist, but nor [sic] is it aggressive or militarist. It is a normal middle power."

Any country that values its part in the international community merits evaluation based on its actual and eventual contributions. It would seem more substantial to assess the ways by which Japan should be encouraged to maintain and expand its constructive contributions to the international community, rather than fixate on extreme scenarios that may or may not necessarily come into fruition. Lind (2012), with regard to Japan and dealing with regional security affairs, states that "recognizing Japan's potential – and viewing it as normal – should open our eyes to how useful Japan could be. Viewing Japan as pacifist leads us to overlook the normal role it can play in East Asia; viewing Japan as militarist makes us afraid to trust it as a true partner."

Particularly, it is in the interest of the Philippines to contemplate the previously mentioned questions if it is to preserve and deepen its relations with Japan. A grounded and more circumspect perspective on

Japan would help the Philippines not only explore other viable avenues for cooperation and exchange but also adjust its policy approach vis-à-vis the transitions or exigencies that bilateral partners experience. The maximization of partnership with Japan, as well as with other countries, requires prescience—prescience that comes from an insightful, balanced assessment of not only Philippine realities but also the realities of its bilateral partners.

(This commentary reflects the personal views of the author and does not necessarily reflect any official position of the Department of Foreign Affairs—Editor)

Notes

- ¹ The article by Christian Caryl, “Why Apple Isn’t Japanese,” appeared in the 1 December 2007 issue of Newsweek.
- ² Lexus is a subsidiary of Toyota Motors specializing in luxury cars.

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Reviews

Book Reviews

The Ruling Elite of Singapore: Networks of Power and Influence, Michael D. Barr, I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2014, 224 pp., ISBN 978 178076 234 0.

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED to figure out how Kuan-Yew Lee did it; how he and the Peoples' Action Party transformed a tiny trading town, surrounded by large, unfriendly governments into a commercial and industrial powerhouse. Barr provides all the elements for an explanation. But his conclusion—[I would describe] Singapore as “a Chinese family business, with all roads leading back to the family and the patriarch”(10)—is more than a bit overdrawn.

Lee and his son and successor as Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong, are certainly the most important members of the elite. But their role is mediated by the demand for skill and competence anchored on education and experience. A true family dynasty would put members in positions of power regardless of capability. There is, moreover, no accusation of corruption, of the Lees using their political power to accumulate wealth. At best, Barr says “...the outcomes of this family business have not always been exemplary” (109).

Later in the book, Barr repeats his thesis: “...it makes it a lot easier to understand Singapore if you put aside notions of modernity and ordinary governance, let alone democracy, and begin from the premise that it is a Chinese family business, complete with a patriarch, an eldest son, *guanxi* networks and questions of cross-generational continuity” (108). But it is precisely “notions of modernity and ordinary governance,” which have to be mobilized for an understanding of the Singapore elite. By disregarding what are core concepts of state formation, Barr cannot even locate the importance of the Lees. Whatever you may accuse the Lees of, it is

undeniable that they have built a modern society with state-of-the-art governance.

Not even Barr would dispute that Singapore has been, and is today, a well-run state. It is administered by an efficient and well-organized bureaucracy. Its economic managers have run the economy past many crises and organized high levels of economic growth through many decades. Its per capita GNP is second only to that of oil-rich Brunei. It is the closest thing to a welfare state in the region, with more than 80 percent of the population living in government housing. If you do not acknowledge the Singapore leadership's high level of achievement, you will not understand the importance of education and skill in recruitment to the elite.

Singapore is a one-party state. But it is not, by any measure, a totalitarian state. It is an authoritarian state as the small opposition would certainly insist. The arrest of 22 activists in 1987 was certainly a violation of international standards of civil and political rights. If you make multiparty elections with one party succeeding another on a regular basis a condition of democracy, then Singapore is not one. Political contests for control of government occur mainly within the PAP.

As dominant as Kuan-Yew Lee was in his day, he was no dictator; his position was not unassailable. Kuan-Yew Lee has not always had his way. His colleagues, thankfully, dismantled the "...programmes that encouraged procreation among middle class, tertiary-educated (mostly Chinese) women, and sterilization among low-income, poorly educated (mostly Malay) women" (51). The decrease in the PAP parliamentary majority after the May 2011 general elections led to Lee's "untimely and sudden political decline."

Barr makes much of two other characteristics of the elite, which is mainly Chinese and consists of a relatively small circle of individuals who know each other and were educated in the same schools. Of course, the elite is Chinese; Singapore is three-quarters Chinese. The small size of the elite is also understandable because, as Barr points out, Singapore is a small island state of 3.2 million people. When you factor in education in

elite schools and a system of scholarships for selecting the brightest and most highly motivated students, the circle for recruitment is small indeed.

Barr assigns a central role to the military. “The military has, in a very real sense, provided a new cultural centre of gravity and a new standard for the elite...soldiers have come to presume a central and leading role in the civil service and politics” (85). The role of the military in Singapore is certainly different from its role in Thailand, Burma and Indonesia, where the military has at various points taken direct control of government. Barr himself says “...it might be more accurate to think of the officer corps as armed bureaucrats, rather than as soldiers” (81). I think that the military might be better seen as one more training ground for senior bureaucrats.

The problem with Barr’s framework of analysis is that he does not think Singapore is a “normal” society. Although he does not say so directly, it seems to me that Barr’s idea of a “normal” society is one that is “...becoming more like a Western, capitalist democracy” (50). If Singapore is not “Western,” it must be very tempting to take a turn towards a form of “orientalism”—towards seeing Singapore as run by a “Chinese family business complete with a patriarch, an eldest son, *guanxi* networks.”

Barr also has a problem with the fact that, whatever you call Singapore’s government, it works. It has been effective in organizing economic growth and social services for the population. But in a strange inversion of cause and effect, Barr nowhere calls Singapore a democracy. If it is effective, it must not be a democracy. Writing about Taiwan, Barr points to “...a period of indifferently effective government (which is arguably the normal state of affairs for a democracy in any case)” (139). This is not just historically inaccurate, it also pulls the rug out from democracy activists. We want both democracy and effective government.

Joel ROCAMORA

Tapping Ink, Tattooing Identities: Tradition and Modernity in Contemporary Kalinga Society, Northern Luzon, Philippines, Analyn V. Salvador-Amores, 2013, University of the Philippines Press, 467 pp., ISBN 978 971542 705 0.

BATEK, *BATOK*, AND *WHATOK* are various local words that denote a traditional tattooing practice among the peoples in the Cordillera Region, particularly in the province of Kalinga. Their bodies are inked with figurative designs of snake, centipede, frog, rice grain, and fern plant, among others, and interspersed with geometric motifs and patterns. These traditional tattoos speak strongly about the culture and landscape of the region: signifying rites of passage, or indicating their religious and political status, and sometimes, simply serving as physical adornment. Various meanings and significance of their tattoos are created and produced as the tattooed men and women of Kalinga articulate their own definition and meanings. Such is the foremost concern of the book, *Tapping Ink, Tradition and Modernity in Contemporary Kalinga Society, Northern Luzon, Philippines* by Analyn V. Salvador-Amores. The constructed meanings attached to their tattoos are explored as Salvador-Amores grounds these meanings within the theoretical contexts of tradition and modernity.

Based on a long-term, detailed, and comprehensive ethnographic accounts of the tattooing practice in Butbut, Kalinga, the book offers a fresh insight regarding Kalinga's thriving tattooing practices, which have a long and significant history. Local and foreign tourists flock to this remote village in Northern Luzon to have their skin inked in a traditional manner using *gisi* ("stick with a thorn"); it is done through a continuous hand-tapping on the skin (93). This traditional method is practiced by Whangud (also *Fang-od*), a ninety-one year old female tattoo practitioner (*manwhatok*) in Buscalan, Kalinga, hailed by the local and foreign media as the "last" and the "oldest" tattoo artist (7).

The book provides a thick ethnographic description of tattooing practice in contemporary Kalinga. It delves into the discourse of the

theoretical constructs of “tradition” and “modernity,” and between “authenticity” and “revived” not only as the backdrop of the tattooing practice but also as the framework for understanding the meaning and significance of the practice across time and place. The study problematizes how the definitions of modernity and tradition were constructed. Ideologically and politically grounded, this dichotomy emphasizes the stark tension between the concepts of *advancement* and *development*, and *backwardness* and *traditional*. Salvador-Amores interrogates how these definitions and conceptual parameters are used by other literature in the study of culture and anthropology. She proposes another manner of looking at the practice and presents a more comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon by considering the varied meanings of the traditional/modern/authentic/revival concepts in “relation to the process of tattoo transformation, focusing on how the Butbut, Kalinga regard changes in tattooing given shifts in economic, social and political circumstances” (8).

The meanings of these concepts are considered fluid, dynamic, and adaptive to the given situations of the tattooed individuals and tattoo artists/practitioners. Salvador-Amores emphasizes the process and shifting of meanings of “traditional” and “modern” within the context of the “transformation and engagement of the Kalinga tattoos with technology, mobility, diaspora and globalization” (8). Wherever individuals—Kalinga and non-Kalinga, local and foreign—who were tattooed travel, they carry with them the form and image of Kalinga identity and culture. However, these tattoos are perceived not just as static and passive objects but also as objects that have an active social life. The discussion follows Arjun Appadurai’s (1986) position that objects and artifacts have “lives” or biographies that are acquired through social engagements, diasporic activities, and mobility of the owners/bearers/wearers within human and social contexts. The constructed meanings of the markings serve as entry points in discerning the individual’s and/or the collective’s notions about their identity. It is in this framework that the dichotomies of tradition and modern, authentic and revived, are explored and interrogated. Salvador-Amores uses content analysis of appropriated and recontextualized designs and processes, and relies on in-depth interviews and narratives of the tattooed individuals.

Another notable aspect in the book is the author's proposition to consider tattoo as an "unfinished object." Most of the significant and related anthropological literature on traditional and contemporary tattooing emphasized the meanings of the finished product—tattooed image on the skin as a reflection of the "society's social practices: the body is both a medium and a site of activity" (17). In Butbut tattoos, the value and significance of their tattoos lie not only in the physical appearance, or the physical pain associated in the process of hand-tapped tattooing, but also in their symbolic connotations as inscriptions of beliefs and customs. These traditions speak highly about their culture and identity, regardless of whether they are considered as finished or unfinished works.

As a comprehensive research work, the book yields further significant insights on the value of thick ethnographic descriptions that can be culled from prolonged and extensive fieldwork; in-depth interviews with tattoo artists, practitioners, and with Kalinga and non-Kalinga tattooed individuals; use of participant observation method through interactions with the locals; learning and acquiring the local language; engaging in conversations; artifact descriptions; oral narratives and stories from tattooed men and women in Kalinga; the author's having herself tattooed; and documenting the life of Whang-ud, as well as her approaches and practice in tattooing. Whang-ud's narrative reflects the condition and state of traditional art and culture in Kalinga, which is currently transitioning towards modern and contemporary practices with reference to traditional arts. Such approaches and methods in the study of traditional tattoos serve as a vital source of information and knowledge about Philippine traditional and contemporary tattooing practices; these include the dynamic interplay between traditional and modern, tattooing designs, forms, images, processes, techniques, and meanings.

Maria Sharon MAPA-ARRIOLA

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Poetry

Human Wrong

Mohiuddin AHMAD

It was a whopping ground
Arid land without a bit of green
And there came a herd of cow
A drove of goat
A flock of sheep
A bunch of pig
They came with intent
To talk about their plight
They were all domesticated
A few of them cleave to no civility
They emulate Homo sapiens

An arrogant cow proclaimed
I'll be the moderator
Why
Because I'm big
And I drip as much milk
As all goats make in a group

A senior goat with beard bickered
We're more creative
My lady breeds two kids in one go
Sometimes three or four
So I deserve to be the chair

A healthy swine nodded her head
If reproduction is the need
I proliferate more
But that's not the point
I am straightforward
We move in straight lines
Even many men imitate us
Like a pig-headed politician
Or a President for life
Sitting tight on the throne says
"I can give you stability"

A somber sheep differed with a dissent
If creation is the condition
Then I'm the natural choice
I produce wool
This is renewable
That's the sustainability criterion

There was an eminent bull
He was wise and astute
He gazed at all calmly
And said with a sharp tongue
My shit is used by humans
To expiate the sinner
To smear the floor
To grow the flower
To plant the rice
To produce energy
But in the colloquiums
They talk bullshit
And draft declarations
That nobody reads
They need a chair
To keep order with a hammer

Men need a moderator
As they are not civil
They have billion totems
They speak million lingoes
They create borders
They make fences
They produce guns
They erect prisons
They cage women
They kill fetus
They use ballot
Then rig the result
And parley on good governance

This is not the end of the story
 They call names
 Of their own folks such as
 Son of a bitch
 Or an ass-hole
 Or a snake in the grass
 Or a kangaroo court
 Or smelling a rat
 Or a paper tiger
 Or a stalking horse
 Or a pig in a poke
 Or crocodile tears
 They abuse us indeed

There was a poet-philosopher
 He affirmed that
 Parliament is a pound of pig
 Isn't it proper to say
 Senators are worse
 Than any filthy being
 We don't have a Senate
 Nor we need it
 We don't breed criminals
 Hence we don't need law
 Nor any attorney or a judge

Men slaughter us
 In the name of Kali
 The symbol of power
 In the name of God
 The most gracious and merciful
 Men fix charity dinner
 To foster philanthropy
 Their carnivorous teeth
 Chew, suck, lick and eat
 Mutton stew and beef steak
 They belch with loud noise
 And swear for animal rights

Men starve our kids
 To fill their stomach
 With our milk
 The swindlers smugly say
 They're vegetarian
 They don't eat flesh
 Yet they take out our skin
 And make footwear
 What a hoax
 Better leave us alone
 And mind your own rights

We are not Homo sapiens
 We are innocuous animals
 In our lexicon
 There is no pimp no whore
 No lesbian no gay
 No marriage no divorce
 No police no prison
 No master no servant
 No lender no borrower

Some men are kind and caring
 They lived with us in the past
 Abraham, Jacob and Moses
 Krishna, Jesus and Muhammad
 They were good shepherds
 And brought the message of love

Haven't you read Sufi poet Rumi
 "We're children of God, his infants
 As the Prophet has said
 All belong to His family
 From mosquito to elephant
 All are in His family
 And for them He is the best
 provider"

Look what the Sikhs say
 "We are all cattle and
 God almighty is our shepherd"

Some men love animals
 They have our names
 Take the example of John Bull
 Or Vincent Fox
 Or Alan Lamb
 Or Honuman Singh
 Once Bill Clinton confessed
 "While Hillary is away
 I sleep with my dog"
 What a lover of the living

In these days men are mean
 King Richard was an exception
 He had an animal's heart
 The lion-hearted as he was called
 Does man has a heart
 Humans talk about child abuse
 They speak of domestic violence
 There is strong connection
 Between the two
 Where there is physical abuse
 Of children and women
 There're records of animal abuse
 Humans find it through studies
 We don't need a study

We see abuse of pets and livestock
 Even animal lover humans are divided
 One group says
 Slaughter animals in a humane way
 Use them in the circus for profit
 But feed them well with love

Our animal rights theory is different
 Don't use us as your property
 Don't trade us as commodity
 Don't use our body to test your drug
 And don't kill us for your food

When you raze a home
 Rape a child
 Kill your daughter in the womb
 You call it beastliness
 Don't you know
 Beasts don't do that
 We love each other
 We believe in free sex
 We don't fight for that
 We have no Troy no Helen
 We don't traffic our kids
 To trade their flesh

We don't yoke others
 We don't need covenants
 We don't need a chair
 Nor a presidium
 Nor a federation
 Nor a secretariat
 Nor a parliament
 We need land
 Grazing land
 Land with green grass
 Beautiful and bountiful grass
 Men are selfish
 Mean and wicked
 For their greed
 We're in the soup
 An they're in the pink

They've seized our land
 The green is lost
 They are sucking the water
 From the womb of the earth
 To make turf for golf
 With neo-liberal grass
 To plant poison to smoke
 To create cage to dwell

Oh men listen to us
We need you on our side
You don't have to be a cop or a
lawyer
Or a judge to fight animal cruelty
All you need is the courage
To speak up for those
Who cannot speak for them

Men you have forgotten
What Imam Ghazali said
"Once I was a slave
Lust was my Master
Lust then became my servant
And I became free"
Men if you want freedom
Wipe out your greed
Be kind to us and the earth
Don't ruin lives and the green

The gracious green is lost
The precious tree is gone
The steppe is a fairy-tale
The prairie is dead forever
The pasture is now police barrack

We want our land back
Our green grassland

Student Lovers on a Hopei September

Thomas David CHAVES

We pick oranges by
The schoolyard the sun

Sets to blanket the first shivers
Of Tangxun Lake when

An old fisherman smile fat as
An ox comes slugging a whale

Of a carp across his chest to
Cross the students' path

Between grove and shore
As they head home in clasped

Hands the earth a palpable
Fruit between their kissing

Thumbs to canter home like
Sleepy cormorants thinking of

The Spring Festival a season
Away of perfumed presents to

Exchange between their vows
Of plucked stars and rains of

Pluckier meteorites and loves undying
For the rabbit to hop twelve moons

Away they will harvest again with
New hands faces hearts lips between the

Oranges the older fisherman coming
Out a carp fatter than the

Sun a smile wider than the
Crescent moon.

About the Contributors

Mohiuddin AHMAD is an economist by training, a researcher by profession, a poet by passion, and an occasional columnist. As a freedom fighter, he directly participated in the armed resistance movement against the Pakistani occupation army for the liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. He obtained an M.A. from Dhaka University in 1973. Mr. Ahmad has been in the field of development since 1977. He is a well-known social communicator, a development practitioner, and a solidarity activist in the region. He has been an ARENA (Asian Regional Exchanges for New Alternatives) Fellow since 1983, a founder member of South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE) since 2001, and Chairperson of Jubilee South-Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD) from 2005 to 2010. Mr. Ahmad has so far authored and edited 38 books, including seven poems, two novelettes, and several research studies, gazetteers and essays. He writes both in Bangla and English.

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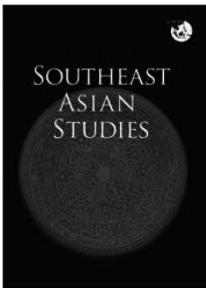
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