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From Passivity to Political Resource: The Catholic Church and the Development of Nationalism in East Timor

CHRIS LUNDRY

The wave of political and economic turmoil sweeping Southeast Asia, beginning with the devaluation of the Thai baht in July 1997 and leading to the ousters of Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and Indonesia's President Suharto in 1998, has focused attention on the region more than at any other time since the Vietnam War. Questions that have remained below the surface for decades, such as the extent of religious, ethnic and political conflicts within Indonesia and the fate of surviving Khmer Rouge members in Cambodia, are receiving attention in the media, and in some cases steps are being taken toward their resolution. One such conflict, often justified in realpolitik terms or deemed insignificant and ignored altogether, is Indonesia's involvement in East Timor. Governments that could have acted to stop the unfolding tragedy from the late 1970s to the 1990s did not, their complicity justified by their relationships to the Suharto regime and the economic and political benefits that came with it. When Suharto abdicated in May 1998, his successor B.J. Habibie took the reins of a state faced with a myriad of problems, not the least of which was the fate of East Timor. Yet Habibie's approach differed from Suharto's, and after negotiations were completed in May of 1999 a referendum to decide the territory's future was held on August 30.[1] Much of the credit for providing a context for Jakarta's reassessment must go to the Roman Catholic Church of East Timor, as the church has not only provided a safe haven (where possible) against the

depredations of the Indonesian army (TNI)[2] but has also been a major source of reliable information about human rights abuses.

Despite the importance of the Roman Catholic Church in East Timor, little has been written about church-state relations in the aftermath of the Indonesian invasion. Thus, following a brief introductory overview of the East Timor conflict, this chapter examines the political role of the Roman Catholic Church in East Timor. In sections two and three it summarizes the origins and development of the church in East Timor, briefly touching on the impact of Vatican II, and then discusses the reactions of different church leaders to the Indonesian occupation of East Timor, noting how the stature of church leaders grew as they worked to protect the population. Section four details the activities of the Catholic Church under occupation, and section five discusses strategies employed by the Indonesian government and TNI to undermine church institutions and discredit church officials. Next is a brief summary of events surrounding the referendum and its aftermath. The conclusion includes a discussion of the implications of these findings. Concurrent with José Casanova's findings regarding the "deprivatization" of religion, especially within the Polish context as well as that of the Philippines, the church in East Timor is decidedly "public" and will remain so.

A significant transformation occurred within the church soon after the Indonesian invasion. The inculturation or "Timorization" of the church took place, and the church became the only tolerated public representation of civil society. This in turn contributed to the birth of Timorese nationalism. Increasingly the church acted as a refuge for those persecuted by TNI and as a source of information about atrocities committed against the Timorese following an Indonesian media blackout, the former fulfilling a traditional role, and the latter representing work more closely associated with that of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The church, as an institution, played an instrumental role in the birth of nationalism, and this role has firmly established the church in East Timor as a "public" church and will influence the development of East Timor from nation to nation-state.

Background of the Conflict

After some conflict between the Dutch and Portuguese over possession of the island, Timor was formally divided in half in 1915 with the signing of the Senteca Arbitral; the Dutch controlled the western half (closest to the rest of the Dutch East Indies) and the Portuguese controlled the eastern half along with the enclave of Oecusse. Although the Netherlands lost control of the East Indies, including West Timor, in 1949 when Indonesia became independent, Portugal maintained its colonial grip on the eastern half of Timor. Nevertheless, Portuguese influence in East Timor during the colonial period was minimal in comparison with nearby colonies. The Portuguese were primarily interested in sandalwood extraction and the export of coffee, and, later, copra. They built few roads (only about 20 kilometers, centered around the capital city Dili, a seaport), leaving the population isolated during the rainy season (Guillain, 1995). A few Catholic missionaries accompanying the Portuguese occupation established several schools and converted a modest percentage (about 25%) of the mostly animist population (Aditjondro, 1994: 69).

Portugal began severing its colonial ties in July 1974, following the relatively peaceful revolution "of the carnations" (so named because student protesters placed carnations in soldiers' gun barrels) that brought a left-wing government to power. East Timor began a move toward independence, although Portugal maintained a small presence, and three major political parties formed: the Timorese Popular Democratic Association (APODETI); the Timorese Democratic Union (UDT); and the Association of Timorese Social Democrats (ASDT), which later became the Revolutionary Front for Independent East Timor (FRETILIN). APODETI favored integration with Indonesia, UDT originally favored ties with Portugal, but later became pro-independence, and FRETILIN favored independence following a brief transitional period of decolonization. APODETI was by far the smallest party, consisting of only a few hundred members, mostly landowners with strong economic ties to the Indonesian government (Dunn, 1983: 71-77). UDT and FRETILIN,

both with larger and more diverse memberships, quickly joined forces and worked for independence upon realizing that their goals had become convergent, but they were subsequently set against one another by Indonesian machinations.

Indonesia closely monitored the increasing political activity in East Timor, as did the United States and Australia, and decided that the destabilization of East Timor would help justify an invasion, although at this point Indonesia had very little to fear. There were but two potential concerns for Indonesia regarding East Timor's independence: the possibility of a power vacuum that could have welcomed outside intervention from communist countries or others unfriendly to Indonesia; and/or the possibility that an independent East Timor might serve as an example to separatist movements in other areas of Indonesia, such as Irian Jaya. These reasons are considered unfounded as well as unrealistic, giving rise to the notion that Indonesia's invasion was primarily for economic reasons (Hoadley, 1977: 133-42; Lundry, 1998).

Soon the Indonesian government split the two pro-independence parties by starting false rumors among UDT members about FRETILIN, such as purported meetings with North Vietnamese in East Timor, and of a planned FRETILIN assault (Jolliffe, 1978: 118-19, 120-33, 136-43). The result was a brief civil war between FRETILIN and UDT in August of 1975. The remaining Portuguese fled East Timor, and, despite Indonesia's backing of UDT, FRETILIN won with relatively few casualties on either side (Freney, 1975: 32-37). FRETILIN set up a de facto government, and began infrastructure projects such as the construction of schools and government offices. Following Indonesian military border incursions, and knowing that an invasion loomed, FRETILIN declared independence unilaterally on November 28, 1975, in the hope of receiving international recognition.

On December 7, 1975, Indonesia invaded East Timor. Jakarta's justification for the invasion was based in part on the July 17, 1975, Balibo declaration (reportedly signed by members of the UDT and APODETI,

who controlled a combined popular support of around 15-25%), which called for integration of East Timor with Indonesia.[3] Approximately 60,000 East Timorese were killed within the first two months of fighting, followed over the next several years by another 140,000, representing one-third of East Timor's population (Jolliffe, 1978: 301; Jardine, 1995: 22; Pilger, 1994: 16). The Indonesian government reported a figure of between 15,000 and 50,000 deaths resulting from the civil war and not the Indonesian invasion (Dunn, 1983: 320-23). While Jakarta still claims a death toll of 50,000, most independent analysts give that number little credibility, noting that the figure of 200,000 reflects more accurate church census data (Dunn, 1983: 3-4).

FRETILIN was driven into the mountains. Indonesian military occupation ensued, creating a climate of terror that included intense aerial bombardments, the deployment of death squads, and the use of random killings and rape to cow the population. TNI created networks of East Timorese informers, and at one point during military actions against FRETILIN, in a campaign dubbed *pagar bentis* (fence of legs), forced a reported 80,000 civilians between the ages of eight and 50 to walk in front of soldiers as human shields in an effort to ferret out guerrillas hiding in the forest and veldt. Hundreds were killed and "innumerable" others died of starvation (Aditjondro, 1994: 11). Hundreds and perhaps thousands "disappeared," while others received lengthy prison sentences handed down by kangaroo courts (Human Rights Watch Asia, 1994: 21-35; Amnesty International, 1994: 29-31, 50-54, 69-71, 83-86). In addition, military occupation resulted in widespread environmental degradation, the resettlement of large segments of the population without adequate provisions for employment, and the payment of sub-standard wages to East Timorese workers. The continuous nature of TNI's abuses was underscored in a report by the National Council of Maubere Resistance (CNRM)[4] that stated that the human rights situation in early 1996 was the worst that it had been since the Dili massacre in late 1991 (National Council of Maubere Resistance, 1996).

Following the occupation, the Indonesian government used its transmigration program (*transmigrasi*) to move citizens from over-crowded islands such as Java to East Timor. This strategy diluted the East Timorese population.[5] However, transmigrants were not the only people moving to East Timor. "Spontaneous" or "voluntary" migration took place as well, by people from all over Indonesia. An estimated 25,000 heads of families migrated to East Timor in 1989 alone, and in 1992 it was estimated that 100,000 Indonesians were living in East Timor, out of a total population of 750,000 (Jardine, 1995: 64). Along with *transmigrasi*, the government implemented its five-tiered development plan, including agriculture, health, education, communications, and government apparatus (Saldanha, 1994:121).

For over twenty years, Indonesia occupied East Timor and created a climate of terror. Foreign journalists were either barred from entry into East Timor, or closely monitored (Guillain, 1995). A huge military presence was widely visible in East Timor, with estimates totaling around 20,000 during the voting process, a higher soldier-to-civilian ratio than anywhere else in Indonesia (Aditjondro, 1995). On the few occasions that diplomats or observers were let into East Timor during the Suharto era, soldiers disguised themselves as civilians, and coerced the indigenous population into showing approval of the occupation (Guillain, 1995). Occasional violence flared up, such as the Santa Cruz Cemetery massacre of over 200 mourning and demonstrating civilians on November 12, 1991.

The United Nations never recognized Indonesia's claim to East Timor, and passed ten resolutions upholding the right of the East Timorese to self-determination. Yet very little was done, especially by the major powers, to alleviate the suffering inflicted on the East Timorese by the Indonesian occupation. Not all stood by silently, however. Increasingly, the Roman Catholic Church of East Timor spoke out against the abuses of Indonesian military occupation and risked persecution by providing sanctuary to East Timorese. In standing up for the East Timorese, the church unwittingly sowed the seeds of nationalism.

Background of the Catholic Church in East Timor

In order to understand the significance of the transformation of the East Timorese Catholic Church, it is necessary to review its background. Portuguese Dominicans were the first to land on the island of Timor, coming from the Moluccas in 1562. In line with doctrine at the time, the church attempted to convert the animist Timorese, although the scope of the missionaries' reach was limited in the early period. Schools were built by Salesian priests and Dominican and Claretian nuns, but education was not widespread, and was confined mostly to *suco* chiefs and *liurai* (village leaders) who were baptized and educated; an important byproduct of this process was to consolidate the chiefs' and *liurai*'s authority (Taylor, 1991: 152). From 1834 to 1875, missionaries were banned in East Timor in conjunction with a state ban on their activities imposed by the Liberals in Lisbon, and again for a decade starting in 1910 with the declaration of the Republic.

In 1940 President Antonio Oliveira Salazar signed a concordat with Rome, signaling a closer link between the church and the Portuguese government. The Concordat declared the "imperial usefulness" and "civilizing influence" of the Catholic missions operated by the Portuguese (Taylor, 1991: 13). The Concordat established the Diocese of Dili, thereby ending the subordination of the church in East Timor to the See of Macao, which resulted in a skyrocketing of the conversion rate. Education in the Portuguese colonies was entrusted to the Roman Catholic Church under the tutelage of the state, and Timorese children were socialized with colonial values as a byproduct of their education. The Jesuit seminary of Nossa Senhora de Fatima was opened in Dare in 1958 to create a native clergy and to offer secondary education for young men not destined for the priesthood (Hull, 1992: 5-6).

The Second Universal Council (Vatican II, 1962-65) recommended a re-examination of church-state alignments and enjoined priests and nuns everywhere to make social justice issues part of the "call to evangelization" (Anyawu, 1987: 275-76). However, the impact of Vatican II — at least

initially — was limited in East Timor. Education remained in the hands of what was essentially a conservative church, although there were signs that some Jesuits had already begun to teach about Asian nationalism and alternative methods of development by the mid-1960s. The Jesuits also criticized Portuguese colonialism, not in a revolutionary manner but based on the social teachings of the church. As Geoffrey Hull notes, "discrepancies between Salazar's corporatist state and the principles of a corporative society set out by Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno* were... common subjects of discussion in church circles in Portugal" (1992: 7). That the impact of Vatican II's teachings was hardly felt in East Timor is consistent with findings from Latin America, a region where the Roman Catholic Church is generally considered to be more socially conscious and politically active. For example, Anthony Gill notes that "if all Latin American bishops were exposed to the progressive ideas of Vatican II... then change should have occurred uniformly across the region. This was hardly the case." Bishops predisposed to denouncing injustice found that the reforms gave them leeway to pursue their goals; bishops not so inclined "could simply drag their feet or ignore the Council's recommendations altogether" (Gill, 1998: 45-6).

Following Vatican II, the church in East Timor remained "at heart a foreign church" and the clergy conservative; they remain so to some degree to this day. Before the invasion, priests were aloof and disdainful of rural Timorese. The church was identified with the state and the clergy was charged with implementing government policies (Taylor, 1991: 152). Even today, East Timorese priests and nuns "wear full religious dress, the traditional catechism is taught, people are trained to behave reverently in church, and such innovations as Communion in the hand, lay ministers of the Eucharist and general absolutions are unknown and unwanted" (Hull, 1992: 13). Despite the liturgical conservatism, however, the social role of the clergy has changed dramatically since Vatican II and, especially, in the aftermath of the Indonesian invasion. With the isolation of the church that accompanied the early years of the occupation, priests found themselves identifying with the persecuted Timorese and becoming more engaged socially and politically. Soon the Catholic priests came to be

viewed as the leaders of their communities. Preaching and catechism were conducted in Portuguese; to become Christian and to become culturally Portuguese were in effect the same thing.

In the late 1960s, a Catholic newspaper emerged called *Seara*. Since it was a Church publication, it stood outside of the normal censorship laws and gave voice to emerging Catholic and Muslim nationalists such as Jose Ramos Horta, Nicolau Lobatau, and Mari Alkatiri, all of whom were taught at the seminary in Dare. The paper regularly taught Tetum, the lingua franca of East Timor, and ran articles about social concerns. The Policia Internacional de Defesa do Estado, the Portuguese secret police force, closed the paper in 1973 when the articles turned increasingly political. Still, the paper had allowed a group of nationalists, some of whom had seen movements in Portugal's African colonies during terms of exile, to meet clandestinely (Jolliffe, 1978: 55-7). Many of these nationalists went on to play prominent roles in the political parties that formed in the interregnum of 1974-75. All overt non-integrationist politics halted, however, with the Indonesian invasion.

The Reaction of East Timorese Church Leaders

Bishop Dom José Joaquim Riberio was the head of the church in East Timor during the invasion. Amendments to the Portuguese Constitution that preceded the 1974 revolution in Lisbon foretold of the fragility of the relationship between Portugal and its African colonies and, ultimately, East Timor. Riberio responded to the overthrow of the Salazar regime in a pastoral letter, "Regarding the New Situation," issued on January 25, 1974. He asserted the church's willingness to adapt to the times:

> All priests and missionary personnel are glad to see new opportunities opening up. The Church is aware of the social and political conditions affecting the life of the people. Times are different for the Church as well as the people... The Bishop and the priests are looking forward

> towards the future: we want a Timor that is progressive, just, peaceful and Catholic (Jolliffe, 1978: 93).

As parties formed in East Timor after the 1974 revolution, Riberio warned his congregation in a thinly veiled attack on FRETILIN that a vote for communism was a vote against God, even though FRETILIN did not espouse communist ideology, and most of the FRETILIN leadership had received their education at Dare and were practicing Catholics.

Again in March 1975 Riberio told a delegation from the Australian Parliament of his apprehension about communism, and warned that although the people of East Timor were anti-communist, influences from overseas were affecting politics in East Timor. "Dialogue is alright at the European level of culture," he stated, "but not here where the people are not sophisticated" (Jolliffe, 1978: 93-4). As relations between UDT and FRETILIN deteriorated later in 1975, Riberio allegedly told a group of UDT leaders that North Vietnamese communists had landed in East Timor to train FRETILIN. Although untrue, which the Indonesian government knew, Bishop Riberio's assertion was treated as authoritative and circulated in Indonesia's controlled press (Jolliffe, 1978: 118). What troubled Riberio was FRETILIN's advocacy of a separation between church and state, which would end the privileged role of the Catholic Church in East Timor, and thus it was not difficult for him to believe that FRETILIN was infiltrated by communists.

Yet in 1977, Riberio stepped down after suffering a breakdown, reportedly caused by witnessing Indonesian army brutalities. His successor, East Timor-born Bishop Martinho da Costa Lopes, said of Riberio:

> Oh, poor man, he could not cope at all. The whole situation was more than he could bear. All he did was cry -- cry every time he heard about what the Indonesians were doing. He just cried and cried. Also, you must not forget, he is Portuguese, and it wounded his feelings very deeply to see the Indonesians pull down Portuguese flags

> and trample on everything Portuguese. So he asked the Vatican to allow him to resign... He is now living in Portugal and he is a very sick man (Jolliffe, 1978: 117-18).

Lopes was appointed as Apostolic Administrator instead of bishop, making him accountable directly to Rome as there was no connection between the East Timorese Catholic Church and the Indonesian Bishop's Conference (IBC). The Vatican's stance was cautious, and interpreted as not supportive of Indonesian rule. The Vatican considered East Timor a disputed territory. Since the East Timorese Catholic Church was independent from the IBC and therefore Indonesian control, it was able to monitor atrocities and distribute information with little Indonesian hindrance (Archer, 1995: 126-27; Hull, 1992: 12). Furthermore it allowed the church to become "a major challenge to Indonesia's moral authority and the main impediment to integration" (Gunn, 1994: 144).

Initially, Lopes was reluctant to speak out publicly about the atrocities in East Timor, although he spoke in private with the Indonesian military leaders.[6] After his pleas were ignored, however, he turned to outspoken criticism in 1981, first in sermons then in the form of letters smuggled out of the country. Within East Timor he established a network among church sources for gathering information about TNI's actions that provided a detailed picture of the military abuses (Taylor, 1991: 153).

On January 11, 1982, Lopes published a letter in the *Sydney Morning Herald* condemning a massacre of at least 500 East Timorese at the shrine of St. Anthony's Rock, near Lacluta. Lopes' letter was followed by reports from "Church sources" that half of East Timor's population faced serious food shortages (Taylor, 1990: 33). The letter sent a shock wave through the Australian public, and, by implication, criticized Australia for its inaction. Former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, in an attempt to discredit the Bishop and defend his much-criticized stance on East Timor, was subsequently flown to Dili by the Center for Strategic and International Studies, an Indonesian think-tank with links to the Indonesian military headed at that time by General Ali Moertopo. With an Australian reporter

in tow, Whitlam was given a sanitized tour to show that the situation was not as Lopes described, prompting Whitlam to state that he could not understand why Lopes "perpetrated this wicked act and sent this cruel letter." Whitlam's "one-sided slanging match" was echoed by the reporter (Gunn, 1994: 143).

Lopes came under increasing pressure from the Indonesian government and the Pro Nuncio in Jakarta, especially after his outspoken criticism of the *pagar bentis* campaign. He was also pressured by the Vatican, which was hesitant to make waves in East Timor for fear of consequences in Indonesia. Although members of the Catholic Church in Indonesia represent a small minority (around three percent of the population), they are a powerful constituency. The Vatican was concerned that they might come under threat, and it also expressed concern that since most of the aid going to East Timor at this time came through Catholic relief agencies, criticism might endanger their operations. The Vatican sought a practical middle path. Lopes summarized his view of the Vatican's stance: "It was a great dream at the Vatican to expand the Catholic Church in Indonesia... The little ones are being sacrificed for big interests" (Kohen, 1999: 112-13). He resigned on May 16, 1983, returned to Lisbon, and almost immediately began a world tour speaking about the injustice in East Timor (Budiardjo and Liong, 1984: 149).

Lopes was succeeded by Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, who was also appointed as Apostolic Administrator. Belo received a cool reception at first, and was branded at his installation by a group of priests as a "Vatican-appointed puppet of the Indonesians."[7] The apprehension of the Timorese priests was based on the fact that Belo was educated in Europe and had not been in Timor since before the invasion. As Belo became aware of the situation (after just fifteen days he gave an estimate of the strength of the FRETILIN force to a priest in Jakarta (Taylor, 1990: 40), he began to speak out as Lopes had done, and his image changed. No longer was he viewed as pro-Jakarta, and no longer did he believe that peace was coming to East Timor. Increasingly Belo began gathering data and making independent judgments.

When the IBC asked Belo in 1983 to consider the integration of the enclave of Oecusse with West Timor, he went there and determined that the people of Oecusse considered themselves East Timorese and wished to remain separate from West Timor, which he reported back to the Pro Nuncio in Jakarta as grounds for the enclave remaining East Timorese (Budiardjo, 1984: 123). In 1986 Belo withdrew his priests from Pancasila indoctrination sessions in protest of the beating of several priests, and he also convinced the IBC to write a letter reaffirming its neutrality on the question of the integration of East Timor with Indonesia. In 1988, he was promoted to bishop by the Vatican.[8] A year later he wrote to the UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar in favor of an act of self-determination, stating that the people of East Timor were "dying as a people and as a nation" (Budiardjo, 1994: 14).

Later that year, the Pope included East Timor as a stop during his visit to Indonesia. A demonstration erupted after the Papal mass, and forty demonstrators were given refuge by Belo at his residence. The demonstrators were subsequently violently removed from his residence and subjected to torture, amidst the protests of Belo (Gunn, 1994: 157-58).

Belo's activism resulted in two assassination attempts, one in 1989 and another in 1991 (Carey, 1996: 14). His statements condemning TNI's actions during the 1991 Santa Cruz Cemetery massacre likewise put him under considerable duress (Gunn, 1994: 232). He was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1995, and in 1996 he shared the Nobel Peace Prize with José Ramos Horta. His courage has been called "an inspiration for many Timorese" and "a living affirmation of the solidarity between church and people... Belo, like (imprisoned resistance leader) Xanana (Gusmão), is essential to any long-term settlement in East Timor" (Carey, 1996: 14). In the aftermath of the referendum, Belo became a target for the militia, his residence was destroyed, and he fled to Australia for refuge. He has since returned to East Timor, and has continued to openly criticize the Indonesian military commanders in a call for a human rights tribunal.

The Functions of the Church

Although the roles of both Lopes and Belo were crucial in galvanizing the resistance, providing relief and disseminating information, their work would have been impossible were it not for a sympathetic clergy. Perhaps the single most important factor in the development of nationalism in East Timor was the inculturation of the clergy. The departure of Portuguese church officials from East Timor during the brief civil war and the Indonesian invasion fostered the "Timorization" of the clergy left behind. Moreover, according to Carmel Budiardjo and Liem Soei Liong, the Portuguese clergy who remained fled with the majority of the population to the mountains:

> The withdrawal of the religious and the retreat of the Portuguese colonial administration shattered the old system into which the Church had so snugly fitted. The disintegration of the Portuguese Catholic Church in East Timor accelerated the transformation of the Church into a national church (1984: 118).

The Timorese people felt betrayed by their departure, but it strengthened the position of the clergy who remained, who forgot their earlier antagonism toward FRETILIN and "came to see them as the only champions of the Maubere" (Hull, 1992: 11). Most of the indigenous Timorese clergy went to school at the seminary at Dare alongside those who became the leaders of FRETILIN. Clergy brought down from the mountains by TNI spoke out against the invasion and in favor of FRETILIN (Taylor, 1991: 153). A further step toward inculturation was the Vatican's allowance of Tetum to be used as the liturgical language, thereby circumventing the Indonesian ban on Portuguese.[9]

While in the mountains with FRETILIN, the clergy converted large numbers of Timorese. This was not FRETILIN policy, but was not condemned either (Pinto, 1996: 47). Conversion to Roman Catholicism skyrocketed and is estimated at over 95% (at least nominally[10]) today for

several reasons. First, under Indonesian law, one must belong to one of five officially recognized religions — Christianity (Protestantism), Buddhism, Hinduism, Catholicism or Islam — and thus the animists of East Timor, representing a vast majority of the population, were considered godless (atheism is often equated with communism in Indonesia). Second, under the severe persecution of the occupying Indonesian army, the Catholic Church was a place of refuge (Jardine, 1995: 67; Mubyarto, 1991: 30). Third, there was a certain prestige attached to being a member of the church. Fourth, the Catholic Church allowed the East Timorese to congregate in large numbers and to speak their native language, and the iconography of Catholicism substituted for that of their animist beliefs (Aditjondro, 1994: 69; Kohen, 1999: 29). Finally, the church was viewed by East Timorese in the mountains "as a place of resistance" (Franks, 1996:163).

Along with providing refuge for those under duress from the Indonesians, the church distributed aid. Belo allowed demonstrators from the Pope's visit and the Santa Cruz Cemetery massacre to stay at his residence. When the demonstrators were either forcibly removed or turned over to the authorities, Belo made an agreement with the military that allowed him to visit them to ensure that they would be treated humanely (often they were not) and publicized their names to draw attention to their plight and lessen their risk of death while imprisoned (Pinto: 1996: 110-12). The church was the only institution to escape severe persecution after the invasion and has also provided assistance to thousands of widowed and orphaned victims of the conflict.

The church was the main distributor of foreign aid that came in the wake of mass starvation in the early years of the war. Often this aid, although donated from international sources such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and Catholic Relief Services (CRS), had to be bought from the Indonesians. The aid from CRS, however, was criticized by the Australian Council for Overseas Aid (ACFOA). The ACFOA charged that CRS was serving as "an extension of American foreign policy the purpose of which is to secure and complete the takeover of an unwilling

East Timor." Although CRS was praised for saving many lives, its *modus operandi* drew criticism. CRS only worked through the Indonesian government as opposed to the local church, and focused primarily on resettlement areas created by TNI as part of its population control exercise. The ACFOA argued that the sites could not become self-sufficient and that the CRS aid was only deepening the structure of dependence (Gunn, 1994: 216-17). Still, without CRS aid there is no doubt the death toll would have been higher.

Apart from scattered accounts of refugees and the occasional reports of individuals who managed to get in and out of the territory, the church was the main source of information for the outside world, often through letters smuggled out by clergy. The network established by Lopes continued under Belo's tutelage. The arrangement with the Vatican ensured that:

> throughout the occupation the Catholic Church was the only local institution that communicated independently with the outside world, maintained institutional connections with an international structure, and therefore could guard for itself a certain independence from the Indonesian authorities (Archer, 1995: 126).

The church provided reliable information about the names and numbers of victims of TNI's torture and abuses (Budiardjo and Liong, 1984: 50). The extent of information gathering, suggesting an extensive and complex network, is evident in the number of citations attributed to church sources in reports on East Timor since the mid-1970s.

Lopes, and subsequently Belo, along with the Council of Catholic Priests in East Timor, resisted calls for integration with the IBC. Instead, they pressured the IBC to join them in condemning the Indonesian occupation and defending the right of the East Timorese to self-determination. Their pleas fell on deaf ears until 1988, when the Pro Nuncio in Jakarta wrote a letter of solidarity to Belo expressing his support and understanding for why the East Timorese wanted to remain separate (Taylor, 1990: 73). The Catholic

Bishop's Conference of the United States (USCBC) also issued statements criticizing the Indonesian government's intimidation of the East Timorese Roman Catholic Church (Taylor, 1990: 68).

East Timorese church officials, supported by the USCBC and others, vehemently protested the Indonesian family planning program. In 1985, the Indonesian press reported that 31.7% of "productive couples" were administered depo provera (Taylor, 1990: 53). Often women receiving birth control were not told about potential side effects, and sometimes were not even told that they were receiving birth control. Similarly, there were reports of women being sterilized via tubal ligation while under anesthesia and without their knowledge. Other reports indicated that some pregnant women were forced to abort, and birth control was administered to girls as young as age twelve. Women who reported problems associated with birth control often had few choices; Indonesian doctors charged for visits that most East Timorese could not afford to pay. Government birth control practices spread fear among East Timorese women, and they no longer felt safe visiting state clinics. Instead they grew to trust only church clinics.[11]

The Roman Catholic Church in East Timor played a key role in protecting the East Timorese population from the abuses of TNI, and in so doing contributed significantly to the creation of a national movement advocating independence. In February of 1999, Constancio Pinto, the United Nations representative for the CNRT asserted that the East Timorese "survived... because of our faith" and maintained that "if it had not been for the Roman Catholic Church, the resistance would have collapsed" (Steel, 1999).

Indonesian Strategy for Dealing with the Church

According to (then) Major Prabowo, a former officer in East Timor and son-in-law of former president Suharto, "The Church, the religious and the priests are the three factors which threaten East Timor's integration with Indonesia." Prabowo went on to say that "the people must turn

against" the Catholic Church if Indonesia is to succeed in East Timor (Taylor, 1991: 157). The Indonesians pursued several strategies for dealing with the increasingly influential church: co-option; discrediting Catholicism; "Indonesianization" of the clergy and population; vandalism; and Islamization.

In an attempt to co-opt the Catholic education system, school teachers were offered triple their wages to abandon their positions at Catholic schools for teaching at Indonesian state-run schools. The offer was tempting because Catholic schools in East Timor received no state funds, and what support they did receive from overseas Catholic development agencies was channeled through Indonesian Catholic social institutes (Taylor, 1991: 28). Another co-option attempt was revealed in a pamphlet published by TNI that detailed procedures for torture in East Timor and suggested taking pictures of prisoners and soldiers together in the following manner:

> It is better to make attractive photographs, such as shots taken while eating together with the prisoner, or shaking hands with those that have just come down from the bush, showing them in front of a house, and so on. If such photos are circulated in the bush, this is classic way of assuredly undermining their morale and fighting spirits. And if such photos are shown to the priests, this can draw the church into supporting operations to restore security (Military Regional Command, 1982, emphasis mine).

As part of the campaign to discredit the church, Lopes and Belo were demonized in the Indonesian press.[12] In 1984, TNI accused the East Timorese church of being infiltrated by Marxists (Taylor, 1990: 46). Swedish journalist Terja Svabo was allowed into East Timor in 1987, but not allowed to interview priests (Taylor, 1990: 68). Two Jesuits who argued against integration were forced to resign, and condemned by the IBC (Taylor, 1990: 70).

The Indonesianization campaign took root on June 24, 1982 when Foreign Minister Mochtar stated that the Indonesian government would progressively replace foreign missionaries serving in East Timor with Indonesians (Taylor, 1990: 35). However, East Timorese showed a willingness to travel great distances in order to receive sacraments from Timorese priests and in general rejected Indonesian priests (Carey, 1995: 11). Most Indonesian priests were pro-integration, considered colonizers, and not trusted (Archer, 1995: 128; Franks, 1996: 160). Some Indonesian priests were suspected of being members of the "respected citizens and local leaders" groups that bolstered Indonesian control over their communities and "nurtured" members of the pro-Indonesia East Timorese paramilitary teams (TAPOL, 1998: 22-24). The government appeared to foster the Indonesianization of East Timor via the Protestant churches of Indonesia. The Protestant churches, for example, always favored integration, perhaps seeing the region as fertile ground for conversions, and successfully blocked the World Council of Churches when it tried to issue a statement condemning the Indonesian invasion (Budiardjo and Liong, 1984: 124). Indonesianization was likewise helped by Jakarta's *transmigrasi* program, mentioned earlier, whereby tens of thousands of Indonesians were moved to East Timor with the results of dilution of the indigenous population, suffocation of Timorese culture and massive unemployment of the indigenous population (45% in 1995) (Scalla, 1997: 194).

The mass-conversion to Catholicism created animosity between the mostly-Moslem Indonesian occupiers and the Catholic East Timorese that occasionally flared into violence (Mubyarto, 1991: 6).[13] One case involved two plainclothes Indonesian soldiers who attended a Catholic mass and received communion, only to spit out the Eucharist and stomp on it. A fight ensued, and eleven East Timorese were taken into custody (Rights Watch, 1994: 25). In July 1998, while accompanying a group of diplomats to a meeting at the Dili cathedral with the Bishop of Baucau, Basilio dos Nasciemento, Indonesian soldiers angered East Timorese by attempting to carry arms onto the cathedral grounds. The crowd reacted by jumping

on the military van and pelting it with stones. The TNI responded by firing into the crowd, killing one and injuring four others (Aglionby, 1998: 4). Disregard for Catholic sensitivities was also reflected in the widespread acts of vandalism against statues, grottoes and other church property.

In addition to *transmigrasi*, the Indonesian government has encouraged the propagation of Islam in East Timor. Belo wrote to the Council of Indonesian Religious Superiors about the influx of Moslem teachers and preachers, and documented instances of groups of young men being sent to West Timor or Java to study at Moslem educational centers (Taylor, 1990: 72). Moreover the Public Relations Bureau of the Province of East Timor openly spoke of the building of mosques in East Timor, and in a 1990 book showed a photograph of a *bupati* (district chief) being inaugurated by a Moslem cleric (Provincial Government, 1990: 46-58).

The Referendum

In August 1998 the New York Times repeated a claim by the Indonesian military that, as part of its "housecleaning" measures, it had removed thousands of troops from East Timor (Mydans, 1998: A3). However, military documents leaked to Western NGOs showed that the military had not, in fact, withdrawn any troops, but had merely completed a standard troop rotation (Indonesian Military, 1998; Crossette, 1998: A6; Greenlee, 1998; Williams, 1998: 1). The military denied the report, although a number of sources gave it credibility ("Indonesia Denies," 1998: A4; TAPOL 1998: 22-24). Furthermore, the Indonesian military increased arms flows to pro-Indonesia paramilitary groups, resulting in more violence and an influx of refugees in search of sanctuary in Dili and Suai ("Mystery," 1999: 39-40; "Thousands Flee," 1999: A5). Indonesian Foreign Minister Ali Alatas claimed that the pro-referendum groups were "aggressive," and arming paramilitary groups was simply a way to ensure law and order (Spencer, 1999). The pre-existing paramilitary groups prompted Belo to note that East Timor is a place where "one half of

society is paid to spy on the other half" (TAPOL, 1997: 18) and he spoke out against worsening abuses. Belo repeatedly called for a peacekeeping force to stop the violence in East Timor as political uncertainty gripped Indonesia.

After Habibie announced the possibility of a referendum for the region, negotiations began between Indonesia, Portugal, and the United Nations. An agreement was reached in May of 1999 that called for a referendum to be held in early August. Human rights groups pointed to obvious flaws in the agreement, such as allowing the Indonesian military to remain in charge of all security issues and requiring the ratification of the referendum by the MPR (Majelis Pemusyawaratan Rakyat, the electoral congress), even though it would not meet until mid-October, allowing a period of uncertainty in the territory if independence was to be chosen. The United Nations pushed back the date of the referendum twice, eventually settling on August 30, in response to increasing violence and uncertainty over preparation for the vote. In the days leading up to the vote, observer groups sent out letters to the UN questioning its preparedness, and some considered withdrawing in protest as an attempt to erode the legitimacy of the vote.

However, on August 30, 1999, the referendum took place. Initial confusion was smoothed out as the day progressed as UN workers figured out solutions to problems that arose, such as general disorder at polling stations. The vote proceeded with less violence than was expected, and over 98 percent of registered voters showed up at the polls, proving that Indonesia's intimidation strategy had failed to stop people from voting. Many voters expressed the sentiment that they had been living under Indonesian threat for 24 years, and a few more months, days or weeks would not deter them from voting their consciences.

The church maintained a high profile during the referendum process, even providing UN- accredited observers. It continued in its role as sanctuary for those fleeing militia violence, and provided advice and warnings to the UN and observer groups. No clergy openly campaigned for either

side, although they may have been perceived as pro-independence for giving sanctuary to those under threat.[14]

The night of the vote, however, shattered the calm that had prevailed during the day. Violence erupted throughout the territory, and escalated daily. Observer teams and UN personnel were forced to evacuate areas that were perceived as militia strongholds, such as Suai, Oecussi, Maliana and Aileu. The UN compound was attacked for the first time on September 1, and the police responded slowly, and then stood idle for about an hour before attempting to break-up the disturbance. The results of the vote were announced on September 4, a few days earlier than expected, and the chaos intensified. Almost all UN personnel and observers were evacuated by September 7, leaving the Indonesian military and militias few witnesses to the devastation they had been threatening for months. Known pro-independence East Timorese were sought out and killed, as were East Timorese who worked for the UN. Approximately 200,000 East Timorese were rounded up at gunpoint and forced onto planes, trucks and ships to be sent to West Timor, Flores, and other locations in Indonesia. Many remain in West Timor in squalid camps run by the militias. Most vehicles and possessions were either stolen or destroyed, and 70-80 percent of the buildings burned. The military felt as though it had been slapped in the face by the East Timorese after years of financing "development", and a scorched earth policy was its revenge.

The church did not escape the wrath of the militias and military. Traditionally afforded nominal respect by the pro-integrationist side, the church and its representatives became a target. On September 6, priests and displaced persons were among the estimated fifty people killed in a church in Suai by the Laksaur militia. On September 26, several nuns and "religious workers" were among the eight people killed in Los Palos by the Team Alfa militia. Church property was looted and destroyed, including the residence of Bishop Belo, who evacuated (U.S. Dept. of State, 2000).

After more than two weeks of pressure on the Indonesian government, met with denials of the extent of damage and assurances

that the military was under control, Habibie finally agreed to allow international peacekeepers into the region, led by an Australian contingent.[15] Peace was established relatively quickly and with little violence, although the damage had already been done. Aid organizations were quick to establish a presence in East Timor, hoping to stave off impending famine (the militias had stolen food stocks and destroyed crops and livestock). The MPR ratified the vote on October 20. The church has been working with organizations in the distribution of aid as well as getting involved in the nation-building process. The church has a diocese representative, Father José Antonio, in the ten-person National Consultative Council (NCC), an organization that includes representatives from the major political parties as well as NGOs (Gutierres, 2000). The NCC is in dialogue with the UN in an attempt to create a viable political system. The church has also started education programs and is laying the foundation for a commission similar to South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in order to resolve sensitive issues such as the return of militia members. Bishop Belo, contrary to Gusmão and Ramos Horta, has continued to vehemently criticize the Indonesian government and military for abuses in East Timor and maintain calls for an international tribunal.

Discussion and Implications

Does the role of the Catholic Church in East Timor cast more doubt about the universality of secularization theory, congruent with José Casanova's (1994) thesis? Close comparisons can be made about the instrumental role of the church in East Timor and Poland, yet an important caveat is in order before the discussion can begin. Within the time frame that Casanova employs to discuss Poland, that country had already become "modern," i.e. industrialized, with high rates of education and literacy. East Timor, in comparison, is far from "modern," with low rates of industrialization, education and literacy. Casanova, and secularization theory in general, is concerned with the role of religion as states become "modern." Secularization theory predicts a lessening role, or

"privatization," of religion within the context of the state as it modernizes, and Casanova disputes this thesis. Although East Timor is far behind Poland in its development, I believe a comparison of the two proves fruitful for discussing the potential role of the church in East Timor.

In Poland, the church evolved from a defender of the state against foreign enemies to a defender of the nation against a hostile state. Similar to East Timor, the church played an instrumental role in fostering an indigenous Catholic nationalism. Attempts by the state to privatize Catholicism and reduce its significance failed, and the results were, in fact, the reverse. The church expanded its role from defender of "both religious rights and the rights of the nation" to defender of human, civil and workers' rights (Casanova, 1994: 100). State attempts to discredit the church actually strengthened it:

> When the resistance comes from a disestablished hierocratic institution opposing a process of differentiation that is being carried out by a state power which lacks societal legitimacy, then the resistance to secularization may be associated with societal resistance to illegitimate state power and such a resistance may actually strengthen hierocratic religious institutions (215).

These results mirror the experience of the East Timorese church in the face of Indonesian attempts to privatize the religion.

The collapse of the Communist state in Poland signaled a new chapter for relations between the church and state and the church and society in Poland, and Casanova raises questions about the potential role of the church in Poland that must be addressed "constitutionally, institutionally, and culturally" (109). These questions must all be faced and resolved by the East Timorese leadership as well. Casanova argues that it is unlikely that the Polish church will become privatized given its past role and influence, and for the same reasons the role of the church in East Timor will remain significant.

Furthermore, as in Poland, the East Timorese church represented the only form of indigenous, popular civil society tolerated by the state. As a result, the two were inseparable: civil society in East Timor was Catholic. As true independence looms, it appears as though secular civil society is emerging in East Timor in the form of NGOs and other associations. However, although these groups can be called secular, their membership is predominantly made up of Catholics who retain their respect for the church. The same is true for the emerging political leadership of East Timor. Although the church may not play a direct role in the decision making process, there is no doubt that its influence will remain, similar to the experience of Poland.

Another fruitful comparison can be made to the Philippines, East Timor's neighbor to the north, and somewhere in between Poland and East Timor in terms of development. The process of inculturation there was very similar to that of East Timor's, although much earlier. Spanish clergy had been much more enthusiastic about converting Filipinos: "The Process of Christianization was ultimately related to the entire process of establishing Spanish civil rule" (Tuggy, 1971: 42). Spanish friars remained aloof up to the last part of the twentieth century, and there was mutual disdain between them and their parishioners (Schumaker, 1979: 233). As indigenous clergy were trained after the opening of seminaries in the Philippines, and Jesuits began educating natives, Filipino nationalism emerged, and this disdain turned to suspicion (Gowing, 1967: 105). Although Jesuits, as conduits of education, were generally regarded neutrally, Filipino nationalism took on an anti-clerical feel because of the antagonism between the Spanish friars and the nationalists, although most nationalists were themselves Catholic. Indigenous clergy provided a "countervailing religious sanction" which continued after 1898 against the new "perceived enemy... Protestant America" (Schumaker, 1979: 266-70; Schumaker, 1991: 42-43, 199-200).

The Catholic Church became even more of an indigenous church after independence, and has played a significant role in politics since then.

As the Marcos regime consolidated power in the early-1980s, representatives of the church remained somewhat divided until the publication of the 1983 pastoral letter "A Dialogue for Peace." The clergy thereafter took a more united oppositional stance against the injustice of the Marcos regime (Fabros, 1988: 172-77). This opposition was furthered by the creation of Basic Christian Communities, which allowed the clergy to become more involved in the secular lives of their parishioners and play an instrumental role similar to that of indigenous clergy in East Timor during the Indonesian occupation. During the explosion of "people power" in the mid-1980s the Catholic Church, led by Cardinal Jaime Sin, played a significant oppositional role and helped bring people to the streets, forcing Marcos' ouster.

This oppositional role was played out again in late-2000 and early-2001. As charges of corruption were brought against President Estrada, Sin roundly condemned his behavior and withdrew his support. Although the straw that broke the camel's back was the military's withdrawal of support, Sin's criticism was critical in helping to shape others' perceptions of Estrada. In this sense, the church has remained active and "public." Given the similarities in history (inculturation, opposition to abuse, status as the majority religion, a well-respected and loved leader) there is reason to believe that the church in East Timor may play a similar role in the future. And given the continued importance of the church in Poland, there is no reason to believe that as East Timor modernizes the significance of the church will decline.

Conclusion

Despite vigorous attempts by TNI to co-opt or discredit church officials, the Roman Catholic Church remained a cornerstone in the struggle for East Timorese self-determination. Bishop Belo and other church leaders not only eased the suffering of the East Timorese population, but engendered a sense of nationalism that fueled the movement for independence. As church personnel became more acculturated and active

in informing the world about injustices that occurred in East Timor the church became stronger as a voice of the people.

The awarding of the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize to Bishop Belo and José Ramos Horta brought both a sense of pride to the East Timorese as well as renewed oppression by TNI. Economic and political change in Indonesia, along with intense international pressure, led to the ouster of Suharto and the succession of Habibie, who relented to pressure concerning East Timor and allowed a referendum. In the face of tremendous intimidation, the people of East Timor overwhelmingly chose independence.

With the end of the Cold War, the western powers, specifically the United States and Great Britain, no longer turned a blind eye to Indonesia's occupation of East Timor. Since the Santa Cruz Cemetery massacre in 1991, the United States began recognizing human rights abuses in East Timor by banning small weapons sales and halting IMET (International Military Exchange Training) courses to Indonesia.[16] As Indonesia continues to founder economically and politically, talk of conditioning US aid on human rights in other regions, such as Aceh, West Papua, and the Moluccas, continues. Belo continues his outspoken criticism of the Indonesian military and his call for an international tribunal.

What was once deemed an "irreversible" invasion and occupation has been reversed (Weatherbee, 1981: 5), yet the ultimate fate of the East Timorese no doubt rests on a number of factors, including the ability of the UN to work with the population without alienating them, and the ability of East Timorese leaders to settle their infighting and agree on political and economic issues. What is more certain, however, is that the Roman Catholic Church, led by Bishop Belo, played a major role in the fomenting of a nationalism that survived twenty four years of brutal occupation, has cemented its role in East Timor as a spokesman for the oppressed, and will continue to influence decisions made in what will be the twenty-first century's newest state.[17]

Notes

1 Just what process allowed Habibie to approve of the vote may never be known, but there is speculation that Habibie and others were assured that the populations could be swayed into choosing autonomy through the terror tactics of the militias that were armed, trained and supplied by the Indonesian military and local government. International pressure brought to bear on Indonesia was surely a factor as well.

2 Formerly known as ABRI (Angkatan Bersenjata Republic Indonesia, Armed Forces of the Republic of Indonesia), the military has been known as TNI (Tentara Nasional Indonesia, Indonesian national military) since April 1999.

3 A 1997 article in the *TAPOL Bulletin* reported that the document was actually signed in Bali, and at least two of the signatories, UDT leader Joao Carrascalao and APODETI figure Guilherme Maria Goncalves, have disassociated themselves from the treaty. At the first All-Inclusive Intra-East Timor Dialogue meeting in Austria in 1995 Goncalves declared that the Declaration was drafted by the Indonesians and the signatories were forced to sign. In an interview in the Indonesian daily *Kompas*, Sugianto, former agent for the military intelligence organization OPSUS, boasted of drafting and typing the Declaration (TAPOL, 1997: 18 (6)).

4 The term Maubere is from an East Timorese ethnic name, Mambae. It was used in a derogatory way by the Portuguese to describe East Timorese who lived outside of the cities and were considered "backward." The term was adopted by the resistance and included all East Timorese. The CNRM has changed its name, however, and is currently know as the CNRT — The National Council of Timorese Resistance.

5 This also led to some concern on the part of the United Nations leadership that while organizing the vote that they might have trouble determining who was eligible. Through strict procedures, including allowing anyone to check the list and dispute any names, the UN was confident that very little cheating occurred, around 400,000 people registered, and approximately 98.5 percent turned up to vote.

6 An interesting item to note is that since the Indonesian military had implemented a full information blackout of East Timor, wives and children of TNI personnel stationed in East Timor would often ask Bishop Lopes for news of their loved ones when he visited Jakarta. TNI did not notify families in the case of death or injury while soldiers were stationed in East Timor (Da Costa Lopes, 1994: 23).

7 During the installation ceremony, a group of priests protested by playing basketball in a nearby schoolyard (McMillan, 1992: 83).

8 Belo became the Bishop of Lorium, "an ancient diocese in Italy no longer functioning." He remained the Apostolic Administrator of Dili, and the move was interpreted as a show of confidence in the young bishop (Kohen, 1999: 130-1). It also showed a change in the stance of the Vatican.

9 However,Portuguese was still taught at the seminary at Dare, at least in the early years of the Indonesian occupation. School administrators were able to convince Indonesian authorities that they were preparing young people for return to Portugal. Interview, Domingos de Olivera, General Secretary of UDT and member of the National Consultative Commission, January 14, 2000, Dili.

10 The author wishes to acknowledge that the *depth* of personal religious conversion is another matter, i.e. the exact percentage of people who have completely given up their prior belief systems and converted wholeheartedly to Catholicism is unknown, and perhaps not possible to measure accurately. The significant point being made, however, is that the population who identify themselves as Catholic accrue benefits by association with the institution of the church, as listed in this section.

11 For a more complete report on birth control policy in East Timor, see Sissons, 1997; and Franks, 155-168.

12 The Indonesian press was either directly owned by the military or heavily subsidized and/or licensed by the government. Under threat of closure, the press usually toed the government's line.

13 Animosity continues, the most striking example today is the fate of a group of non-ethnically East Timorese Moslems in the Kampung Alor district of Dili. They were forcibly evacuated to West Timor with many East Timorese, and returned on September 30. They have been subjected to threats and abuse, and conflicting reports from the CNRT about their fate. They are currently housed in the mosque in Kampung Alor, under UN protection, and awaiting the results of as yet undecided immigration laws that will decide their fate. They have expressed their desire to remain in East Timor, but many in the community regard them with suspicion and open contempt, and they have been the victims of several attacks.

14 There was little, if any, overt intimidation by the pro-independence side. They faced an opponent that was well-armed and financed, which constantly intimidated the population with threats that it could realistically carry out. The pro-independence side was not well equipped (many FALANTIL members had given up their weapons at UN cantonments) and had very little money. Their only resource was the chance for freedom.

15 This immediately soured Australia-Indonesia relations, leading to widespread protest and the cancellation of a joint security agreement.

16 Following the IMET ban, similar military training to Indonesia continued under the name J-CET (Joint Combined Education and Training), although when this was disclosed, it caused quite an uproar among human rights groups (Weiner, 1998: A3).

17 National elections are tentatively scheduled for August 30, 2001, which would signify a change in its current status as a UN protectorate.

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Impact of China's WTO Entry on Sino-Philippine Economic Relations and on the Philippine Economy

SHEN HONG FANG

This paper examines the impact of China's WTO entry on trade, investment and services between the Philippines and China, as well as on Philippines economic growth and development. Section 1 introduces different analyses of China's WTO entry from the perspectives of Philippine official, academic as well as business circles. Section 2 discusses bilateral cooperation through trade, investments, and other forms of cooperation such as contracted projects, labor cooperation, air services agreement, and the development of agricultural technologies. Section 3 looks at the concerns of the Philippine government and the public with respect to China's accession to the WTO, reviewing the state of current relations and comparing this with China's relations with other Southeast Asian countries. Section 4 advances five issues pertaining to the rise of a Chinese "economic threat" following its entry into WTO. The paper concludes that China's WTO accession will help promote bilateral trade expansion, and bring about opportunities for Chinese private entrepreneurs to invest in the Philippines. However, China's WTO entry will also put added pressure on Philippine manufactures, further facilitating the flow of Chinese commodities, capital and personnel and aggravating the disputes that had already existed in the economic intercourse between the two countries prior to WTO admission.

Conflicting Public and Official Views in the Philippines

China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO) is recognized as an important event for the global economy in the beginning of 21st century. It means that China could enjoy most-favored-nation treatment which is expected to greatly benefit its economic growth. At the same time, China has to assume its corresponding obligations as a member of the WTO, such as further opening up its market, increasing the transparency of trade policies, and abiding by international rules and the relevant codes these will no doubt help expand global investment and trade, and stimulate world economic growth with China's potential market of 1.3 billion people. The Chinese government and many other governments in the world expect that the outcome of China's WTO entry will be a "double win" for both China and its trade and investment partners.

However, upon closer examination of the implications of China's WTO entry on Sino-ASEAN economic relations, particularly Sino-Philippine economic relations, I find that the conclusions won't be as simple as the above expectations.

From a Philippine viewpoint, there are two schools of thought with regard to the impact of China's WTO entry on Sino-Philippine relations and Philippine economic growth. Some Filipinos hold that China's WTO entry is a threat and an encumbrance to Philippine economic recovery and sustained economic growth. The arguments in support of this are the following:

a) China's accession to the WTO will further facilitate competition by cheap Chinese commodities into the Philippine domestic market, as a result driving Philippine manufacturers out of business and depriving Filipinos of employment opportunities.
b) Cheap Chinese export commodities also compete with Philippine exports in the international market, thus the status of Philippine exports in their traditional export markets, particularly the United States, Japan and Europe will deteriorate.

c) With the facilitation of labor migration after China's acceptance to WTO, China's cheap labor migrants might compete with Filipino overseas laborers in Hongkong, and probably in Taiwan as well, resulting in negative effects on the Philippine economy.

However, a few Philippine officials, merchants and scholars are also inclined to consider China's WTO entry as a good thing for the Philippines. Mr. Manuel Roxas, Secretary of Philippine Department of Trade and Industry, believes that there are complementarities in trade between the Philippines and China from the angle of natural resources as the Philippines is a tropical country while China is not. China's reduction of customs duties for Philippine exports - one of its WTO pledges - will also benefit Philippine products, especially farm products, that wish to enter the huge China market. Roxas also points out that competition between Philippine and Chinese export goods for the US market has existed for years, even before WTO. However, if China could earlier afford to ignore Philippine accusations of unfair competition because the Philippines is a small country, now the formal mechanisms of trade dispute settlement under the framework of WTO will force Chinese merchants and investors to abandon unfair competition.[1]

While there are these conflicting views, the general perspective of the Philippine government and the public on the impact of China's WTO entry to the Philippine economy is that it is a threat more than an opportunity. The Philippine Daily Inquirer, for instance, reported that Philippine administration senators were bracing for the worst from China's WTO involvement because China's labor costs, cheap commercial inputs and resources would allow it to flood most countries with commodities that are cheaper than Philippine exports.[2] Although there may be opportunities for the Philippines to expand exports in the China market, these will depend on how efficiently the Philippine government is able to use the mechanisms of WTO dispute settlement. The dispute settlement mechanism provided by WTO might put pressure on the Chinese

government to provide more favorable conditions for Philippine exporters to enlarge their access to the China market.

Overview of Sino-Philippine Economic Cooperation

Are the anxieties of the Philippine government and public about China's growing "economic threat" since its WTO entry justified? A review of past relations may provide further answers.

China and the Philippines started formal development of economic cooperation following the establishment of official diplomatic relations between the two countries in June 1975. Recent years have witnessed greater diversification of cooperation from trade to capital investment, contracted projects and labor cooperation. However, the pattern of development has not been smooth.

Bilateral Trade

Generally, bilateral trade of China and the Philippines has gone through three distinct periods.

The first period (1975-82) was characterized by rather stable and rapid growth. Under careful nurturing by the two governments, the total value of bilateral trade which was only US$ 65 million in 1975, rose to US$ 320 million in 1982, with an average annual growth rate of 33 percent.

During the second period (1983-1992), the total value of bilateral trade stagnated, fluctuating between US$ 200 million to US$ 400 million. This was mainly because the Philippine economy had gone into recession in the mid-1980s, and the annual average GDP growth was only 1.2 percent between 1980 and 1992 according to the World Bank, while foreign trade recorded only an 80 percent increase during this twelve year period. Trade between the two countries therefore came into a standstill. The other reason for the slow growth of bilateral trade was the "trade

Table 1. China - Philippines Bilateral Trade, 1986-2002
(in US$ hundred million)

Year	Total Value	% Change	Export to Phil	Import from Phil	Trade Balance
1985	4.05	--	3.11	0.94	2.17
1986	2.94	-0.27	1.57	1.37	0.20
1987	3.85	0.31	2.45	1.40	1.05
1988	4.04	0.05	2.69	1.35	1.34
1989	3.39	-0.16	2.56	0.83	1.73
1990	2.95	-0.13	2.10	0.85	1.25
1991	3.83	0.30	2.53	1.30	1.23
1992	3.64	-0.05	2.09	1.55	0.54
1993	4.95	0.36	2.81	2.14	0.67
1994	7.48	0.51	4.76	2.72	2.04
1995	13.06	0.75	10.30	2.76	7.54
1996	13.87	0.06	10.15	3.72	6.43
1997	16.67	0.20	13.39	3.28	10.11
1998	20.00	0.20	15.00	5.00	10.00
1999	22.87	0.13	13.79	9.08	4.71
2000	31.42	0.37	14.64	16.78	-2.14
2001	35.65	0.14	16.20	19.45	-3.25
2002	52.59	0.47	20.42	32.17	-11.75

Source: China Customhouse, quoted from Economic and Commercial Section of Embassy of P.R.C. in R.P. <http://ph.moftec.gov.cn>

balancing program" instituted by the Philippine government in August 1989. The program was intended to remove the trade deficit on the Philippine side. It required that imports from China be matched by an equivalent amount of exports to China. In fact, this program did little to

boost exports but succeeded in curbing imports from China. As a result, the bilateral trade target for 1988 to 1992 which was stipulated in a medium-term trade protocol, could not be reached.

The third period (1993-1999) witnessed a substantial expansion of bilateral trade when the Philippine government adopted major steps to reduce economic protectionism. While relaxing foreign exchange controls, the Philippine government through E.O. 244 abolished the trade balancing program and removed China from its list of communist or centrally-planned economies with whom trade was restricted. [3] Bilateral trade reached US$ 1.306 billion in 1995, an increase of 74.5 percent over the previous year and surpassing the target of US$1 billion set in the trade protocol. According to China's Customhouse, the figure further increased to US$ 2.287 billion in 1999, more than five-fold that in 1992. Simultaneously, however, the Philippines was experiencing a dramatic escalation of its trade deficit in relation to China. Table 1 shows that the deficit widened to US$ 1.011 billion in 1997 and US$ 1 billion in 1998. Philippine exports to China reached US$ 328 million and US$ 500 million in 1997 and 1998, according to Chinese data. This meant the Philippine deficit was more than twice the value of its exports to China in 1997 and 1998.

Since 2000, bilateral trade of the two countries has turned over a new leaf. The significant growth of Philippine exports to China from 2000 to 2002 helped to expand the trade turnover from US$3.365 billion in 2000 to US$5.259 billion in 2002, an annual increase of 33 percent. In addition, the Philippines enjoyed a favorable balance in a succession of three years, according to Customhouse, a reversal of the historical pattern of bilateral trade. It was also the first time for China to be listed in the Philippines Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as one of the Philippines' top ten export markets, as Table 2 shows.

The improvement in bilateral trade between the two countries is attributed in part to the efforts of the two governments to adopt important confidence-building measures for facilitating the flow of commodities.

Table 2. Philippines' Top Ten Export Markets, June 2002 vs. June 2001
(FOB in US$ million)

Industry Sector	June 2002	June 2001	% Change
1. US	749.12	768.23	-2.49
2. Japan	446.14	431.41	3.41
3. Netherlands	295.29	207.19	42.52
4. Singapore	195.11	180.89	7.86
5. Taiwan	183.04	175.13	4.52
6. Hongkong	163.96	126.64	29.47
7. Malaysia	143.38	80.72	77.63
8. Germany	117.12	92.53	26.58
9. S. Korea	98.62	83.62	17.94
10. China	91.07	63.05	44.44
11. Others	411.27	368.75	11.53

Source: Department of Trade and Industry, Philippines <file://bak\June. htm>

These helped to diversify the structure of import and export commodities of both sides. Moreover, the commitments made by the Chinese government to lower its tariff on both agricultural and industrial products after entering WTO boosted the total turnover of the bilateral trade. According to Philippine sources, Philippine sales to China of farm products such as fresh foods and processed foods, as well as manufactures, particularly electronics, have greatly increased.

Cross Investments

With the implementation of China's reform and open door policy, two-way investment of the two countries is also expanding. Chinese official data show that the direct investment (paid-up capital) of Filipino investors to China was US$ 1.08 million in 1986, representing 0.05 percent of

Table 3. Philippine Investments to China under Various Investment Incentive Laws, 1986-2002 (in US$ Million)

Year	Number of Projects	Contract Amount	Utilized Amount
1986	9	3.81	1.08
1987	10	30.39	3.80
1988	22	7.30	3.63
1989	12	4.71	1.52
1990	18	10.78	1.67
1991	30	17.44	58.50
1992	153	273.16	16.28
1993	302	630.63	122.50
1994	162	290.69	140.40
1995	125	213.15	105.78
1997	102	181.13	155.63
2000	132	361.53	111.12
2001	...	...	209.00
2002*	142	416.00	175.00

* From January to November 2002.

Sources: Reconstructed by author, based on 1986 to 1997 data from various issues of *The Yearbook of China's External Economic Relations and Trade*, published by China Social Publishing House; 2000 data from *Almanac of China's Foreign Economic Relations and Trade 2001*,by China Foreign Economic Relations and Trade Publishing House, Sept.2001; data of 2001 and 2002 quoted from Economic and Commercial Section of Embassy of P.R.C. in R.P. <http://ph.moftec.gov.cn>

China's utilized amount of foreign direct investment of that year. The amount increased over 128-fold by 1994, reaching US$ 140.4 million or about 0.42 percent of China's utilized foreign direct investment. In 2001, Filipino merchants invested US$ 209 million in China, an increase of 49 percent over 1994. Nevertheless, the proportion was the same due to the

big increase of total foreign investment in China that year.[4] There were 142 investment contracts worth a total amount of US$ 416 million signed by Filipino investors from January to November of 2002, while the amount of paid-up capital was US$ 175 million, a 32 percent increase over the same period in 2001.

The pattern of Philippine direct investments in China has been affected by both economic and non-economic factors, and can be roughly classified into five stages. The first stage (before 1980), was characterized as small scale largely because China had a very poor investment environment. During the second stage (mid-1980's), Chinese-Filipino merchants increased their investments in China, so as to avoid political unrest and increased incidence of kidnapping that targeted rich Chinese Filipinos back home. The paid-up capital of Philippine investors reached US$ 58.5 million in 1991, an unprecedented figure that may be attributed to the fact that the Aquino regime was repeatedly threatened by military coup attempts. The third stage showed a rapid increase of Philippine investment in China, spurred on the one hand by economic policies of the Ramos government such as freeing the economy from excessive state control, and on the other hand China's policies encouraging foreign investment. The fourth stage was again a low period for Philippine investments in China. The heightened bilateral disputes over sovereignty in the South China Sea since 1995, and later the Asian Financial Crisis, both had negative impact on the interest of Filipino investors. During the fifth stage, from 2001 onward, Filipino merchants expanded their investments following Philippine economic recovery and China's opening up of its western area to new foreign investment.

The Chinese have also invested in the Philippines since the re-establishment of official ties in 1975. In the absence of Philippine official data, there are conflicting estimates among earlier studies as to the extent of actual PRC investment in the Philippines. One source of confusion is that the Philippine Board of Investment (BOI) includes under its "Resident Chinese" category, both "Chinese nationals " or "foreign nationals of

Table 4. PROC's Investment Approved under Various Investment Incentive Laws 1989-1994

Year	Total FDI (P'000)	PRC Investment (P'000)	PRC's Share to Total(percent)
1989	17480366	13200	0.076
1990	23369835	236957	1.014
1991	21389349	2000	0.009
1992	7250386	8240	0.114
1993	14414648	—	—
1994	61765168	454579	0.736
Total	145669752	714976	0.500

Source: Philippine Board of Investments, cited by Eric Baltazar, "Chinese Investments in the Philippines", in *China Currents*, Vol.6, No.2, April-June 1995:18

Table 5. PROC's Registered Direct Equity Investment in the Philippines (in US$ million)

	1997	1998	1999	2000
Registered Total	1053.378	884.714	1894.174	1398.203
People's Republic of China	1.970	72.057	111.405	48.485
Agriculture, Fishery & Forestry	0.000	0.075	0.450	0.300
Commerce	1.440	32.497	70.023	34.948
Construction	0.115	0.597	0.524	0.253
Financial Institutions	0.187	0.492	1.849	1.447
Manufacturing	0.220	2.235	4.087	0.551
Mining	0.000	0.000	0.092	0.000
Public Utility	0.000	0.176	0.526	0.151
Services	0.008	0.379	0.478	0.335
Others	0.000	35.606	33.376	10.500
% share of PROC's FDIs	**0.19%**	**8.14%**	**5.88%**	**3.47%**

Source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Chinese descent". A study done by the Philippine-China Development Resource Center in 1995 concluded that some 3.35 billion pesos had been injected into investment projects since 1975 by resident Chinese, and that majority of such projects were done by "PRC nationals"[5], whereas it was not until 1989 that China's capital inflows became recorded by BOI of the Philippines.

Even though the figures provided in Tables 4 and 5 are in different currencies and come from different sources, they roughly show the situation of China's investments to the Philippines. There was an apparent growth in China's investments to the Philippines since 1992, the highlight being 1998 when they accounted for 8.14 percent of the total value of Philippine foreign investment. However, the amount of direct investment from mainland China in this specific period likely exceeds the figures reported by the Philippine Central Bank. First of all, direct equity investment by resident Chinese in the country is not calculated as China's investment even though they may come from China. Secondly, only foreign investors who use the channels of the Philippine Central Bank are required to register with the Central Bank. Therefore, the data supplied for 1997-2000 is likely incomplete, and the total amount may be bigger.

Filipino investments in China are mostly in the form of sole proprietorship and joint venture, and are concentrated in the areas of real estate, commerce, manufacturing, services, electronic assembly and financial institutions. On the other hand, China's investments in the Philippines are mostly joint ventures in the areas of commerce, manufacturing, financial institutions, services and public utilities.

Other Forms of Economic Cooperation

The expansion of economic relations between the two countries can be seen not only with respect to trade and investment, but also in other forms including contracted projects, labor cooperation, air services, and the development of agricultural technologies.

According to Chinese official sources, between 1981 and 1994, Chinese construction projects in the Philippines were valued at US$492.86 million.[6] From 1995 onward, China actively took part in Philippine construction projects in the model of BOT (build-operate-transfer). By 2000, China had completed more than 400 such projects, involving highways, harbors, hydro-electric power plant, thermal power plant, power transmission lines, rural water supply, public markets, and others. For 2001, close to 37 contracts were signed by both sides with a total value of US$ 74 million, while in 2002 there were 21 newly-signed agreements with a total value of US$ 184 million. The completed turnover for 2002 was US$ 74 million.[7]

Cooperation in agricultural technologies has been the recent focus of bilateral economic relations of the two countries. In addition to sending Chinese technical personnel to the Philippines-based International Rice Research Institute to provide volunteer training program, the Chinese government has invested US$ 5 million to build the China Agricultural-Technology Center in the Philippines, which was completed in March 2003. An agricultural cooperation project involving a US$ 100 million loan from China is currently being carried out.

Some breakthroughs have also been achieved in financial cooperation. Metrobank, the Philippine's largest financial institution, opened a branch in Shanghai in July 2000, while the Bank of China also started operations in Manila in January 2001. With the expansion of financial cooperation of the two governments, traders of the two countries now carry out transactions without transiting through the banks of a third country.

Features and Problems

In terms of comparing Sino-Philippine economic relations with that between China and other Southeast Asian countries, certain features and problems can be noted:

Firstly, China's trade with the Philippines grew slowly compared with its trade with Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia. As a result, the percentage of trade turnover of the two countries in China's total trade with core ASEAN member countries is always small, standing at less than ten percent, as Table 6 shows below. Taking the years of 1985 and 2000 as a base for comparison, the total value of China's trade with Malaysia increased by 22.6 times, with Thailand 24 times, with Brunei 28 times, but only 10.7 times with the Philippines. In 2000, China became the fifth largest trade partner of both Indonesia and Singapore.[8] Bilateral exports also occupied a small percentage of total export values of both sides. The export value of China and the Philippines in 1999 were 39.7 and 35.7 percent of their GNP respectively, whereas the value of bilateral export was only 0.38 and 2.6 percent of their total.[9] Total Sino-Philippine trade in 2000 was merely 29 percent of the trade between China and Singapore, 39 percent of trade between China and Malaysia, 42 percent of that between China and Indonesia, and 47 percent of that between China and Thailand.

Secondly, the trade structures of China and the Philippines have remained simple compared to China's diversifying trade with the other Southeast Asian states since the early 1980's. China's main exports to Southeast Asia have changed from predominantly agricultural products to various types of manufactured goods, while its imports also diversified from petroleum and traditional agro-products to industrial manufactures. Meanwhile, Philippine exports to China have been heavily concentrated in a few commodities, so that the ten major exports to China represented 74.4 percent of total exports to China in 1995. Of the Philippines' top ten exports, petroleum products took up 59.2 percent, with copper

Table 6. China's Trade with Southeast Asian Countries, 1985-2000 (in US$ million)

	Phil.	Singapore	Malaysia	Thailand	Indonesia	Brunei	Total	Phil. (%)
1985	268.55	2280.56	341.50	265.34	108.74	2.56	3267.19	7.0
1986	230.23	133.499	314.01	322.96	284.96	2.50	2489.65	9.2
1987	292.60	151.51	447.30	553.64	432.22	2.40	3243.32	9.0
1988	263.76	1679.89	528.74	820.51	522.70	2.62	3818.22	6.9
1989	207.00	2044.23	560.15	884.08	441.88	3.03	4140.37	5.0
1990	295.13	2832.17	1176.14	1193.75	1182.26	11.83	6691.28	4.4
1991	833.97	3076.73	1331.89	1269.47	1884.48	13.10	7959.64	4.8
1992	364.67	3266.86	1475.62	1319.35	2025.70	15.40	8467.60	4.3
1993	493.33	4890.85	1788.01	1351.92	2160.28	10.64	10695.03	4.6
1994	758.09	5040.44	2740.32	2023.67	2640.07	16.26	13208.85	5.7
1996	1387.31	7350.51	3614.13	3145.25	3708.43	38.88	19244.51	7.2
1997	1666.18	8783.56	4415.31	3514.76	4514.19	33.31	22927.31	7.3
1999	2286.92	8563.34	5279.40	4216.18	4829.83	8.10	25183.77	9.1
2000	3141.73	10820.97	8045.03	6624.22	7463.85	74.37	36170.17	8.7

Source: Constructed by author. For original data, see various issues of MOFTEC, *The Yearbook of China's External Economic Relations and Trade*, from 1986 to 2001, published by China Social Publishing House.

manufactures at 3 percent, while the rest were resource-based products (banana and coconut oil) accounting for only 17.8 percent.

The big bulk of Philippine exports – petroleum products and copper manufactures, were actually not traditional Philippine exports.[10] Chinese trade information also shows that between 1975 and 1992, Philippine

imports were largely crude oil, which constituted more than half of all imports from China. However, since 1994, there has been a tremendous improvement in the trade diversification of the two countries, and the complementarity of the commodities from both sides is strengthening due to the sincerity showed by both governments in improving trade ties. The trade protocols signed in recent years have been much more concrete than the former ones, and have opened up more varieties of import commodities for both sides. To ensure the smooth implementation of trade protocols, officials from both sides meet in the middle of the year to examine the state of bilateral trade. As a result, the Philippine side has been able to expand the list of products that it can trade with China. Table 7 shows that manufactured goods have also dominated Philippine exports since 1999.

Thirdly, Sino-Philippine trade has been more favorable to China than to the Philippines (see Table 1). Sources from China's Customhouse showed that with the exception of 1975, 1977 and three years running from 2000 to 2002, the balance of trade has largely been in favor of China. The situation is completely different from the trade between China and other Southeast Asian countries. Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand enjoy large surpluses in the course of trading with China.[11] There are different points of view with respect to the Philippine trade deficit with China. The official Philippine view is that there is a lack of complementarity in the country's products and those of China. China is seen not as a market for Philippine exports but instead as a rival for Philippine priority exports in the world market. The official view from China, on the other hand, holds that the burden falls largely on the Philippines to narrow the scale of its deficit by expanding exports to China. Whether the Philippines can meet China's needs for resource-based products of the required quality and of reasonable price are important factors. The yearly value of bilateral trade recorded by China is much bigger than that recorded by the Philippines. The data provided by DTI showed that the total values of trade between China and the Philippines from 1994 to 2000 were 0.459,

Table 7. Merchandise Exports of the Philippines to China by Major Product Grouping, 1997-2000
(FOB in US$ million)

Major Product Grouping			1998		1999		2000	
			Exports to China	Imports from China	Exports to China	Imports from China	Exports to China	Imports from China
Consumer Manufactures	8.23	77.03	7.72	72.10	16.59	123.00	18.81	102.89
Food and Food Preparations	28.21	132.76	41.22	423.42	27.30	153.34	51.11	88.76
Resource-Based Products	149.21	167.08	142.71	154.89	195.91	154.36	188.30	197.98
Industrial Manufactures	45.14	492.49	127.53	545.33	301.21	447.42	378.94	373.83
Special Transactions	13.62	2.23	24.49	3.15	33.79	160.12	26.11	4.21

Source: Philippine Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

0.793, 1.101, 1.116, 1.543, 1.613 and 1.431 (in US$ billion) respectively. And yet Chinese official data appeared in the same period as 0.748, 1.306, 1.387, 1.667, 2.000, 2.287 and 3.142 (in US$ billion). The Chinese-recorded trade according to Chinese sources has been nearly double the official Philippine figures. It is believed that Philippine traders are partly responsible for the lower recorded volume of trade with China, as they attempt to evade payment of customs duties.

Fourthly, Philippine investments in China, whether in the form of contracted amount or utilized amount, is small compared with the other

Table 8. China's Utilization of Capital from Southeast Asian Countries
(in US$ ten thousand)

	1997		2000	
	Contract Amount	Utilized Amount	Contract Amount	Utilized Amount
Philippines	18113	15563	36153	11112
Singapore	447060	260641	203074	217220
Malaysia	49021	38183	38851	20288
Thailand	31662	19400	17061	20357
Indonesia	8562	7998	8561	14694

Sources: MOFTEC, *The Yearbook of China's External Economic Relations and Trade in 1997*, by China Social Publishing House, 1998:623,631; MOFTEC, *Almanac of China's Foreign Economic Relations and Trade 2001*, by China Foreign Economic Relations and Trade Publishing House, Sept.2001:765.

Southeast countries except for Indonesia, according to Chinese data. Although the contracted amount of Filipino investment was bigger than that of Indonesia the utilized amount (or the amount of paid-up capital) was the smallest among the ASEAN states in 2000. Besides, there is a wide gap between the contract amount and utilized amount of Filipino investment, particularly in 2000. While investment in the form of utilized amount from Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia all surpassed that of the contracted amount, for the Philippines it was the reverse, that utilized amount only reaching 30.7 percent of the contracted amount.

Last but not the least; there are different viewpoints with regard to labor cooperation between the two countries. Labor cooperation used to be principally one-way, with China as the labor-exporting country. However, with the inclusion of almost 150,000 overseas Filipino workers in Hong Kong following the resumption of China's sovereignty over of Hong Kong in mid-1997, labor exchange has become two-way.

China's WTO Entry: Opportunities and Challenges for Sino-Philippine Economic Relations and the Philippine Economy

The qualms of the Philippine side in reaction to China's WTO entry are engendered mostly by personal perceptions, although such perceptions are shaped also by problems and many unresolved issues in past experiences of economic cooperation.

The pessimistic perceptions by certain Philippine government officials and the public that the Chinese "economic threat" would become even more severe after China's accession to WTO, revolve around the following arguments:

- The trade deficits lead to Filipinos being deprived of jobs by the Chinese;
- That direct investments by Chinese Filipinos into their ancestral hometowns in Fujian province or other advanced areas of China demonstrate misplaced "loyalty to their native place". Moreover, it is an "improper way for the Chinese government to absorb foreign investment";
- Competition for all kinds of "China-made commodities" in the international market are a main reason for the shrinking of Philippine traditional and non-traditional markets abroad;
- The large amount of foreign investment flowing into China in recent years is one of the important causes for the dwindling of foreign investment in the Philippines; and
- The laborers in China are the rivals of overseas Filipino workers.

Having engaged in the study of Sino-Philippine economic relations for quite a long period of time, my own observation points to the coexistence of complementarity along with competition in the economic relations of the two countries. The diversification and expansion of economic exchanges since 2000, however, prove that there are more

opportunities than challenges to the two countries' economic relations since China gained membership into the WTO.

China's WTO Accession will lead to the Expansion of Bilateral Trade

As a member of the WTO, the Chinese government has to strictly abide by WTO rules and earnestly fulfill its pledges. Chinese traders must follow international rules and regulations in conducting international trade and commerce. Therefore, while further opening up the Chinese domestic market for the entry of foreign commodities, the Chinese government has to strengthen its transparency of market information and to provide a predictable environment for trade. A massive dismantling of trade protection is already taking place, according to the schedule pledged by China. The Chinese government's commitments with regard to its imports and exports include the following:

a) Its average tariffs on imported farm products will drop from 21 percent in 2001 to 15 percent or below five years later. There will be a period of protection for implementing the quota system on tariffs due to the weak competitiveness of China's agricultural products. However, the implementation of the concrete quota system will depend on the negotiation between China and relevant countries.

b) Its average tariffs on industrial goods will drop from 24 percent in 2001 to 8.9 percent or below five years later. Two thirds of the items must be in place by 2003, and the rest have to be in place in 2005. China's tariff for some specific products such as CMOS chips, or semiconductors have been lowered to zero, and China's average tariff for automobiles will be lowered from 80 percent in 2001 to 25 percent by July of 2006. The Chinese government has also pledged to lower the tariffs for various kinds of goods including paper pulp, leather, transformers, textiles and others.

It can be seen that commitments made by the Chinese government to lower the entry requirements of many farm products and industrial products are actually in accord with those Philippine exports, which can not but benefit Philippine export products. These include processed food, metal manufactures, furniture, jewelry, toys, lumber, paper pulp, plastic products, electronics, etc. As a matter of fact, many Philippine exports to China have already gained significant tariff reduction, including marine products, plant oil, coconut products, garments, electric computers, calculators, tape recorders, diskettes, paper and paper products, and electronic input and output fittings.[12] There is a phenomenal growth in bilateral trade since 2000, whether one uses the data by China or by the Philippines. The total value of Philippine exports to China from January to November 2002 has increased by 77 percent from that of the same period of 2001. That China has become one of the top ten export markets of the Philippines is also convincing evidence.

China's WTO Entry Will Bring about Opportunities for Chinese Private Entrepreneurs to Invest in the Philippines

Approximately 1 million Filipinos, accounting for more than 1 percent of the total population of the Philippines, are of Chinese origin, mostly from Fujian province and some from Guangdong province in China. While playing a central role in the country's creation of wealth and jobs, they have had a very close relationship with their ancestral hometowns, especially since China opened to the outside world in the 1980's. Many Chinese-Filipino businessmen have gained from doing business with China. Meanwhile, the economic development of Southern China has also undergone rapid growth with an important role played by private entrepreneurs in partnership with overseas ethnic Chinese. With China having abandoned its policy of holding back its own private entrepreneurs from conducting international trade and foreign investment - another result of China's WTO accession – and having encouraged instead a "Go Out" strategy, not a few private companies, particularly from Fujian and

Guangdong provinces, intend to invest in the Philippines, where they could find many conveniences and business links. Recognizing the possibility of an increase in Chinese private capital, Philippine president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo instructed the Philippine Bureau of Immigration to relax the visa requirements for Chinese citizens who intend to conduct business in the Philippines. During her official visit to China after attending the APEC summit in Shanghai in October 2003, Arroyo said that she does not consider China's WTO accession a threat to Philippine economy. "In fact, we would prefer to look at it as a challenge. That will enable us to launch more businesses in Fujian Province in China, and invite more Chinese entrepreneurs to invest in the Philippines".[13] Meanwhile, Chinese investors are also looking forward to the improved stability of the political situation as well as social order in the Philippines.

China's WTO Entry Will Put High Pressure on Philippine Manufacturers

Many China-made exports have at one time or another suffered the reputation of being "cheap in price, but inferior in quality". However, the situation is changing with more and more multinational corporations setting up bases in China. With the advent of foreign direct investments, the quality of China-made export products has greatly improved. Simultaneously, multinational corporations through their business networks, further opened up the global market for "China-made" products, thus further magnifying the supply of "Chinese-made" products in the Philippines. This can not but add pressure on the Philippine government and Filipino exporters to upgrade technology, improve the quality of manufactured products, and lower the prices of their export commodities in order to enhance the competitiveness of Philippine manufactures in the world market.

In addition, the competition between similar export products of the two countries in the world market will become even more severe with respect to textile products, electronics and manufactured goods. The export

value of China's textile goods accounts for 1/5 of the total value of China's exports. Under WTO, the export quotas will be greatly reduced and access to other countries' markets will increase overall in 2008. China's exports of machinery - covering whole sets of equipment, home-use electronic appliances, electronic communication gadgets, electricity generation equipment and transportation equipment – will also expand, with only 8 percent tariff, according to the rules. Some of these products that China is striving to export are similar to exports of the Philippines. There will be strong competition in footwear, toys, boxes and bags, housewares and other labor-intensive products, as well as the swiftly growing software industry and the integrated circuit industry.

Concerned over the excessive entry of cheap Chinese and other foreign products and services into the Philippine market, the biggest business organization, the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FFCCCI) is taking the lead to initiate a "Buy Pinoy Movement" in association with some other big business groups. It states in their covenant that "continuing globalization and rampant smuggling pose yet the greatest challenges. Even as the Philippines hopes to gain better access to the global market, we also face the increased entry of foreign goods that are mass-produced at a price lower than what we can offer". With the purpose of protecting the home market for manufactured goods and services, the "Buy Pinoy" covenant called on Filipino consumers to patronize products and services that are made in the Philippines or made by factories that employ Filipinos, and emphasize that "Every peso spent on a Filipino product is a peso contribution to the national interest and to the preservation of jobs".[14] This action has gained the support of the Philippine government. However, it is very difficult to predict the success of such a movement. In my view, it is very difficult for the large population of Filipinos whose living standard is below the poverty line to spend more pesos to buy home-made goods. Some Filipino workers have satirized the "Buy Pinoy" Movement into a "Buy Penoy" ("Buy Duck's Egg") Movement.[15]

The Greater Flow of Chinese Commodities, Capital and Labor Certainly Will Increase Disputes of the Two Countries

Even before China entered the WTO, some tensions had already existed, to wit:

a) Taking advantage of their natural linkages, some Chinese Filipino traders imported large quantities of cheap Chinese products which now dominate the Philippine domestic market. They have obtained sudden huge profits within a short period of time, thus arousing the envy of Filipino traders.

b) A handful of Chinese-Filipino traders colluded with some officials from China's Customs to import inferior Chinese products that were not in accord with the products prescribed in the customs declaration. Such behavior not only shatters the image of the People's Republic of China, but also unfairly affects local tradesmen.

c) Some China-based relatives or family dependents of Chinese Filipinos move to Manila. Many do not want to go back to China, and instead become illegal immigrants. They set up illegal vendor's stalls in Manila and elsewhere, entering into competition with small Filipino Binondo businesses and adversely affecting small- and middle-sized Philippine manufacturers.

d) Influenced by criminal gang (triads) of Hong Kong and Taiwan, quite a few illegal aliens from mainland China are engaged in illegal drug trafficking under the guise of doing business. Such behavior violates the laws of the Philippines, and leaves a terrible impression on the Philippine people.

WTO regulations with respect to relaxing the flow of goods, capital and labor services of the member countries will no doubt strengthen the exchanges between the two countries, not only because these two countries

are geographically close, but also because many people have consanguinity on the other side. Because of the limited capacity of the Philippine market and the scarcity of job opportunities, however, the implications of Chinese small- and medium-sized capital as well as personnel moving to the Philippines are not always positive. Trade-related disputes will possibly increase. The main trade partners of the two countries are basically the same, and the Philippine government has vowed to use the mechanisms and procedures of WTO, including dispute settlement, to protect the interests of Filipino traders.

Notes

1 "Philippines: We Need to Get Our Act Together," http://www.inquirer.net, October 16, 2001.

2 "China's entry to WTO seen as threat to RP," http://www.inquirer.net, November 25, 2001.

3 In 1977, Philippine former president Marcos ordered a decree to create Philippine International Trade Corporation (PITC) together with his instruction, embodied in Letter of Instruction (LOI) 444, that the PITC coordinate and facilitate trade with socialist and centrally planned economies.

4 Total values of China utilized foreign direct investment in 1986, 1994 and 2001 were US$ 2.244 billion, 33.767 billion and 49.7 billion respectively.

5 Eric Baltazar, "Chinese Investments in the Philippines," *China Currents*, Vol.6, No.2 April-June 1995:19.

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8 Chinese customs data, quoted from China Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation, http://www.moftec.gov.cn.

9 World Bank data showed that total values of GNP of China and the Philippines in 1999 were US$ 9082 hundred million and US$ 980 hundred million respectively, while the values of exports for both sides were US$ 3606.5 hundred million and US$ 350.3 hundred million.

10 Source of basic data was from Philippine Department of Trade and Industry.

11 Malaysia, Indonesia enjoyed US$ 2.91 billion and US$ 1.34 billion surplus respectively in 2000, Thailand enjoyed US$ 2.375 billion surplus in 2001 when trading with China.

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Cultural Exchanges between the Muslim and Christian Worlds: Focus on the Philippines*

AURORA ROXAS-LIM

Introduction: Tensions and Violence in the Post Cold War Era

Everyone expected the post - Cold War period to usher in an era of prosperity and greater freedoms for all peoples of the world. However, we are still facing continuing wars in Eastern Europe following the break up of the USSR. Far from bringing about universal peace, the post-Cold War period brought into relief internal dissensions, inter-ethnic conflict and religious strife that often exploded into violence. Among the most frightening examples of this phenomenon are the continuing war between the Palestinians and the Israelis, Taliban and other Muslim factions in Afghanistan, and Chechen rebels against Russia that spill across state borders, and the US invasion of Iraq. The September 11,2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon provoked the USA to seek restitution by waging all-out war against perceived perpetrators of the crime in Afghanistan and then Iraq. US occupation forces in Iraq are still at a loss to prove that former President Saddam Hussein possessed "weapons of mass destruction".

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Ostensibly, the US invasion of Iraq was waged in order to depose a terrible and hated "military dictator" and to bring "democracy" to the Iraqis. President George Bush avoided any mention of what may have been the most crucial motivating factor for the invasion- control of Iraqi oil and securing America's free and unimpeded passage in the Persian Gulf and the eastern Mediterranean. The USA and its ally Britain having vanquished the military forces of Saddam Hussein are now faced with Iraqi guerilla-type resistance. Deaths of American soldiers will surely exacerbate American public hostility against Iraqis, Afghans and Muslims in general and this attitude will contribute to the further deterioration of Christian - Muslim relations around the world.

Besides the US' determined drive to control the vast oil reserves in the Middle East, what adds to world instability and tension is that ethnic, cultural and religious minorities are up in arms against their respective central governments. In West Asia, Africa, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and the Philippines, various socio-cultural groups and political factions are fighting central authority. In the Philippines, Muslims have been waging a war against the central government since the Spanish colonial period and have not given up the struggle up to the present. The most recent eruption of violence started in March 2002 when hostages were taken by the Abu Sayyaf, a small break-away Muslim faction that is condemned by the broad coalition of Muslim organizations in Mindanao and Sulu. The central government responded with the use of force. Force may temporarily halt armed conflict, free hostages and punish some of the culprits, but it cannot by itself quell Muslim rebellion. For the causes of Muslim rebellion, its evolution and the aspirations are very complex. Evidently rebels have been fighting under the banner of Islam for their right to maintain and advance Islamic faith, the Ummah, Islamic community, and their way of life. They are struggling for equal recognition and benefits enjoyed by the Christian majority that control the levers of power in our government. They demand redress for unjust appropriation of lands to outside settlers, lands which they claim are their ancestral domain. They are fighting what they perceive to be centuries of

discrimination and neglect by government and other institutions. These grievances must be examined in the light of their historical background and the prevailing national and global political and economic system obtaining today.

This conference, by convening scholars and diplomats from the Philippines and Iran, provides a forum for serious frank discussions. Conferences of this kind can help promote dialogue among different cultural, religious and ethnic groups. Dialogue is an important step towards the promotion of mutual understanding and respect for cultural and religious differences. In turn, mutual understanding and respect provides the groundwork for mutual trust, goodwill and peace, and paves the way for concerted efforts in building the institutions that can guarantee liberty, justice and human rights for all peoples.

Historical Background of Philippine Relations with Muslim Countries

So far, there is no written record of early and direct cultural exchanges between West Asia (much less Persia) and the Philippines.[1] Whatever relations and exchanges there were occurred through intermediaries, via the Indian subcontinent and countries along the Malay Straits and the South China Sea. These relations were part of the international trade between West Asia (Middle East) and China along the maritime silk route that was activated when the overland route was closed in the late 8th C. But there must have been indirect relations that may have begun before the advent of Islam. Ancient Persia had wide relations in trade and commerce, and travelers may have spread Persian culture, its language and literature via the Indian subcontinent and from there to Southeast Asia. The paucity of Arabs and Persians in historical documents on Southeast Asia may be explained by the tendency to ignore the varied ethnic composition of traveling merchants from West Asia who came to Southeast Asia and East Asia. Historians lumped together all West Asians as "Arab" " and after 7th and 8th C. these people were all called Muslims regardless of their religion or which country they came from.[2]

The scarcity of information about Philippine contacts with West Asia was due mainly to geographical distance and the colonial and predominantly Christian-centered historiography in the Philippines. Having been a colony of western Christian powers - Spain and the USA, the Philippines as a whole could not conduct an independent foreign policy. Indeed, westem colonial dominance obstructed relations with Asian countries, particularly those that professed Islam. Spanish colonial policy was to divide and rule the various ethnic and tribal groups in the archipelago precisely at the time when they were undergoing the process of social and economic consolidation under the Muslim Sultanates of Maguindanao, Sulu and Tondo in the late 15th C. By the1570's, imperialist Spain shattered the trade and religious alliances forged by the Sultans and rajahs within the archipelago and with neighboring countries. Spain together with the British, Dutch and Portuguese obstructed if not completely cut off Mindanao and Sulu relations with neighboring kingdoms of Aceh and Samudra-Pasai in Sumatra, relations that had flourished since pre-Islamic Srivijaya (7th–14th C.) Similarly disrupted were relations with the sultanates in Ternate and Tidore (16th-17th C.) in the Moluccas, Brunei in West Borneo (16th C.), Malacca (16th C.), Jahore in the Malay peninsula (16th C.) and China[3]. Conversion to Christianity became the hallmark of Spanish colonial legacy and while it may have helped wield together the various tribal groups and other political principalities under its colonial-cum-ecclesiastical administration, it also ingrained anti-Muslim sentiments among the Christian converts. Anti-Muslim prejudice was intensified by the continuous wars waged by Spain against the Mindanao and Sulu sultanates utilizing "Christianized" Filipino troops. Filipino Christians harbor prejudice against Muslims, which was aggravated by Moro raids into the so-called "Hispanized" areas in the Visayas and Luzon. Although conditions have changed with the ascendancy of Christianized Filipinos over the Muslims, these sentiments still influence our social and political institutions until today.

Philippine Relations with West Asia in the Post Independence Period

Only after the Philippines won independence from the USA were diplomatic relations with West Asian countries established. Although sporadic and negligible, diplomatic relations paved the way for further direct contacts. The formation of the United Nations in 1948 and the partition of Palestine to create the state of Israel aroused greater interest in West Asian affairs and in Islam. The establishment of Israel provoked violent resistance among the Muslim peoples that could not but affect those living in the Philippines. Subsequently, cultural and economic contacts with West Asia, particularly the oil-rich countries, reached their peak in the 1970's during the oil crisis and as a consequence of Philippine policy of exporting Filipino contract labor to West Asia.[4]

The Historical Background of Christian - Muslim Relations

The broader history of Christian-Muslim relations in the outside world affected relations in the Philippines. These relations could be characterized by ambivalent attitudes. Relations were good during good times and turned antagonistic and even violent during bad times. It should be pointed out however that this kind of relationship applies not only with respect to Muslim-Christian relations but also to Muslim relations with other faiths such as Zoroastrians, Manichaens, Jews, Animists, etc. Apart from religious and doctrinal differences, social, political and economic considerations affected their relations with one another. And yet disputes over territory especially over trade routes and markets, dominion over peoples, disposition of resources, political authority, and dynastic successions ware embroiled and oftentimes obscured by religious discord.

Muslims had ambivalent attitudes towards Christianity and Christians that are reflected in the Quran. Shura 5.85 says that Muslims

will find Christians "nearest to them in Love." But another Shura 5.54 warns them that Christians and Jews can neither be their "close friends" nor their "protectors" (*awliya*)[5]. By the same token, Christians ware also ambivalent towards Muslims. Christian propagandists depicted Islam as a "Satanic piot" and claimed that Islam intended to destroy the Christian faith. Other polemics that depicted the Prophet "as lascivious" for having several wives and concubines, and as an "ambitious conqueror and a merciless murderer," reflect ignorance of social and political conditions obtaining in Arab society in the 7th C to 8th C. What this harsh criticism ignored was that marrying the widow of one's brother or kin was a practical solution to the care of helpless female family members. Frequent wars caused the early deaths of fathers, brothers and husbands so that their daughters, sisters and widows had to be cared for by surviving males. The accepted arrangement in such situations was for widows to be married to males even though the latter may already have been married. As for wars waged by Muslim troops, this was the accepted practice in the region at the time when people fought for survival and competed over resources, and when they had no other recourse for obtaining justice or rectifying grievances. It was precisely to address rampant violence by despotic kings and ambitious empire builders and injustice against the weak that Christianity and Islam offered the alternative moral philosophies to the arbitrariness of despotic kings and the general lack of institutions of justice during those times.

From the very beginning of Islam, Muslims for the most part lived in close proximity and interacted peacefully with Jews, Christians and other religious sects. According to Ibn Ishaq, one of the biographers of the Prophet Muhammad's first wife had a Christian uncle who was the one that interpreted the prophet's experience in the cave in Hira as a "divine revelation." It was likely that Muhammad's Christian uncle-in-law understood the extraordinary intensity of his spiritual experience. When Muhammad built his first mosque, he invited Christian delegates from Najran to pray and even debated with them regarding the doctrine of

Incarnation. Muhammad was given a slave woman named Mariyah as a gift by an Egyptian king. She happened to be a Christian Coptic and must have been his favorite for on the last days of his life, after taking leave from his other wives, he spent his last moments with her. [6]

When Muslim states were firmly established, the need to govern multi-ethnic populations professing different religions led to the evolution of the concept of the rights of minorities *(dhimm,).* The protection of the *dhimmi* became part of Islamic law. Muslim authorities maintained very good relations with Christians, Jews and other minorities. Indeed Muslim rulers instead of removing them from government retained the pre-existing bureaucracy that counted Christians and Jews among them. They also continued the use of Greek as the language of administration rather than Arabic. More significantly, Muslim rulers like Caliph al Ma'mun (reigned 813-833 CE) considered themselves as inheritors of classical Greek traditions and they supported and further developed this proud legacy. Caliph al Ma'mun founded an academy whose task was to translate works of science, philosophy and medicine from Greek to Arabic. One of the religious works translated was *The Bible.* Islam used the cultural legacy of Greece and the rest of the Mediterranean civilization and undertook some of the most creative intellectual and technological innovations in human history. One of its greatest achievements in the arena of human rights was the concept of the legal rights of non-Muslims, a concept enshrined in Islamic law. Islamic cultural and intellectual achievements together with the sanctity of the concept of legal rights of minorities survived the breakdown of political unity of Muslim caliphates.

The Medieval Period (9th C.) marked the breakup of political union of the Muslim world. During periods of instability and uncertainty, the larger majority of the populace felt threatened and became restive. People tended to look for quick solutions and tended to be intolerant. These conditions were ripe for the occurrence of many kinds of social abuses and excesses and the first victims of intolerance and whose human rights were violated were non-Muslim minorities.[7]

The period of the Crusades and the rise of despotic and expansionist monarchies in Europe brought in its wake the horrors of war and instilled a deep-seated fear and hatred of Islam and of Muslims. This drew a similar reaction among Muslims whose leaders imposed harsh measures not only on Christians but also on all minorities. While the large influx of Europeans to and from West Asia brought back the benefits of classical Greco-Roman and Arabic civilizations, Islamic contributions to this cultural legacy in philosophy, science, medicine, the arts, military tactics, were almost obliterated from the memory of majority of lay Christians.[8] What remained instilled were suspicions and hatred of Muslims. The 14th C. onward saw the decline of Muslim political unity. The westernmost Muslim State Granada, in Spain, fell to Christian assault in 1492; Mongols from Central Asia expanded their armies all the way to Persia and Turkey, while Muslim rulers weakened in the Muslim heartland of Arabia, Syria and Iraq. In the meantime, the 15th to 16th C. saw the ascendancy European powers that sought colonies around the world and brought in its wake vigorous and determined Christian missionaries that sought to convert "pagans" and "infidels."

The spirit of the Crusades was carried forward by Western colonial powers into Africa and Asia. French and British encroachments into Africa and West Asia led to the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire (1281-1924), the one remaining political entity under the banner of Islam. [9] In the case of Portugal and Spain their conquistadors had as inseparable companions Christian missionaries armed with belief in the superiority of their faith and institutions over the conquered peoples. Muslim - Christian relations reached its nadir during the centuries of Western colonial expansion, and since Muslims offered the fiercest resistance, they were the victims of harshest retaliations by the colonial governments that favored Christian converts. As quiescent subjects, Christian converts were given special treatment while Muslims were persecuted or neglected.

The rise of European Enlightenment in the late 18th C. and the French Revolution brought about a great change in Christian thinking and faith.

The philosophers of the Enlightenment scaled down the primacy of religion in public life, and replaced it with human reason and the concept of the natural rights of humans to personal freedom, liberty, justice and democracy. The succession of religious wars in Europe, the rise of Protestantism, and developments in science and technology contributed to the depreciation of faith while respect for established authority led to the exaltation of human reason and the scientific method. Twentieth century advances in science and technology, industrialization in vast scale, and urbanization affected peoples of varied cultures and regions. The rise of commercial-industrial complexes overshadowed and even undermined the authority of social, political and religious institutions of individual countries. This chain of events has been viewed as the sum total of the modernization process of societies. And when individual reason and the scientific method is upheld, belief and faith in the Absolute, Transcendental, and the Unseen often diminishes as well. Thus, modernization also brought about secularization and diminution of religious authority and reliance on faith. It is in confronting the challenges of modernization and secularization that Muslims and Christians may be said to stand together. Regardless of their mutual animosities, the majority of devout Muslims and Christians often stand against crass materialism and unbridled competition for personal gain. For the more orthodox and fundamentalist factions among Christians and especially among Muslims, they consider most malevolent the unstoppable onslaught of secularization as exemplified by American culture. It should be emphasized however, that many American intellectuals are also very critical of American popular culture purveyed by movies, television, mass media, and advertising agencies. American intelligentsia like I. F. Stone and Noam Chomsky write of the shameful and degrading values propagated by the US-dominated global entertainment industry.

Academics, scholars and intellectuals by themselves cannot change the global economic and political arrangements that have been put in place since the end of World War II. The current regional and economic alliances of powerful and rich countries and their multi-national

corporations dominate the nation states of the Third World. Experience tells us of the futility of waging wars of liberation against the superpowers and their economic institutions, its military agencies as well as client states whose leaders often acquiesce with the current global economic and social order.

We are concerned for genuine world peace and social justice, not a Pax Americana that ignores the grievances of the majority of peoples around the world and imposes American values and way of life. We can begin by systematic, rational analysis of the global situation and identifying sources of the conflicts and how these may be solved. Let us start with cultural values espoused by Christians and Muslims that seem divergent and even irreconcilable. And yet, if we analyze these religious beliefs and cultural values, it can be demonstrated that there are certain analogies and parallelisms between the two. What clouds and obfuscates the issue of Christian-Muslim relations is the failure to distinguish between the various facets of the conflict, between religious and theological, ethnic, social, cultural, economic, demographic, ecological, disputes over land and natural resources, administrative and leadership aspects. Aspects often ignored are class conflicts, economic disparities, and unequal access to education, resources and opportunities for social mobility. We should also keep in mind that these aspects are inter-related and inter-acting. Nevertheless we have to deal with them one by one for heuristic purposes. Moreover, it is important to take into account the complex diversities and internal divisions as well as animosities within the Muslim and Christian countries and communities.

Some of the analogies and parallelisms that may be mentioned pertain to the fundamental beliefs to which both Muslims and Christian subscribe. Both believe in transcendental and immutable power of God or Allah. Both believe that the Muslim *Koran* and the Christian *Bible* are the revealed word of God, that these beliefs and attendant rituals and ceremonies are sources of personal and group identity. Muslim community or ummah is somewhat equivalent to Christian parishes and diocese, while

the ulamas and Muslim clerics and scholars are analogous to the Christian religious orders. Among the spiritual practices common to both Christianity and Islam are asceticism involving prolonged seclusion, introspection, fasting, acceptance of suffering, and even martyrdom as the supreme test of unwavering religious devotion and resolve. Sufi mysticism has its equivalent in Christian mysticism as exemplified by Mother Theresa, and the Muslim *tariqahs* have analogies in the Christian lay organizations. We should also stress that Muslims regard Jews and Christians as belonging to a special category to which Muslims also belong as "people of the book," meaning that they trace their origins from the ancient Jewish tradition since Abraham.

Contrasting Ideology and Values: Orthodox Muslims and Western Secular Capitalists

Admittedly, there are varieties of world-view or ideologies among Western secular capitalists and Muslims, and on each side different groups harbor a wide spectrum of positions. Indeed there are many Muslims who share many values of Western secular capitalists, in the same manner that many Westerners would agree with values adhered to by Muslims. At the risk of going into gross generalizations, and ignoring some other values, for purposes of discussion it would be useful to enumerate two extreme positions focused mainly on Islam and Western secular capitalist world-views. The list serves as a guide in order to trace some of the ideological bases on which certain "extremist" groups and governments wage violent actions such as in Afghanistan, Algeria, Indonesia and the Philippines. This is not to say that there are no violent conflicts in countries professing other religions and values. Furthermore, the values listed below are certainly incomplete and need more detailed elaboration and qualification.

These contrasting values and world outlook need not be irreconcilable and adversarial. As was pointed out earlier both sides do not necessarily adhere rigidly to all of these values nor do they practice them to the same degree. There is need to search for the middle ground

Orthodox Muslim	Western Secular Capitalist
Primacy of faith, obedience to religious and learned authority; Complete submission to Allah as revealed in sacred texts and Muslim exemplars	Reason, scientific inquiry and analysis, empirical proof constitute reality, it follows that individual free will is important and cultivated Personal exertion, hard work & industry stressed
Tradition drawn from Islamic history beliefs, customs more important than individual reason; live within the Ummah	Rational thinking and self-directed behavior in order to navigate & succeed in earthly existence
Life on earth is temporary, exert effort to prepare for the next life; practice piety & morality	Gain profit, accumulate capital, consume luxuries, gain high social status
Simplicity and humble life style source of high social status & prestige	Wealth & luxuries are power and the
Land and natural resources belong to Allah Communal ownership preferred	Land and natural resources can be individually-owned, accumulated & disposed of
Cooperation & collective achievement	Competition and individual success
Social stability, consensus; Allah & the. Ummah determine one's social status looking	Change, innovation, social conflict expected Value progress; forward-
Extended family, arranged marriages; Polygamy & monogamy allowed but not adultery and extra-marital affairs	Nuclear family, monogamy, mobility of family members; laxity in extra-marital affairs
Superiority of males over females Male protection of females	Women are independent & equal to men in all aspects
High regard and value the elders, tendency to look back to past generations for guidance	Children and youth are highly regarded and enjoy greater individual freedom and rights
Devotion to Allah, practice of Islamic rituals, ceremonies, tenets are mandatory and are considered inseparable from one's individual and group identity	Religious values are private and individual; tend to be lax in the performance of religious obligations

and stress the commonalties rather than differences between the two sides. Surely belief in the Transcendental Almighty, respect for life and human dignity, pursuit of social justice, and combating oppression and tyranny are principles both sides would uphold. The Dialogue of Civilizations proposed by President Muhammad Khatami can be brought to fruition if we search for the fundamental bases of our common humanity.

Fortunately we can work with government and private cultural and educational institutions and organizations to undertake programs that will help our communities. There are also many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and People's Organizations (POs) that mushroomed during and after the fall of martial law (1972-1986) that address a host of social, cultural and environmental problems. The Christian Churches of the Philippines (Protestants and Filipino Christians) are taking steps to work for peace and reconciliation through dialogue and by undertaking community service. Many are taking part in the ecumenical movement to work for religious and cultural understanding and cooperation to help alleviate social problems. No longer does the Roman Catholic Church seek to convert Muslims and Indigenous Peoples as aggressively as it did during the Spanish colonial period. In 1988 Pope Paul VI instituted a special department of the Roman Curia for relations with the people of other religions called the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue (PCID). The PCID has the following responsibilities:

1. to promote mutual understanding, respect and collaboration between Catholics and followers of other religious traditions;
2. to encourage the study of religions,
3. to promote the formation of persons dedicated to dialogue.

Apart from initiatives from the Roman Catholic Church there are similar efforts of the World Council of Christian Churches that regularly convenes conferences, workshops, undertakes research and community projects to foster inter-religious dialogue and cooperation. International agencies and organizations like the UN even though it is still hampered

by the Security Council is contributing to the amelioration of poverty, violations of human rights, environmental pollution, and promoting the rights of women, children, the infirm, indigenous peoples and refugees around the world. We should help undertake educational and cultural projects that contribute to humane values of peace, mutual understanding and appreciation of cultural and religious differences. Educational programs should also have practical aspects that develop needed skills for business and industry, that inculcate qualities of industry, hard work, productivity, capability in solving problems and fostering social cohesiveness and cooperation. Designing programs and projects that will contribute towards these goals should be part of the subsequent discussions in this conference.

Notes

1 The term West Asia applies to the region called "Middle East" in western maps and literature. It covers present-day Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Israel, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Yemen. For convenience, the name "Philippines" will be used for the Philippine archipelago even though it was the name given by Spanish conquerors in the 16th C. Parts of the archipelago were known as Luzon, Ma-I, San-su, Sulu, Maguindanao, and by other various names in historical texts; the earliest accounts referring to the archipelago were written by Chinese.

2 Hourini, G. F. *Arab Seafaring in the Indian Ocean in Ancient and Medieval Times,* Princeton Univ. Press, New Jersey, *1951.*

3 Majul, Cesar Adib, *The Muslims in the Philippines,* Philippine Center for Advanced Studies, Univ. of the Philippines, Quezon City, 1974: 1-23. Saleeby, Najeeb, *History of Sulu,* Bureau of Printing, Manila, 1905. For the earliest trade mission to China, see: William Henry Scott, "Filipinos in China Before 1500," *Asian Studies,* Asian Center, Univ. of the Philippines, August, 1983.

4 Wadi, Julkipli, 'The Philippines and the Islamic World," in Philippine External Relations, a Centennial Vista, edited by Aileen San Pablo Baviera and Lydia Yu-Jose, Foreign Service Institute, Dept. of Foreign Affairs, Manila, 1998:15-90.

5 Arberry, A. J., translator, The Koran, Interpreted, 2 vols. London and New York, 1955.

6 Breiner, Bert F. and Christian W. Troll, 'Christianity and Islam," in John L. Esposito, editor in chief *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World,* Oxford Univ. Press, Oxford and London, 1995, 5 vols. vol. 1: 280-286.

7 Ibid.

8 Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades,* Cambridge. 1951. There were eight crusades from 1096 to 1291 where millions of Europeans most of whom were French fought "the Infidels" in the belief that they would attain salvation in paradise. While its main purpose was to conquer the Holy Land focused on Jerusalem, control over the city shifted back and forth from Muslim to Christian hands until the 19th C. Territorial gains of the Crusaders were limited to Spain and northwestern tip of Africa while Muslims not only remained in control over traditional territories but expanded to Eastern Europe. Europe in any event gamed foothold in Asia and found direct routes to the East. The Crusades inaugurated Western aggressive Christianizing mission into Asia and Africa that became the handmaiden of colonial conquest of the world. In the aftermath, it strengthened the political power of the Papacy and enabled it to contest European monarchs. On the other hand despite the violence spawned by of European imperialism, there were also some positive effects of close

European and Asian contacts resulting in the cross-fertilization in the field of scholarship and learning.

9 The combined French, British and Russian forces exacted trade and commercial privileges called "Capitulations" from the Ottoman rulers since the early 17th C. and in 1798, the French occupied Egypt.

Southeast Asian Studies and Southeast Asia: A Filipino Note[1]

PATRICIO N. ABINALES

I

The beginnings of "Southeast Asian studies" in Southeast Asia were expectedly colonial. The scholarship of the period was being undertaken by bureaucrat-scholars whose task was to "understand" the societies their empires controlled to ensure a more efficient – and often more brutal – colonial governance, and to devise better ways of exploiting the local communities. Their works were, as Benedict Anderson put it,

> directly commissioned by the colonial state, for its policing and development purposes. The conditions that led to unexpected peasant uprisings, puzzling resistance by remote mountain tribes, or flashflood riots by religious and ethnic groups, could best – so thought the colonial state after 1900, after several decades of internal and external criticism by savants in the metropole and on the spot – be systematically explored by scholarly methods. The same applied to the problems of rural indebtedness, landlessness, rural-urban migrations and so forth.[2]

Some excelled at "varying extents, [in] literary studies, ethnology, Buddhist and Islamic studies, economics, demography and rural sociology," while others studied "precolonial history, archeology, epigraphy, philology and linguistics," spurred by "an obvious practical need for good dictionaries, grammars, and language training manuals, since colonial administrations by the later nineteenth century recognized the need for 'intellectual access' to peoples they governed but did not intend, in any large way, to train to speak the metropolitan languages."[3]

The majority of these bureaucrat-scholars, however, never tried to venture beyond the bounds of their respective colonial societies, in part because imperial rivalry in the region ensured that the different colonial states remain suspicious of each other.[4] In fact, we can regard them as the forerunners of the country specialists: Georges Coedes and Paul Mus were "experts" of the Indochinese states, Bertram Schrieke and Theodoor Pigeaud studied Java, and J.R. Hayden, Roy Barton and Dean C. Worcester were Philippine specialists. The only exception was John Furnivall, whose study of Netherlands India and British Burma, revealed an incomparable comparative grasp of colonial politics.[5] This colony-specific focus of these bureaucrat-scholars would try to frame "Southeast Asian" studies would be built in the academic centers of both the metropoles and the region itself.

It was another group that imagined the region on broader terms. Pre-war Japanese scholars wrote about Southeast Asia, drawn by the curiosity of migrant Japanese labor going around Southeast Asia in the early 1900s, of which the largest number were prostitutes.[6] After Japan acquired the status of honorary European power as a result of her victory over Tsarist Russian in the Russo-Japanese war, the Japanese state also began to make its presence felt in East and Southeast Asia. Its target was to curtail the prevalence of prostitution, protect its migrant male labor and make Japan look more respectable among the peoples of Southeast Asia.[7] This led to the emergence of what we may describe as the first policy writings on *Tonan Ajia*, many of which became resource materials for the military's invasion plans in World War II.[8]

In this world of colonial scholarship, the colonized had very little role to play. But this did not mean that they did not aspire to understand their own societies. Those who managed to get an education beyond the primary school began to critically expropriate whatever knowledge they learned from their rulers and to turn these into weapons of criticism of the colonial order. Jose Rizal and Raden Adjeng Kartini stood out as notable examples of these "native" critics, the former utilizing analytical methods he learned from Spanish Jesuits and European liberals to write a devastating portrait of colonial society, while the latter, learning from her correspondence with a Dutch friend, to understand her role as a colonial subject and a woman in the Netherlands East Indies.[9] Rizal and Kartini, however, represented attempts by the colonial young to configure the foundations of a would-be nation. The "spectre of comparison" that haunted their writings was therefore inevitably aimed towards conceptualizing a national community, not a society that transcended the domains of the colonial state. They were, in short, also not regionalists (Benedict Anderson is thus only partly right in noting Rizal's "el demonio de las comparaciones." Rizal's comparative vista was focused on Europe (Spain?) and his beloved Philippines; there was very little in his writings that sought to extend this perspective to colonial neighbors).[10]

The generations that immediately followed Rizal and Kartini were distinct for being more revolutionary and proactive in their efforts to liberate their respective societies. The more notable among this group included Phan Boi Chau who saw in Japan the model for a liberated Vietnam, and Ho Chi Minh, who was drawn to Marxism's internationalist élan, becoming a founding member of the French Communist Party and the Comintern's agent in Asia. In Indonesia, Tan Malaka traveled around the region to establish networks with fellow Asian communists as well as to draw lessons from "foreign experiences" which he hoped he could bring back to aid Indonesians and their revolution against the Dutch and their local allies.[11] Marxism's internationalist ethos and Japan's official propaganda of an Asia for Asians were the initial appeals that could have made these revolutionaries the precursors of an indigenous Southeast Asian

perspective. And in fact we see hints of such imaginings in the manner in which Tan Malaka and Ho Chi Minh sought to organize their comrades.[12] But their priorities were clearly anti-colonial and they would scale down their vista back to "national liberation." Their internationalism would recede in favor of a national one, but this was something not out of the ordinary. For in the supposed centers of internationalist solidarity, nationalist currents had taken over: the Soviet Union under Stalin had reversed back to its Russian chauvinism while in Japan, once the military came to power, all talk of a pan-Asian solidarity could not hide her real intention of Asian dominance.

II

It was only in the post-war period that the contours of a "Southeast Asian" area studies began to take shape. Its first sites however were located somewhere else –in the academic institutions of the former colonial powers and in the United States. There, academic institutions had expropriated the British military's concept of "Southeast Asia" and made it their own.[13] Moreover, with the end of colonial rule and the onset of the Cold War, it became necessary for the new global hegemons – the United States and the Soviet Union – to set up the intellectual apparatuses to study the new nations of the post-colonial world. The latter, after all, constituted a potential power base or instruments of their global interests as well as arenas where they could do combat against each other using surrogate armies. The Americans immediately overextended themselves, intervening in the Indonesian revolution, as well as in the communist movements in the Philippines and Vietnam. This eagerness of the American state to spy on these new countries of the region, and to get involved in local affairs to prevent a slide into communism, would help boost the creation of centers and/or interdisciplinary programs in universities like Cornell and Yale.[14] These institutions however would not necessarily toe the official line; neither did they become simple producers of imperialist secret agents. Cornell University, for example, became a haven of a generation of Southeast

Asian scholars who were not only experts of the countries they were studying, but who also opposed the maneuverings of the American state, often to their intellectual and political detriment.[15]

In Europe, the inspiration to set up Southeast Asian studies programs was driven by a sense of nostalgia for the colonial era and the desire among many of those who served in the "Far East" to maintain ties with the societies they ruled. Southeast Asian institutes were thus formed in Holland and the study of Southeast Asia included in programs that concern the post-colonial world, such as the Southeast Asia Institute set up in Bedefeld, Germany, the University of Hull in England, and the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies. But the balance in the non-communist West had clearly shifted away from Europe towards the United States simply because the latter "was a rising power in the 1950s and 1960s, while France, England, and Holland were declining [as] the scholars-bureaucrats, who had reluctantly moved back to university slots, aged and died off."[16]

The growth of Southeast Asian studies in top American universities provided an impetus for training the next generations of specialists, many becoming pioneers in establishing additional centers. Charles Hirschman writes:

Compilations of the number of doctoral dissertations show rapid growth in the 1950s and 1960s, but a leveling off in the late 1970s and 1980s...In the early phase of growth, most Ph.D.'s with a specialization in Southeast Asia were in the traditional liberal arts (history, political science, anthropology) and were recruited to teach on international and Asian subjects in American universities. While undoubtedly exceptional, the early career of Professor Norman Parmer represents the era of growth in Southeast Asian studies. Parmer was one of the very first American academics to specialize in Malaysia (then Malaya). Within a decade after receiving his doctorate in history from Cornell (1957), Parmer founded the Southeast Asia Center at Northern Illinois University, served as country director for the first contingent of Peace Corps volunteers in Malaya, and then founded another Southeast Asia Center at Ohio University.[17]

But even this post-war generation did not depart significantly from their colonial predecessors. Like the old bureaucrat-scholars, many preferred to be country experts, to be educated in one or two languages (mainly of the country they studied), and rarely venturing into regional and global comparisons. Only a few possessed the capacity and intelligence to think regionally, and in this small cabal, four stood out. There was O.W. Wolters, a former colonial bureaucrat-scholar who made the successful leap into academia, and was noted for his remarkable overview of the area (including southern China) from the 4th century to the colonial period. His colleague George McTurnan Kahin, wrote the path-breaking work on the Indonesian nationalist revolution which he soon followed with one of the best critical appraisals of American foreign policy in Indochina. A generation younger to Wolters and Kahin consisted of Benedict Anderson, whose brilliant and unusual intellectual and political pilgrimage led him from Indonesia (Java) to Thailand (Bangkok), and the Philippines (Manila), and James C. Scott, whose studies of the Vietnamese, Burmese and Malaysian peasantries' modes of resistance remain a classic.[18]

No tangible Southeast Asian studies program developed in Japan until the early 1960s with the establishment of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) in Kyoto University and the organization of the Japan Society for Southeast Asian History in November 1966. Even then, these organizations were pretty much country-specific. Kyoto University's CSEAS, for example, states that one of its first projects was "a joint research project with special emphasis on Thailand and Malaysia [where researchers] went...to conduct fieldwork ranging from detailed community studies by anthropologists, to investigations of tropical forests, paddy soils, and agricultural techniques, further confined these country interests by natural scientists."[19] There was hardly anything devoted to understanding regional politics, and historical writings were too concentrated on "a more subjective, microscopic account of Filipino self-consciousness, both at the national and regional levels" and a partiality on social history over national histories.[20] Japanese academia's passionate empiricism also accounted for

the preponderance of long-term studies of changes at the village level, very often failing to connect with larger national and regional processes.[21]

In Southeast Asia, the development was much slower where, with the exception of Thailand and the Philippines, the establishment of national universities only came after World War II.[22] These schools' history and politics departments were – as expected – created to mainly devote their attention to writing and propagating the official national stories of these new republics.[23] The graduate training of young scholars within the country and abroad were likewise directed at producing country experts. Young Filipinos, Indonesians, Malaysians and Thais went to Leiden, London, Chicago, Ithaca, and New Haven to write dissertations on their countries.[24] There were some exceptions to this country-centric scholarship. In the Philippines, the Siquijodnon Jose Eliseo Rocamora wrote an exceptional dissertation about Indonesia which, to this very day, remains the definitive study on the *Partai Nasionalis Indonesia*.[25] Slightly older than him is the Malaysian historian Wang Gung Wu, whose curiosity about his "origins" led him to explore the world of the Chinese diaspora in the region and its connections to the "motherland."[26] Rocamora and Wang, unfortunately, were the only ones in the region with a curiosity to compare, with their numerical marginality only mitigated by the brilliance of their respective works. Elsewhere, it was easier for a budding scholar to specialize on his or her own country.

Meanwhile in the national universities, course listings that included seminars and classes on Europe, the United States, greater "Asia," or other countries in Southeast Asia were developed. "Asian Centers" were being built in places like the University of the Philippines, but university support was miniscule compared to the attention devoted to building up the disciplines and the major departments. The only exception in the 1960s appeared to be Malaysia, where a Southeast Asia Program was built to provide institutional support to students of Malaysian history and politics, as well as those who specialized on the "larger Malay world." This program also became the domain for scholars working on subjects like the origins

of the country's multiethnic communities, the break away and birth of Singapore and the incorporation of Borneo and Sarawak to the Federation.[27] Still, even this pioneering institution was only ancillary to such disciplines as economics and public administration. Hence, early post-colonial Southeast Asia still paralleled the developments in metropoles where the academic concerns remained mainly country-specific, albeit this time to support the building of official nationalism.

The budding institutional curiosity about Southeast Asia was to be found elsewhere, in the think tank groups supported by or sympathetic to government and American interests, and fearful of local communist threats as well as of Mao's China. Created at various times during the Cold War era, these institutes gained credence through their frequent evaluations of regional "security risks.". In the process of tracing the efforts of "enemy countries" like Vietnam and/or China to promote revolutionary solidarity, and later, in the flow of drugs and arms by warlords and syndicates, these centers slowly became the odd precursors of a comparative perspective that took into account the relationships between countries vis-à-vis these problems.[28] Because many of their members were academics, these centers kept close ties with the university, thereby keeping open the possibility of extending their regional curiosities and contaminating the country-focus of many specialists.

The one negative but perhaps unintended outcome of this national bias of Southeast Asian universities was the intellectual diminution of the local, the periphery and the frontier as subjects of study. In many cases, what was often written as national politics or history was narrowly centered on the stories of the dominant elites and the national capitals. The areas outside of the capital's orbit were often ignored, with the communities at the margins of the national body politic suffering the most for their exclusion. For their stories would be reduced to uneasy accounts of their ungovernability and perilous nature, where smuggling, rebellion, criminality and other inscrutable acts occur to the befuddlement and irritation of those in the capital. Ironically it was also in these areas that a

regional consciousness could have prevailed in the early postwar period. Driven mainly by trade concerns, the histories of pre-colonial Southeast Asian states as well as the early colonial states demonstrated a cosmopolitan interaction between them, without being bothered by the delineation of clear-cut territorial boundaries. This, in turn, engendered an intellectual and cultural cosmopolitanism that saw Maguindanao or Riau datus conversing with Portuguese assisted by Chinese finance advisers, of Thai kings inquiring about the merits and demerits of Western education, and of Vietnamese merchants trading effortlessly with their Chinese counterparts.[29] This consciousness waned as the policing of the borders by colonial states improved. But it never really disappeared. The borders remained porous, and the nation-states with the weakest navies or immigration agencies could only tolerate the continued human and material exchanges that were now classified under the rubric "smuggling."[30] The point I wish to make in this aside is that had scholars in the region searched for an infrastructure for the development of a Southeast Asian perspective, the frontiers ironically could have provided that source of inspiration. But because the predisposition was to write national history or politics from the capital, this was never given due consideration.[31]

III

In the late 20th century, two major changes occurred in the metropole and in Southeast Asia that would make the prospect of a more secure region-wide "Southeast Asian" studies possible. The American state's defeat in the Vietnam War and the collapse of the Soviet Union over a decade later brought about the unsurprising decline in American interest on Southeast Asia. Federal and private funding for research and graduate education were now shifted to more "strategic" and "newsworthy" areas like post-communist Russia and Eastern Europe, and in Asia, a revitalized communist China and the new power dynamos of South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan. This diminished institutional interest coincided with shifts in university departments that emphasized "theory" over "area

studies," and "broad comparisons" over "country studies." Southeast Asian studies, which was already a minor "area" compared to East or South Asia, would experience further marginalization by the disinterest of new hegemonic theories like deconstruction, post-structuralism and rational choice. Once cultural studies in particular began to "interrogate" the authenticity of "Southeast Asia," even the intellectual premises of Southeast Asian studies began to erode, prompting concerns from specialists but also prodding them to explore new pathways that may not necessarily be tied anymore to the now-dubious terrain that is "Southeast Asia."[32]

Financial constraints and foreign policy shifts also affected European and Australian Southeast Asian centers, with only the "bigger" ones being able to survive.[33] Finally, in Japan, despite the resources in their hand and despite their government's commitment to enrich the local version of "area studies," scholars continue to focus on country-centered investigations. Although there are indications that some scholars are pushing their colleagues to be more adventurous and hence engage in much broader regional comparisons, the majority of Japanese Southeast Asianists remained heavily tilted towards the local and the anthropological.[34]

In Southeast Asia, the trend seems to go the opposite direction. The decision by many revolutionaries to abandon the *maquis* and move to graduate studies has produced a bevy of studies that are outstanding in both theory and empirical substance. What is more important, however, is that these studies could not simply be situated within national boundaries anymore for the subjects they explore are issues that many countries in Southeast Asia and the larger post-colonial world share in common. There is, therefore, an opening to compare.[35] Meanwhile, no sooner had specialists in the anti-communist think tanks began to settle down into their academic niches, when they and their more academic colleagues were drawn towards new social problems. The fragile presence of the nation-states in their peripheries, and their use of excessive force to compensate for this weakness, had led to uprisings by communities in these marginal areas. Islamic separatist movements have challenged the

governments of Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand, while in Burma and Vietnam, "minorities" seeking to break away and form their own nation-states were confronting the state.[36] The failure of the authoritarian project in Southeast Asia has raised questions about the enduring viability of the nation-state as the institutional and symbolic inspiration for communities of the region. The use of Islam as a political weapon in Aceh, Maguindanao, Pattani and Sulawesi is thus not simply just the purported invocation of a superior philosophy over the more limited national idea. The notion of a universal Islamic *umma* has also become the inspiration for imagining a politico-moral order that transcends the limited boundaries of the nation-state. To academics in the various national universities, these were concerns demanding their attention if only to defend the continuing "goodness of nations" against processes that tend to unravel a now-fundamental notion of political space.[37]

At the other end, Singapore's exceptional development from a non-descript fishing village to an internationalized economic powerhouse has led to a major rethinking of the nationalism-inspired import-substitution orthodoxy of the early post-war period, and its displacement by a more globalized export-oriented approach to progress.[38] Singapore's transformation paralleled those of South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and the one important consequence of the emergence of these "East Asian tiger economies" to the rest of Southeast Asia was the increase in their demand for the latter's natural and human resources to feed their burgeoning industries, increasingly prosperous citizens and remarkably changed lifestyles. In the 1980s, therefore, Indonesians, Filipinos, Thais began to fill up the lower end of the labor hierarchy of these countries and supplying the domestic assistance to enhance the leisure time for middle class and elite Singaporeans, Taiwanese, South Koreans and Hong Kong residents. It was inevitable that this flow would catch the attention of academics and area specialists.[39]

Rebellions in the periphery, the merits of full participation in the global capitalist system and increased flow of humans and resources all

throughout Asia, combined to increase the level of curiosity on "Southeast Asian studies" within the region. In the late postwar period, universities began to create the appropriate Southeast Asia programs, or where they were already in existence, strengthen them with additional staff and resources. Of these programs, the National University of Singapore has been the most prolific, with its Southeast Asia Program becoming the top graduate program in the region.[40]

IV

Two other impulses are expected to bolster this emergence of Southeast Asian studies in the long-term. The first comes from changes in international relations in today's Asia, with a more assertive presence by China and South Korea and the coming out of the hitherto isolated socialist states of Indochina. China apparently has had a number of institutions dedicated to the study of Southeast Asia (the largest and most prominent is in Xiamen, southern China) and whose statures appear to have risen as Chinese business and economic interests in Southeast Asian grew. South Korean universities have also begin the process of creating similar centers, in part prompted by the active presence of Southeast Asia migrant labor in the Korean economy, and indirectly by the effects of its citizens vacationing in Southeast Asia. Finally, as Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam rebuild their universities in anticipation of completely opening to the world capitalist system, there are indications that this would involve introducing programs or courses on the region.[41] Of these countries, Vietnam is several steps ahead institutionally speaking, with the founding of its Institute for Southeast Asian Studies in 1973. The war against the Americans and the subsequent attempts by the latter to isolate Vietnam from the rest of the world, however, put a limit to what this institute could do. This, however, has changed at present and the prospects for Vietnam leading the renewed interest in Southeast Asia in Indochina are quite positive. [42]

The second impulse comes from "civil society" groups and governments that are increasingly concerned with problems whose

resolution is transnational. Ecological and environmental problems, human rights and religious politics are just some of the concerns that drew attention of state and anti-state forces. This has led to, among other things, increased attention by alliances like the ASEAN to understanding and dealing with them. With the return of a security angle in the "war against terrorism," there is more bases for further cooperation.

Much closer "solidarity" networking among civil society forces all over the region has become the imperative to deal with the same issues. Non-government organizations (NGOs) and people's organizations (POs) from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand have come together to share experiences on how to handle the state, ecological problems and promote community-based development. They also became closely involved with each other in dealing with regional problems. The Asia Pacific Conference on East Timor (APCET) that Southeast Asian NGOs and POs set up in support of Timorese independence was one classic example of this regional solidarity.[43] These collaborations have inevitably drawn scholarly interest, made easy by the fact that many academics are themselves involved in these social problems.

Already there are academic movements aimed at promoting this rejuvenated perspective. The Toyota Foundation-supported Southeast Asian Studies Regional Exchange Program network continues to make its mark among the participating universities, and efforts by Singaporean academics, American-funded Southeast-Asia based fellowship programs, and Japanese foundations to promote a "We Asians" dialogue have created more opportunities for Southeast Asian intellectuals to discuss how to develop further this regional perspective.[44] But there are dangers: this "feel good" mentality could also breed a misplaced "we Southeast Asians versus them of the West" sentiment which could undermine or make a caricature of the cosmopolitanism inherent in Southeast Asian studies. Moreover, this sentiment could also hide the major institutional and resource discrepancies between nations.[45] The optimism over the possibilities of going beyond national perspectives into a regional one, and enriching inter-country

comparison alongside national focus, however, is still dominant. It is this enthusiasm that the spread of "Southeast Asian studies" in Southeast Asia will most likely build on.

But this perhaps may not last long. For already, the contagion of cultural studies is beginning to infect the "traditional disciplines" in each country, spurred in part by the growing curiosity of the humanities on the universal claims and theoretical assertions of the social sciences, and the attempts to transcend the confining borders of the disciplines.[46] Post-structural and post-colonial scholarship is making its way into Southeast Asia, posing as both a positive addition to this renewed curiosity of the region, but also imperiling – by the sheer energy of its interrogation – the idea that there is indeed a Southeast Asia.

Notes

1 By reasons of professional training and limited knowledge, this essay will mainly confine itself to the social sciences. Its tendency to focus on the Philippines and Malaysia has also something to do with my training as well as that of my partner, Donna J. Amoroso, a historian of colonial and early post-colonial Malaysia.

2 Benedict R. Anderson, "The Changing Ecology of Southeast Asian Studies in the United States, 1950-1990," in *Southeast Asian Studies in the Balance: Reflections from America* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Association for Asian Studies, 1992), 26.

3 Anderson, "The Changing Ecology of Southeast Asian Studies in the United States, 1950-1990," 26-27.

4 One gets a sense of this mutual distrust in Anne L. Foster, "Alienation and Cooperation: European, Southeast Asian and American Perceptions of Anti-Colonial Rebellion, 1919-1937," Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1995

5 J.S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948).

6 *The Japanese in Colonial Southeast Asia*, Saya Shiraishi and Takashi Shiraishi, eds. (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program Translation Series, Volume III). See in particular the introduction by the editors and the essay of Hajime Shimizu, "Southeast Asia as a Regional Concept in Modern Japan: An Analysis of Geography Textbooks," 27-30.

7 Shiraishi and Shiraishi *The Japanese in Colonial Southeast Asia*, 14-15.

8 Ken'ichi Goto, "Cooperation, Submission, and Resistance of Indigenous Elites of Southeast Asia in the Wartime Empire," in *The Japanese Wartime Empire, 1931-1945,* Peter Duus, Ramon Myers and Mark R. Peattie, eds. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 274-277.

9 See Jose Rizal, *Noli Me Tangere*, as translated by Ma. Soledad Lacson-Locsin (Manila: Bookmark, 1966); and Raden Adjeng Kartini, *Letters of a Javanese Princess* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1964). This kind of "awakening" was not unique to Kartini. Indonesian Arabs were likewise evolving their own identity by the early 1900s. See Natalie Mobini-Kesheh, *The Hadrami Awakening: Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900-1942* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1999).

10 Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World* (London: Verso, 1998), 2. On Rizal's nationalist imaginings, see Caroline S. Hau, *Necessary Fictions: Philippine Literature and the Nation, 1946-1980* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000), 48-93. Rizal was not alone. Mabini himself

was aware of the region (which he called "Oceania"), while Isabelo de los Reyes wrote his studies on Filipino "folklore" conscious of the world beyond the colony. On de los Reyes, see Benedict Anderson, "The Rooster's Egg: Pioneering World Folklore in the Philippines," *New Left Review* 2 (March-April 2000), 47-62.

11 See Phan Boi Chau, *Overturned Chariot: The Autobiography of Phan Boi Chau* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1999); David G. Marr, *Vietnamese Anticolonialism, 1885-1925* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971), 98-119; William J. Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh* (New York: Hyperion, 2000), 46-104; Rudolf Mrazek, "Tan Malaka: A Political Personality's Structure of Experience," *Indonesia* 14 (October 1972), 1-47.

12 Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh*, 149-167; Rudolf Mrazek, "Tan Malaka: A Political Personality's Structure of Experience," *Indonesia* 14 (October 1972), 1-47.

13 The provenance of "Southeast Asia" was military: this was how the British Far East Command divided the Asian region into different spheres of operations during World War II.

14 Charles Hirschman, "Southeast Asian Studies in American Universities," in *Southeast Asian Studies in the Balance*, 43.

15 See the academic and political autobiography of Benedict Anderson, *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990), 1-13; and, George McTurnan Kahin, *Southeast Asia: A Testament* (New York: Routledge and Curzon, 2002)

16 Anderson, "The Changing Ecology of Southeast Asian Studies in the United States, 1950-1990," 29.

17 Hircschman, "Southeast Asian Studies in American Universities," 45.

18 O.W. Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1999); George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952); George McTurnan Kahin, *Intervention: How American became involved in Vietnam* (New York: 1987); Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparisons*; James C. Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1976); and James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985).

19 Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, 12th Report, 1999-2001, 2.

20 Kiichi Fujiwara, "Philippine Studies in Japan," *Philippine Studies Newsletter* 24: 2-3 (June-October 1996): 24. Fujiwara refers here to the inordinate concern by Japanese historians of religious, local and indigenous community histories.

21 See, for example, Tsubouchi Yoshihiro, *One Malay Village: A Thirty-Year Community Study* (Kyoto, Japan: Kyoto University Press and Trans Pacific Press, 2001).

22 The University of Malaya was established only in October 1949

23 A sampling of the leading historical works in Malaysia and the Philippines is indicative of this inclination. For Malaysia: Cheah Boon Khen, "The Erosion of Ideological Hegemony and Royal Power and the Rise of Postwar Malay Nationalism, 1945-1946," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 19, 1 (March 1998); Khon Kim Hong, *Merdeka: British Rule and the Struggle for Independence in Malaya, 1945-1957* (Selangor, Malaysia: Institute for Social Analysis, 1984); Khoo Kay Kim, *The Western Malay States* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1972); Ishak bin Tadin, "Dato Onn and Malay Nationalism, 1946-1951," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 1, 1 (March 1960): 56-88. On the Philippines, see Teodoro Agoncillo, *Revolt of the Masses: The Story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1956); Teodoro Agoncillo, *Malolos: The Crisis of the Republic* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1960; Renato Constantino, *The Philippines: A Past Revisited* (Quezon City: Renato Constantino, 1974); Letizia Constantino and Renato Constantino, *The Philippines: A Continuing Past* (Quezon City: Foundation for Nationalist Studies, 1978); Cesar Abid Majul, *The Political and Constitutional Ideas of the Philippine Revolution* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press,1996); Cesar Abid Majul, *Mabini and the Philippine Revolution* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1960)

24 The University of Chicago's Anthropology Department supported for a while a Philippine Studies Program.

25 Jose Eliseo Rocamora, "Nationalism in Search of an Ideology: Indonesia's Nationalist Party, 1945-1965," Ph.D. dissertation, Cornell University, 1974.

26 See the collection of his past essays in Wang Gungwu, *A Short History of the Nanyang Chinese* (Singapore: Donald Moore-Eastern Universities Press, 1959).

27 See the list of sources and further readings in Barbara Watson Andaya and Leonard Y. Andaya, *A History of Malaysia* (London: Palgrave, 2001).

28 Among the notable were the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies in Singapore (established 1968) and the Indonesian Centre for Strategic Studies (established 1971).

29 Wolters, *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*; Robert Elson, "International Commerce, the State and Society: Economic and Social Change," in *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia,* Nicholas Tarling, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 131-196; and Robert S. Wicks, *Money, Markets and Trade in Early Southeast Asia* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1992).

30 There has yet to be a comprehensive study of smuggling in Southeast Asia. Hints of this resilient informal economy, however, can be found in Alfred W. McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin: CIA Complicity in the Global Trade* (New York: Lawrence Hill, 1991), 283+.

31 The nation-state would also exclude the stories of those who opposed its formation, especially those who joined the communist movement or the more radical of the anti-colonial movement whose continued presence in the political arena after independence threatened the hegemony of the faction in power. These excluded stories are only slowly coming out now in the form of political memoirs. See Said Zahari, *Dark Clouds at Dawn: A Political Memoir* (Kuala Lumpur: Insan, 2001); *Comet in our Sky: Lim Chin Siong in History*, Tan Jung Quee and Jomo K.S., eds. (Kuala Lumpur: Insan, 2001); Jose Y. Dalisay, *The Lavas: A Filipino Family* (Pasig City: Anvil, 1999); *Sa Tungki ng Ilong ng Kaaway: Talambuhay ni Tatang* (Manila: Linang, 1988); and the essays of Vina Lanzona, Alfred W. McCoy, Brian Fegan, Benedict J. Tria Kerkvliet and Rosanne Rutten, in the collection *Lives at the Margins: Biography of Filipinos, Obscure, Ordinary and Heroic*, Alfred W. McCoy, ed. (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2000

32 On these anxieties, see *Weighing the Balance: Southeast Asian Studies Ten Years After* (New York City: Social Science Research Council, 1999).

33 Australian scholar Mark Turner suggests that of the Australian universities with Southeast Asian programs, only the Australian National University may survive. Conversation with author, October 2002, Cebu City. In Europe, Southeast Asian scholars are linked to institutions that have broader area coverage like the Institute of Social Studies in the Netherlands.

34 Takashi Shiraishi, *The Making of a Region: How to Think about East Asia* (Japan: Chuko Shinsho, 2000); and Narifumi Tachimoto, *Area Studies Methodologies* (Japan: Kyoto University Press, 1999) These works, however, suffer from being too limited to a Japanese audience. There is little attempt from Southeast Asia to translate these works, unlike the inordinate concern given to reproducing and translating the writings of Southeast Asianists from the West. But there are exceptions like Kunio Yoshihara, *Building a Prosperous Southeast Asia* (England: Curzon Press, 1999).

35 See the following: Reynaldo Ileto, *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979); Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994); and, Kasian Tejapira, *Commodifying Marxism: The Formation of Modern Thai Radical Culture, 1927-1958* (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 2001).

36 These include: Benedict Anderson, "Majorities and Minorities," in *Spectre of Comparison*, 318-332; Geoffrey Robinson, "*Rawan* is as *Rawan* Does: The Origins of Disorder in New Order Aceh," in *Violence and the State in Suharto's Indonesia*, Benedict R.O'G. Anderson, ed. (Ithaca, New York: Cornell Southeast Asia Program, 2001), 213-242; Geoffrey

Robinson, "The Fruitless Search for a Smoking Gun: Tracing the Origins of Violence in East Timor," in *Roots of Violence in Indonesia*, Freek Colombjin and J. Thomas Lindblad, eds. (The Netherlands: KITLV Press, 2002), 243-276; Marites Danguilan Vitug and Glenda Gloria, *Under the Crescent Moon: Rebellion in Mindanao* (Quezon City: Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs and Institute for Popular Democracy, 2000); W.K. Che Man, *Muslim Separatism: The Moros of the Southern Philippines and the Malays of Southern Thailand* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1990); Martin Smith, *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity* (London: Zed Press, 1991).

37 The term "goodness of nations" is from Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparison*, 360-368.

38 Frederick Deyo, The Political Economy of New Asian Industrialism (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987); and, City States in the Global Economy: Industrial Restructuring in Hong Kong and Singapore, Stephen W.K. Chiu et. al., eds. (Boulder: Westview, 1997);

39 In the case of the Filipino labor diaspora, see *Filipinos in Global Migrations: At Home in the World?* Filomeno Aguilar, ed. (Manila: Philippine Migration Research Network and the Philippine Social Science Council, 2002).

40 Hong Lysa, "Southeast Asian Studies, National University of Singapore," *Southeast Asian Studies Bulletin*, 2, 99 (October-November 1999): 31.

41 See the reports of participants from various Asian universities with Southeast Asian studies in their curricula in the Conference-Workshop on "Southeast Asian Studies in Asia: An Assessment towards a Collaborative Action Plan," University of the Philippines, January 8-10, 2002.

42 Check the website: www.iias.nl/iiasn/iiasn7/southeast/vietnam.html

43 I thank Malaysian scholar and activist Sumit Mandal for this information.

44 *'We Asians': Between Past and Future*, Kwok Kian-Woon et. al., eds. (Singapore: Japan Foundation Asian Center, National Archives of Singapore and Singapore Heritage Society. 2000); *Asianizing Asia: Reflexivity, History and Identity: First Annual Conference of the Asia Fellows Program* (Bangkok" ASIA Fellows Program, Institute of International Education, 2001). See also the various topics covered by SEASREP's *Southeast Asian Studies Bulletin.*

45 Conference-Workshop on "Southeast Asian Studies in Asia: An Assessment towards a Collaborative Action Plan," University of the Philippines, January 8-10, 2002.

46 An example is Caroline S. Hau, "The 'Cultural' and 'Linguistic' Turns in the Writing of Philippine History," in *Journal of Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies* 7, 2 (Fall 2000): 89-122.

Reflections on the Development of Philippine Studies in the Philippines: The U.P. Asian Center Experience*

CAROLYN I. SOBRITCHEA

In a way the Philippines is what we as social scientists think or imagine it is since after all governments listen to the ravings of economists and the narratives of historians, the preachings of psychologists, the serendipitous views of anthropologists, the warnings of demographers, or alternatively take offence at the views of novelists, poets and film makers, and particularly of radical sociologists. In all of these activities we, as professionals, are creating, constituting, imagining this reality called the Philippines (Pertierra 1989: 29).

Introduction

I discuss this paper based on more than four decades of experience in teaching graduate level courses in Philippine Studies at the Asian Center. I identify and examine the various factors and issues that have influenced the thrust and contents of the Philippine Studies program at the Asian Center. Although the success of an academic program depends on many factors like the availability of resources, faculty competence and management processes, these are not mentioned here. Instead, my

* Based on a paper read at the Conference-Workshop on Southeast Asian Studies in Asia: An Assessment Towards a Collaborative Action Plan held on January 8-10, 2002 at the SEAMEO-INNOTECH Building, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City Philippines; organized by the Asian Center, University of the Philippines.

reflections focus on the possibilities and limits of area and multi-disciplinary programs like Philippine Studies, both for theory building and relevant scholarship. I have taken note of the opportunities as well as challenges of engaging traditional or mainstream disciplines; of producing knowledge that combine in the most creative, yet often disquieting manner, the perspectives and methodologies of the fields of history, political science, sociology, anthropology and the other social sciences. In light of current theoretical debates about the politics and culture of knowledge production, I end this short paper with a discussion of the future of Philippine Studies in the Philippines.

Why Philippine Studies in the UP?

The teaching of Philippine Studies at the graduate level in the University of the Philippines dates back to the mid-fifties with the establishment of the Institute of Asian Studies at the College of Liberal Arts. It was organized, following a directive from President Magsaysay, to provide a "common ground in which to bring together scholars and students in Asia ... for joint endeavors... to preserve and advance their common cultural heritage" (AC Brochure 1968:5). Since the Philippines was seen at that time as a "stranger in Southeast Asia", the establishment of the Institute, with Philippine Studies as the core area of inquiry, would allow for the training of a "new breed" of Filipino scholars who could bring the country closer to its Asian neighbors. The general objective of the Institute was "to bring the reality of Asia to the Philippines and the Philippines to the rest of Asia" (Ibid:9). Professor Aurora Lim, one of the earliest faculty members recruited into the program noted that the IAS was established "to promote and advance the study of Asia and was one of the corrective measures to balance the **heavily western bias of the University curriculum** and of its research and professional orientation" (Lim n.d.:1).

A cursory examination of the scanty documents from this period shows that the faculty who joined the IAS on a part-time basis came from

the various departments of the College of Liberal Arts. With graduate training in various disciplines (i.e. history, political science, and literature) from the United States, they jointly undertook research and developed the area courses which, however, bore strong similarities to those offered by the disciplinal departments. It would take many years and countless experiments by the faculty to develop courses that integrated the perspectives and empirical materials coming from the various social sciences.

In 1968, the IAS was reorganized and renamed as the Asian Center through a law (Republic Act 5334) which also declared it a national policy "to develop a closer and broader contact with... Asian neighbors in the field of learning and scholarship to attain knowledge of ... national identity in relation to other Asian nations through profound studies on Asian cultures, histories, social forces and aspirations" (AC 1968:1). The law gave the UP the funds for the building, equipment and facilities for the Asian Center; it mandated that the IAS be absorbed by this new unit and that there would be " emphasis on Philippine studies."

The Philippine Studies program was operationalized through the creation of more courses on Philippine society and culture and on Philippine relations with Asian countries. Additionally, the Asian Center published together with the social science departments an annual journal on Philippine society and culture called *Lipunan;* it expanded its library collection of local materials and launched a number of studies on Philippine historical relations with countries like India, China and Japan.

With the declaration of martial law in 1972, the Asian Center was again reorganized, this time to backstop the government in the formulation of foreign policies and national development plans and programs. Through a Presidential Proclamation, the Asian Center became the Philippine Center for Advanced Studies (PCAS) and its programs and facilities were expanded to include an ethnographic museum, a laboratory for the learning of various Asian and Philippine languages and a library that included the subscription of all the major academic journals in Asia.

The curricular programs were strengthened through the opening of a doctoral degree in Philippine Studies and a master of arts degree in Islamic Studies. The M.A. programs in Philippine and Asian Studies of the Asian Center were retained.

The conversion of the Asian Center into a "think tank" of government led to a reconceptualization of the thrust of Philippine Studies. If originally, the program intended to link and locate the Philippines within the culture and history of Asia, this time the intent was to produce scholars that would help "increase the Filipino's participation in his society and culture within the context of **world affairs** through greater understanding and appreciation of his role in **the development of the Filipino nation"** (PCAS Terminal Report, 1979). Concepts like "national development" and "social engineering" guided much of the work of the Center and the teaching agenda of many Philippine Studies faculty throughout the dark years of martial rule. I would like to mention in passing the valiant efforts of faculty members and students who resisted the pressure to convert their classrooms into a propaganda arm of the Marcos government.

The list of curricular offerings during the PCAS period shows a strong bias for courses that examine the various forms and expressions of culture change in the country (i.e. acculturation, development processes, urbanization) and problem-oriented topics. This is understandable inasmuch as the overriding agenda of the program was to bring together the different theories and methods of investigation of the different disciplines to develop a body of knowledge about the roots of underdevelopment and contribute to the building of a "progressive Philippine society" (PCAS Terminal Report 1979: 17). The curricular structure was designed in such a way that the graduates could directly participate, either through service in government or development organizations, in resolving national issues and problems.

When PCAS was finally dissolved in 1979 and the Asian Center reverted to its former status as one of the colleges of the UP, the curricular

programs were retained together with most of the faculty members. To this day there has been very little change in the curricular offerings. However there is the spirited attempt by some of its faculty to infuse the program with new paradigms and perspectives for studying Philippine society and culture.

Current Status of the Teaching Program

The Asian Center continues to offer three graduate degrees in Philippine Studies: (a) the Master of Arts (M.A.); (b) the Master in Philippine Studies (without thesis requirement); and the (c) Ph.D. program. The doctoral program is now jointly managed by three colleges, the Asian Center, the College of Arts and Letters (CAL) and the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy (CSSP).[1] The CSSP offers only the Ph. D. degree whereas the two colleges offer both M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Philippine Studies. The degree programs at the CSSP and CAL are discipline-based and students have to select their areas of emphasis or concentration from among the various disciplines within their home college (Conaco, n.d.).

As the three colleges came together to set common curricular standards and requirements, they also agreed to adopt the same program objectives which are:

- To study Filipino civilization and its constituent ethnolinguistic cultures;
- To problematize our own distinct identity as Filipinos;
- To acquire a profound, holistic idea about ourselves, as a starting point for knowing other cultures and civilizations *(Report on the Proposed Single Ph. D. Philippine Studies Program, 1992).*

Unlike the two aforementioned colleges, the Asian Center uses the multi-disciplinary area study approach. Students have to choose for their area of specialization among (a) Philippine society and culture, (b)

Philippine external relations; and (c) Philippine bureaucracy. The study of Philippine society and culture can theoretically encompass a wide range of themes or topics, from ethnicity and ethnic relations, to urbanization, religious cultures and even literature and language. Meanwhile, the area of Philippine bureaucracy exposes students to the study of organizational culture, leadership, and comparative bureaucracy. Philippine external relations offers a wide range of topics on the dynamics, cultural, economic and political dimensions of Philippine relations with other countries and international organizations.

Application of the multi-disciplinary approach. The curriculum for all the degree programs is structured to provide "(a) training to do quality research, (b) flexibility and breadth of knowledge and intellectual outlook without sacrificing the depth and substance in any chosen major area of study; and (c) continuity in the development of graduate skills" (PSP Brochure, n.d.). The courses vary in content and objectives. Students are first required to pass the core courses. At the Ph.D. level, these consist of subjects that would enable the students to have a firm grasp of issues, theories, perspectives, and methodologies needed to complete the course work and undertake the dissertation research. After the students pass the core courses, they enlist in survey or introductory courses that provide thrusts, breadth and unity to the curricular program. Finally, the students are made to choose from among a wide array of readings and topic or problem- focused courses, depending on the chosen thesis or dissertation topic. Such curricular structure ensures that the students acquire the analytical skills to process empirical material and build theories grounded on Philippine realities.

The application of the multi- and inter-disciplinary integration occurs at four levels: "(a) at the formulation and development of courses, (b) in teaching of these courses, (3) in planning the students' program of study, and (4) in the selection of the dissertation problem that may serve as focal point of this integrative process" (Report on the proposed single Ph.D, Studies Program, 1992). The Asian Center maintains only a small number of full-time faculty members for Philippine Studies, and allows its students

to take courses in various colleges and choose research topics from a wide variety of theoretical and practical problems and issues. Faculty members from the different disciplines and colleges are invited as thesis and dissertation readers.

Number and profile of students and graduates. The Asian Center has graduated a total of 139 Philippine Studies students in the last twenty five years, 68 Ph.D. and 71 M.A. and MPS degree holders. Student enrollment has increased across the years, making it the "biggest single sector of the AC" (Social Science Agenda 2000, Internal Assessment Report). From 1995 to 2000, the average student enrolment was 129 per semester; between 31 to 54 percent of the enrollees were doctoral students. Compared to the enrolment performance of other units, however, the number of AC students has been generally lower, causing cost-recovery, efficiency and sustainability concerns from administration.

Majority of the enrollees are working students. More than half are faculty members and researchers from the University of the Philippines and tertiary schools from the different regions of the country. The rest work for private companies and non-government organizations. Since Philippine external relations is one of the areas of specialization, the program tends to attract middle-level personnel from government particularly the Department of Foreign Affairs. The program also attracts foreign students, particularly Americans, Japanese and Koreans. In terms of geographic distribution, most of the students in the seventies and eighties came from Mindanao and the Visayas. This pattern has changed in recent years with the increase of students residing in Metro-Manila and nearby provinces.

Reflections on Program Strengths and Weaknesses

I started teaching Philippine Studies in 1974 and for the past 27 years I have served as adviser and reader of many thesis and dissertation students. My participation in several multi-disciplinary studies has given me a lot of insights about the possibilities and limits of area studies in

producing knowledge about, for and by Filipinos. Going over the theses and dissertations written by the graduates, I marvel at the richness of empirical data and grounded theories they have produced. The strengths of area studies, in fact, lie in the opportunity given to students to focus on a subject matter, theme or issue, and the availability of theories and data from various disciplines. The other side of this, however, is the difficulty of arriving at a set of standards on which to evaluate the quality of area studies. Some faculty members would sometimes insist on discipline-based conventions of teaching and research. Occasionally, students would also have problems negotiating the competing demands and divergent views of their examiners who come from different academic backgrounds. The other difficulties encountered by students in the program are:

- Inadequate preparation to integrate knowledge, methodologies and approaches coming from different disciplines. The courses and other academic requirements to complete a degree in Philippine Studies are not adequate to hone the skills of many students in inter-disciplinary research. There is a need for additional capacity-building measures to address this issue. Some possible solutions are the development of a mentoring program in multi-disciplinary studies and active participation of students in local and foreign multi-disciplinary conferences.
- Lack of faculty advisers who are open to multi- and inter-disciplinary modes of knowledge production; and
- Prevailing differences among disciplines in their approaches and interpretations of the various theoretical and empirical issues in Philippine Studies. The process of integration must be subjected to more rigorous discussions among scholars since this is mediated by many contentious theoretical issues.

I would like to take note of the fact that different perspectives for doing Philippine Studies have emerged in recent years, strongly influencing the thrusts and directions of teaching and research. These are the

perspectives developed by Filipino scholars (i.e. *pantayong pananaw, sikolohiyang Filipino*) that challenge many of the traditional, albeit western modes of knowledge production. But while the students are introduced to these various perspectives, the AC Philippine Studies program also uses western models and theories of society and culture (i.e. critical theory, feminism, class analysis) to explain and understand local conditions and contexts. Courses are taught both in Filipino and English and reading materials are drawn from those written by both foreign and local scholars. More importantly, the program commits to relevant scholarship; it encourages the rereading/deconstruction of colonial and western-oriented texts, critical analyses of social processes and development efforts as well as the production of knowledge about the marginalized groups and sectors in Philippine society.

Current developments in academe augur well for the future of area studies. These include the availability of more faculty members trained in the use of the multi-disciplinal approach and theoretical as well as methodology literature. There are more academic gatherings that presently provide the venue for scholars to cross disciplinal boundaries and collectively discuss a common topic and issue. Most importantly, area studies has shown the capacity to generate knowledge that can directly and indirectly, immediately and in the long run, help solve the many pestering social and political problems of the country and the global community. After all, the University's guiding philosophy is to respond to new challenges in life and fresh forms of knowledge.

Note

1 In 1974, the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) initiated a Ph.D. Philippine Studies program. This was administered separately from the Asian Center program. During the term of UP President Angara, a committee was formed to study the merging of the two Philippine Studies programs (AC-CAS Ad Hoc Committee on Philippine Studies 1982). Before this could happen, the CAS was divided into the College of Arts and Letters (CAL) and the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy (CSSP), and each new college opted to administer their own Philippine Studies program. Following further attempts at unifying the program, there is now a single Ph.D. Philippine Studies program that gives students some leeway to design their program of study according to the unique features of the three participating colleges.

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Conference on Southeast Asian Studies in Asia

SUMMARY REPORT

In January 2002, the University of the Philippines' Asian Center organized an international conference workshop on "SEA Studies in Asia: An Assessment Towards a Collaborative Action Plan". Although it was not the first attempt to gather together scholars and specialists to review the status of Southeast Asian studies in the region, the event was certainly a milestone as it attempted to take stock of the gains, the limitations and most especially, the current challenges facing Southeast Asian studies in light of the changing regional and global milieu.

In this increasingly globalized world, it is no longer within the context of national and regional developments that the limitations and the potentials of Southeast Asian studies should be situated. The more important challenge posed today is how to keep Southeast Asian studies vital and relevant, not only to the sub-region but also to Asia and the world as a whole.

One recognizes the reality that the development of Southeast Asian studies in East Asia is uneven, with some countries and institutions devoting more resources than others, certain fields of study more emphasized than others and the areas of research focus defined in varying degrees against the backdrop of each country's respective national histories and pace of progress. Still, the urgency of the need to come together is apparent as

each confronts the question of the need for new approaches, perspectives and discursive spaces to capture both the diversity and unity of Southeast Asia. The time is also ripe for efforts to broaden networking on Southeast Asian studies among scholars in the region, especially after the 1980s, whilst building on existing networks or reviving old ones.

The objectives of the conference workshop were to examine the state of contemporary teaching and research on Southeast Asia being undertaken in Southeast Asia, as well as in Japan, Korea and China (including Hong Kong), and to identify possible cooperative activities for the promotion of Southeast Asian studies in Asia. There was a special emphasis on graduate-level academic programs. The conference presentations during the first two days were divided into two parts: the first part focused on the teaching and research on Southeast Asian studies as a whole in each of the participating countries (e.g. Southeast Asian Studies in Vietnam), and the second part on the teaching and research on one's own country (e.g. Cambodian Studies in Cambodia).

A workshop on the third day was designed to identify problems and concerns in Southeast Asian studies as well as to recommend an agenda of projects and activities that would help address such problems. Three workshop groups looked into problems and issues in teaching, research and publications, and explored ideas for collaborative projects for future consideration by the workshop participants.

The Conference-Workshop was attended by 32 participants and 15 observers from the Philippines and 25 delegates from foreign countries. Although they come from varied national and disciplinary backgrounds, they all shared a common concern for the problems and certainly for the future of Southeast Asia and Southeast Asian studies.What follows is a summary of the findings and the workshop recommendations from the conference.

General Features of Southeast Asian Studies in Participating Institutions

Most of the institutions represented during the conference were relatively new in offering Southeast Asian studies – whether as full programs or as courses offered in different units. Only China and the Philippines had programs established in the 1950s; Malaysia and Japan in the 60s; Cambodia, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Laos in the 90s while most recently, Indonesia and Thailand also established their own programs.

The origins of such programs varied but a common thread was that the seeds had been planted by academics concerned with Southeast Asian cultures and demography. The participation of other disciplines followed later.

Uneven institutional development in each country arose from several factors:

- specific national histories – e.g. political change dovetailing with the interests and policies of the nation state,
- academic capacities, researches and priorities in relation to other disciplines – manifested in well-prepared or well-thought out courses in some programs while for others, the programs and courses are still in infancy stage.
- availability of personnel – certain counties already have a strong Ph.D. base; while others are still in the process of training and spotting undergraduates interested in Southeast Asia. There are variations in existing personnel with some tension or dynamics between foreign-trained scholars and local scholars; and
- varying levels of public interest in particular countries – e.g., a noticeable phenomenon in China or Japan but low in others.

The participating institutions also differed in their priorities with most placing a strong emphasis in undergraduate training as part of disciplinary requirements while others combined research and teaching.

Still others have had to grapple with whether or not it is important to address academic objectives or pragmatic policy concerns.

What was also remarkable from the conference findings were the similarities in terms of problems confronted and opportunities faced, some of which are listed here:

- the aspiration to promote further institutionalization of Southeast Asian studies in their respective universities;
- the desire to improve dialogue among scholars across national and regional boundaries, in part by enhancing translation and learning of each other's languages; recognizing that there already are existing materials both formal or informal) to facilitate such contacts.
- a strong interest in sharing resources and information (e.g. fellowships, MA curricula, etc.);
- agreement that for Southeast Asian studies to flourish, it should not simply be a strictly academic endeavor but must also involve sectors outside the academe (business, NGOs, policy-makers, etc.); and
- awareness of the need for comparative and /or a multidisciplinary approach as well as an interest in both the historical and the contemporary.

Alternative Approaches to Southeast Asian Studies

Many issues were raised during the course of the discussions that could impact on the future directions of Southeast Asian Studies in Asia. A persistent question was its rationale and place as an academic program in the context of growing nationalisms in the countries of Southeast Asia even as the state of the art continues to be dominated by the concerns and interests of the former colonial powers. It was also noted that many of the Southeast Asianists in the region, past and present, were trained in the West, a fact that may have affected the development of the field in the

region. Are the questions that we seek to address our own questions or those of others?

Moreover, it was observed that there is much unevenness in the teaching of Southeast Asian studies across the region. There was an expressed need for more thematic or comparative cross-country studies, e.g. ethnicity and religion, and conflicts arising from them that need to be addressed. In addition, the inclusion of studies on gender was strongly recommended. These meant that Southeast Asian studies must not limit its scope to country studies alone, but must address contemporary issues as they cut across countries on a comparative basis. One participant pointed out how country studies are good topics for research but not for teaching.

In both teaching and research, the question of creating a balance between pragmatic and utilitarian interests such as catering to the requirements of government and business interests vis-à-vis the need to develop a core of faculty and research scholars with multidisciplinal expertise was raised. One suggested approach to multidisciplinariness was to encourage more team teaching and collaborative research. Another key issue that was brought up was whether Southeast Asian studies is best approached as "area studies" or from a disciplinal perspective.

Similarly, the question was raised whether focusing on country studies helps better one's understanding and appreciation of Southeast Asia as a whole.

Workshop Reflections: Lessons and Prospects for Southeast Asian Studies

The state of the field, especially in Southeast Asian universities, is still very backward in general. While there are SEA-related courses taught in different departments and faculties and at different levels, these are quite few and formal. Moreover, many so-called Southeast Asianists in the region have little claim to expertise on any country in the region other than their own.

The participants agreed that the importance of Southeast Asian Studies in East and Southeast Asia would grow in light of the weak prospects and declining interest in Southeast Asian Studies in North America and Europe. The increasing linkages among countries and peoples of the region also drive the need for more programs that will enable the expansion of mutual understanding and cooperation.

The workshop discussions emphasized the importance of this field of study especially in the region, of integrating teaching with research, theory with practical applications, and of developing indigenous perspectives. Language and culture are very important elements of Southeast Asian studies, but there are new emerging issues that also merit attention, e.g. gender, environment and the economy.

The workshop addressed the question: what should be the objectives of teaching Southeast Asian studies in the region in the next ten years? Participants noted three main objectives: 1) the need to answer questions of people from within the region, 2) to expand knowledge of our neighboring countries and peoples in order to promote mutual understanding and cooperation, and 3) to develop multiple perspectives and theoretical breakthroughs in the study of the region. These goals recognize the importance of the global and regional environment as well as our consciousness of a shared colonial legacy and shared destiny. We need alternative understandings of the region as distinguished from the perceptions that have been framed by outside observers and colonial scholarship.

Most workshop participants felt that Southeast Asian studies is best taught at the graduate level. At this level, students have had some orientation in the disciplines, and would be more prepared to pursue comparative studies, eventually moving on to further knowledge on Southeast Asia, since teaching programs in the region inevitably have to involve more complex interdisciplinary work. However, there are varied sources of demand directed at multiple audiences – students at the undergraduate and graduate levels, practitioners from the private and public

sectors and regional and international organizations, among others. The pooling of teaching resources, developing student exchanges and expanding fieldwork opportunities were some of the proposals aimed at improving the quality of instruction.

The workshop discussed an agenda for research and publications on Southeast Asian studies in the next ten years. Comparative studies on many issues should be undertaken, including, among others, urgent questions affecting peace and security in the region, maritime concerns, flows of people, the impact of globalization on traditional cultures and communities, environment and labor concerns.

The conference-workshop endorsed the formation of an association of scholars in Asia who study Southeast Asia, beginning with a preparatory committee composed of participants of the current conference-workshop. Possible initial projects include producing directories of individual scholars and networks, as well as inventories of current researches (including books, dissertations, theses). The network, and later the Association, can help promote exchanges among academics and extend support for students.

Other proposals by the participants were as follows:

- Hold a workshop on the development of common core courses that can be be shared among universities in the region (e.g. Introduction to Southeast Asian Studies, Theories and Methods in Southeast Asian Studies, Southeast Asian civilizations);
- Develop syllabi on Southeast Asian studies that can be made public domain;
- Translate reference materials and link up with existing translation projects such as that of Kyoto University's Center for Southeast Asian Studies;
- Gather some of the existing research papers across the region into a publication series or journal, editing and publication of which can be rotated among various institutions on a voluntary basis.

- Share directories, resource materials, curricula, syllabi, funding opportunities and information on activities, projects, etc. of various individual scholars and institutions on the Internet; and
- Organize research dissemination conferences and workshops for young and old scholars of the region who do work on similar issues and publish results in existing local journals and via the Internet.

Finally, this need for and desirability of promoting collaboration in Southeast Asian studies was encapsulated in a vision statement contributed by participant Francis Loh Kok-Wah, to wit:

> "While the notion of 'Southeast Asia' was created in the West, we now wish to take responsibility for 'Southeast Asia' as scholars, by recreating and critiquing it particularly with regards to preparing future generations of scholars who look upon the region in comparative and regional terms."

The Contributors

Patricio N. Abinales, PhD is an Associate Professor at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University in Japan. Among his recent published works are: *Making Mindanao: Cotabato and Davao in the Formation of the Philippine Nation-State* (Quezon City: Ateneo University Press, 2000)*;* "Filipino Communism and the 'National Question,'" Pilipinas: Journal of the Philippine Studies Group 1998:33 (September 1999); *Images of State Power: Essays on Philippine Politics from the Margins* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1998); and "'Muslim' Political Brokers and the Philippine Nation-State," in *Gangsters, Democracy and the State in Southeast Asia*, Carl J. Trocki, ed. (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1998).

Shen Hong Fang holds the position of professor at the Research School of Southeast Asian Studies, Xiamen University. She has written on the subject of East Asian and Southeast Asian economies in crisis and reform, China's relations with the Philippines and ASEAN, and on the Philippine economy and society. The publications to her credit include two authored and eight co-authored books as well as more than one hundred papers, mostly written in Chinese and published in China. She has been a visiting research fellow at the Center of Asian Studies of Amsterdam; Kent University; Asian Center, the University of the Philippines; and the Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University in Thailand, among others.

Chris Lundry is a doctoral candidate in political science at Arizona State University. He has traveled to East Timor many times. His work covers issues of human rights, indigenous rights, democratization, sovereignty, and the role of non-governmental organizations in Indonesia and East Timor. He was an accredited observer during the 1999 elections that led to East Timor's independence.

Aurora Roxas-Lim was former Professor and Dean of the Asian Center, University of the Philippines (1994-1997); Curator of the U.P. Vargas Museum (1988-1994); and Deputy Director of the Special Project in Archeology and Fine Arts (SPAFA) of the Southeast Asia Ministries of Education (SEAMEO) (1985-1986). Trained in English Literature at the University of the Philippines, she took up Master of Arts in the General Studies of the Humanities combining Literature and Art History at the University of Chicago. She went on to Cornell University where she majored in the Art History and Archaeology of Southeast Asia.

Carolyn I. Sobritchea is a full professor of Philippine Studies at the Asian Center, University of the Philippines. She is also Director of the University Center for Women's Studies. She has authored and edited numerous publications in Philippine and international circles, particularly on gender issues and concerns. She has also supported the establishment of Gender/Women's Centers in around 25 colleges and universities in the Philippines, Indonesia and Japan.

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ISSUE EDITOR
Aileen S.P. Baviera, Ph.D.

MARKETING MANAGER
Milagros Dumlao

LAYOUT ARTIST
Ariel G. Manuel

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